
Licensing Sub Committee MINUTES

Of a meeting held in the Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Rickmansworth, on
Wednesday, 2 October 2024 from 12.00 - 2.21 pm

Present: Councillors Councillor Andrew Scarth, Debbie Morris and Narinder Sian

Officers in Attendance:

Richard Ricks, Legal Officer
Lorna Curtis, Lead Licensing Officer
Sharon Keenlyside, Interim Senior Committee Officer
Emma Lund, Senior Committee Officer

5 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

Councillor Scarth was appointed as Chair for this meeting.

6 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made by Members.

7 FULL VARIATION OF PREMISES LICENCE AT HUNTON PARK, ESSEX LANE, ABBOTS LANGLEY

Lorna Curtis, Lead Licensing Officer, presented an application to seek a variation of the premises licence at Hunton Park, Essex Lane, Abbots Langley which sought to:

- (i) Add the Garden Marquee to the existing Premises Licence (same times as existing Terrace Marquee)
- (ii) Add films to the existing Premises Licence
- (iii) Update the filed plan in circumstances where some conference rooms are now bedrooms in the Mansion House
- (iv) Update/remove out of date and unenforceable conditions with appropriate replacements.

Lorna Curtis reported that subsequent to publication of the officer's report, a new condition relating to noise monitoring which had been recommended by the Environmental Health Officer had been accepted by the applicant. The objection from Environmental Health had therefore now been withdrawn. The Sub-Committee's legal representative advised that approval for the wording of the noise monitoring condition would be sought from the Sub-Committee in order to avoid conflict with the wording of existing conditions in the application.

The Chair invited the applicant to put their case to the Sub-Committee.

Sally Hills, representing the applicant, explained the background to the application and the reason for seeking to add the Garden Marquee to the existing Premises Licence.

The applicant had purchased the premises in 2022 from an administrator, at which time it had been in a state of disrepair. A number of issues were inherited, including staffing issues which had been challenging to resolve. Due to a lack of documentation, it had taken time to establish who had erected the marquee and installed the sound system and within the intervening period the applicant had been obliged to honour bookings made with the former proprietor who had allowed customers to supply their own catering and sound equipment. The practice of allowing customers to use their own equipment had now ceased, giving greater control and management of sound issues.

The marquee structure had been repaired and upgraded: the applicant's representative advised that, should the application before the Sub-Committee be approved, there were plans to further enhance the facilities (subject to any necessary planning consents) which should also help to improve sound performance. The revenue generated by bookings of the marquee was needed by the applicant in order to ensure that the premises remained a viable and sustainable prospect, and in order to be able to maintain the structure of the Grade II listed Mansion House building.

The applicant and their representatives responded to questions from Members.

The Chair asked the Interested Parties to put their case to the Sub-Committee.

Duncan Baine and Tim Carroll (Chair of the Gypsy Lane Residents' Association) put the case on behalf of the objectors. The points made by the objectors included the following:

- The volume limiting system was not effective in ensuring that the music was inaudible at the premises boundary. Music could still be heard inside neighbouring residential properties even with their windows closed, and on some occasions even above other noise within the home such as the television.
- An objector stated that on occasion he had had to leave his property at the weekend due to the upset caused by the noise of the music and the public address system.
- It was important to retain the condition that noise should be inaudible at the premises boundary; however, that condition had historically not been met. A suggestion to replace it with a condition which allowed a noise level of 5db above ambient noise level was not considered acceptable.
- Complaints had on previous occasions been made to the Duty Manager at the venue using the contact numbers provided, but these had not resulted in any action. Complaints had also been made to the Council's Environmental Health Team, including sending sound logs. However, the noise nuisance happened at night and on weekends when Environmental Health staff were not on duty and they had not been followed up. The objectors were therefore concerned about who would police the noise management conditions and ensure compliance, and who they could contact to ensure timely action was taken in the event of any breaches.
- The control of noise required a combination of management discipline and technological solutions. More information was needed by way of a comprehensive method statement as to how the premises would manage noise.

The objectors responded to questions from Members.

Applicants' Sum-Up

The applicant's representative stressed that the intention was not to remove the noise monitoring condition, but to change the wording of it in order address the points raised by the Environmental Health Officer. It was disappointing to hear that complaints had not been responded to or conveyed to the applicant by the Council, and it was also disappointing that the Environmental Health Officer had not been able to be present at the meeting. The applicant was happy to provide contact telephone numbers of duty staff at the premises who could assist in the case of noise nuisance and provide a list of events which were expected to continue beyond 9pm so that this could be circulated amongst residents. The conditions of the licence needed to be more enforceable for the Council and operational for the client and more accessible for local residents; the applicant was keen to work collaboratively with local residents in relation to noise management.

Interested Parties' Sum-Up

The objectors summarised that residents still lacked assurance that a comprehensive plan was in place to manage and respond to noise nuisance. A number of residents had stopped raising noise complaints due to frustration with the process.

Officers' Sum-Up

The Lead Licensing Officer summarised that the options before the Sub-Committee were to either (i) grant the licence subject to conditions; (ii) exclude conditions from the licence if considered appropriate; (iii) refuse to specify a person on the licence; or (iv) reject the application.

The Chair thanked all of the participants for their contributions to the discussion.

The meeting was adjourned at 13:46 to allow for further discussion between the applicant and the objectors.

The meeting reconvened at 14:02 and closed so that the Members could determine the application.

Decision

The Sub-Committee resolved to allow the full variation of premises licence as in the report and subject to the following additional conditions:

1. There will be, where appropriate, liaison with local residents.
2. All residents and non-residents when attending, will be encouraged to limit any noise when leaving/entering the site late at night.
3. All windows and doors, except those necessary for entrance to and exit from the premises to remain shut, after 21:00 hours whilst regulated entertainment is taking place, in the rooms where such entertainment is taking place.
4. Staff to be made aware, in particular at weekends (when pre booked family events may take place), that no person under the age of 18 years is allowed on site without being accompanied by an adult.
5. The contact telephone numbers of the Hotel and the Duty Manager to be sent to the owners/occupiers of The Bothy, West Lodge, East Lodge and the Secretary of the Gypsy Lane Residents Association.
6. All amplified music must be routed through the in-house directional speaker system and digital process limiter.

7. No visiting amplification equipment is permitted to be used within the Garden Marquee.
8. The LAeq(t15min) of entertainment noise (measured with an event in operation) must not exceed the L90(t15min) ambient background level (measured without an event in operation) by more than 5 dB when taken 1m from the façade of any noise sensitive dwelling.
9. An annual calibration of the in-house directional speaker systems, process limiter and associated equipment must be undertaken to ensure compliance with the above conditions.
10. A noise management plan will be agreed with the licensing authority's Environmental Health officer and be put in place before the Garden Marquee is used for regulated entertainment.
11. Noise monitoring patrols will take place along Gypsy Lane at least once an hour between 19:00hrs and 00:00hrs when an event is taking place in the garden marquee and grounds.
12. A written record will be made of the assessments made in accordance with [condition 11] in a logbook kept for the purposes and will include dates, times and location assessments, the person making them, the results and/or action taken. These records will be made available on demand by any authorised officer of Three Rivers District Council.
13. Where a resident makes a noise complaint the Duty Manager will investigate and take appropriate action. Any action will be recorded in the log book.
14. An electronic log of noise complaints will be kept by the DPS to include the date and time of the complaint and subsequent action.
15. There shall be no alcoholic, or non-alcoholic, beverages left in either marquee, unless the marquee is staffed.
16. All alcoholic or non-alcoholic beverages shall be stored within the main building of the hotel and not in either marquee.
17. A perimeter check of each marquee will be completed after every event to ensure the marquee is locked and secure.
18. A CCTV system will be installed internally at the premises giving coverage of the entrance and exit, alcohol and such system shall be maintained and fit for purpose.
19. CCTV covering the marquee(s) shall be in operation 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
20. The recording system will be able to capture images of evidential quality and such recordings shall be retained for as long as the system is able (whilst retaining the high quality image) and in any event for a minimum of 28 days.
 - a) The system shall continually record whilst the premises is open for licensable activities and during all times when staff and customers remain on the premises.
 - b) The CCTV system shall have a constant and accurate time and date generation.
 - c) Management to be trained to view and download CCTV footage on receipt of an internal authorisation code. For urgent matters, at all times officers will be able to view CCTV footage to verify if a reported offence is covered and, whenever required, CCTV will be downloaded and made available to the officer as soon as reasonably practicable. For non-urgent matters, CCTV will be available to view and

download at all times during normal office hours of between 09:00 to 17:00hrs on receipt of an internal authorisation code or in any event within 48 hours.

- d) Signage will be displayed advising that CCTV is in operation
21. A refusals log (which may be electronically recorded) shall be kept detailing all refused sale/supply of alcohol. The log should include the date and time of the refused sale/supply and the name of the member of staff who refused it. The log shall be available for inspection at the premises by the police or an authorised officer of the licensing authority at all times whilst the premises is open.
22. An incident log shall be kept at the premises for at least 12 months, and made available on request to an authorised officer of the licensing authority or the Rickmansworth Police Licensing Unit, which will record the following:
- a) all crimes reported to the venue, or by the venue to the Police
 - b) all ejections of patrons
 - c) any complaints received
 - d) any incidents of disorder
 - e) seizures of drugs, offensive weapons, fraudulent ID or other items
 - f) any failures or faults in the CCTV system or searching equipment or scanning equipment
 - g) any refusal of the sale/supply of alcohol
 - h) any visit by a responsible authority or emergency service
 - i) the times on duty, and the licence number, of all licensed door supervisors employed by the premises.
 - j) assaults or other injuries whether or not police or medical assistance is required
 - k) all times when CCTV and electronic identification system records have been supplied to Police and licensing authority officers.
 - l) records of reasonable requests from authorised officers in accordance with condition
23. The premises will operate a Challenge 25 Policy for sales of alcohol. Only forms of ID such as photographic driving licence, passport or proof of age card with PASS hologram will be accepted for proof of age. Signage advising of the Challenge 25 Policy will be prominently displayed at the premises.

CHAIR