

FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

PRESS RELEASE

July 27, 2020

Council's new 'pavement licence' will allow premises to offer al fresco dining

Al fresco dining spaces and street cafes could soon become a more familiar sight in Fenland as local food and drink businesses are invited to apply for a free pavement licence.

Fenland District Council has launched a fast-track process to apply for the new licence, which will allow pubs, cafes and restaurants to place tables and chairs outside their premises, without the usual need for planning permission.

The pavement licences, made possible following the introduction of the new Business and Planning Bill 2020 this week, aim to help licensed businesses bounce back from the coronavirus lockdown and operate safely while social distancing measures are in place.

The Council has waived the fee for the licences until the end of the year, and will determine applications in just 14 days including a seven day consultation period.

In addition, the Bill has amended the Licensing Act 2003 to allow operators with existing alcohol on-sales licences to also serve alcohol for consumption off the premises and to make deliveries.

Cllr Sam Clark, Fenland District Council's Portfolio Holder for Licensing, said: "This is all about supporting local businesses as they begin to welcome customers back. Current social distancing guidelines make it difficult for many premises to find enough space indoors to allow them to operate safely, so a pavement licence could help. The streamlined process will also allow businesses to obtain licences as quickly as possible, aiding their financial recovery.

"We know this won't be something which every business will be able to take advantage of because their location might not make it possible. But some businesses could definitely benefit from this and we aim to be of as much help as we can."

The temporary pavement licences will be available until September 31, 2021, and may be issued for between three and 12 months.

Applications will be subject to feasibility assessments to determine whether what is proposed is suitable for the outdoor space, and conditions may be applied to licences granted.

For more information and guidance, and to apply for a pavement licence, visit:

www.fenland.gov.uk/pavementlicence

ENDS

For more information contact Fenland District Council press office on 01354 622226