RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT TO LICENSING COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No. 8

meeting date: 31 AUGUST 2010
title: COALITION   GOVERNMENT'S   CONSULTATION   ABOUT
                   REBALANCING THE LICENSING ACT
submitted by: LEGAL SERVICES MANAGER
principal author: DIANE RICE

1   PURPOSE

1.1   To seek Committee's instructions as to the Council's response to a consultation
       document issued on 28 July 2010 concerning the Licensing Act 2003.

1.2   Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities

       • Council Ambitions -   }   The Council aims to help make people's lives
                                          safer and healthier. The problems created by
       • Community Objectives - }   irresponsible drinking including the effects on
                                          residents and local communities have to be
       • Corporate Priorities -   }   balanced against the contribution licensed
                                          premises make to the economy and wider
       • Other Considerations -   }   community. The consultation document seeks
                                          to rebalance the effect of the Licensing Act
                                          2003.

2   BACKGROUND

2.1   The Coalition Agenda theme of localism is reflected in the proposals to rebalance the
       Licensing Act 2003.

2.2   The consultation document emphasises the importance of empowering individual's
       families and local communities to shape and determine local licensing.

2.3   The purpose of the proposals, if implemented, would be to give more power to local
       authorities and local police forces in order to tailor to local needs the promotion of
       businesses as against problems created by alcohol related crime and disorder.

2.4   The proposals include:

       •   giving local authorities and the police much stronger powers to remove
            licences from or refuse to grant licences to problematic premises ;

       •   increasing the maximum fine for those caught selling alcohol to minors to
            £20,000;

       •   councils will be able to charge higher fees for late night licences, to help pay
            for the additional costs incurred in enforcement;

       •   councils and police will have the powers to close any shop or bar premise that
            is found to be repeatedly selling alcohol to children; and

       •   preventing the sale of alcohol at a low cost price.

2.5   A copy of the consultation document is attached at Appendix 1 and a copy of a short guide produced by the Local Government Group of LACORS is attached as Appendix 2.

3   ISSUES

3.1   Committee is requested to consider the proposals set out in the consultation document.

3.2   The document contains numerous questions on which the views of local authorities are sought and these are summarised in Part 11 of the report.

3.3   Members will have an opportunity at the meeting of Committee to debate the proposals, in order to formulate a response on behalf of the Council.

4   RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1   The approval of this report may have the following implications

• Resources - }	Members of the Licensing Committee are uniquely placed to make representations to Central Government based on their experiences as Members of this Committee, and informed by their role as representatives of their Local Authority.
• Technical, Environmental and Legal - }	
• Political - }	
• Reputation - }	

5   **RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE**

5.1   Formulate a response to the Government's consultation paper on or before 8 September 2010.

For further information please ask for Diane Rice, extension 4418.