

Licensing board will scrutinise farm shop application

A farm shop's bid to keep selling alcohol will go before councillors for a decision after it operated on occasional licences for nearly a year.

Carfrae Farm Shop, at Garvald, East Lothian, has applied for six occasional licences to allow it to sell alcohol over the next three months.

However East Lothian Council's licensing officer has referred the decision to elected members after pointing out it will mean the shop has been operating off sales under the temporary licences for 14 months.

The council's licensing board policy expects premises who use the two week licence for more than three months to cover standard operations to apply for a permanent premises licence.

In a report to the board, which meets next week, licensing officer Karen Harling says she visited the shop and advised them of the need for the permanent licence adding she was told in January this year an application for it would be submitted.

However, she said, to date no application had been submitted.

Referring the current six applications which cover off sales from August 24 to November 15 to the board for a decision, she said the board would be able to refuse the applications if it

felt it breached licensing objectives including securing public safety.

She said the board's policy states: "The scrutiny given to an application for a Premises Licence is not available where premises operate under a series of Occasional Licences.

In the interests of securing public safety and/or protecting and improving public health, the Board considers that it is not appropriate to operate on a series of Occasional Licences.

"The board will require an application to explain at a hearing why an application for a Premises License is not being made."

The hearing is being held on Thursday.

by Marie Sharp *Local Democracy Reporter*.

