
LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held in the Committee Room, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT on Wednesday, 25 May 2016 from 2.00pm - 4.50pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Paul Fleming, Prescott and Ted Wilcox (Chairman).

OFFICERS PRESENT: Mohammad Bauluck, Philippa Davies and Robin Harris.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: DC Gill Angus, PC Diane Holroyd (Kent Police), Mr Marc Rustage (Kent Fire and Rescue Service), Mr Bradley Wright (Respondent) and Angela Seaward (Senior Licensing Officer and Witness).

686 FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Fire Evacuation Procedure was noted.

687 NOTIFICATION OF CHAIRMAN AND OUTLINE OF PROCEDURE

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and outlined the procedure that would be followed. He explained that since the Agenda had been published, Councillors Ben Stokes and Mike Whiting were unable to attend, and Councillors Prescott and Ted Wilcox had been appointed to sit on the Sub-Committee in their place.

688 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

689 REVIEW OF PREMISES LICENCE UNDER THE LICENSING ACT 2003

Mr Mo Bauluck, the Licensing Officer, introduced the report which was an application for the review of the Premises Licence at Sittingbourne Snooker Club, 7-11 High Street, Sittingbourne. He drew the Sub-Committee's attention to the amendments to the licence requested by the applicant (Kent Police), as outlined on page nine of the report.

PC Diane Holroyd, Kent Police, reported that Mr Bradley Wright, the respondent, had failed to promote two of the licensing objectives: the prevention of crime and disorder, and public safety. PC Holroyd outlined her statement, reported on pages eight and nine on the Sub-Committee report. PC Holroyd further advised that there had been 27 reported crimes at the premises, 13 of which had been after midnight, and she stated the venue was a snooker club, not a nightclub.

In response to questions, PC Holroyd explained that the 27 crimes had taken place since the Designated Premises Supervisor (DPS) had taken on the license in March 2015, up to 12 April 2016. She explained that most of the crimes had been investigated to a degree and had all taken place within the premises.

Discussion ensued between the Police and the Respondent on some of the meetings that had taken place between the two parties. The Respondent had considered these meetings to be informal, similar to a 'catch-up', whilst the Police considered the requests for measures to be taken were clear indications that the DPS was in breach of the licensing conditions. PC Holroyd explained that these had been verbal warnings, rather than written warnings. In response to a question on the frequency that drug evidence was found throughout premises generally, PC Holroyd explained that this was normally 50/50. There had been two drug incidents during a police drugs operation at the premises in February 2016. PC Holroyd could not confirm how many of the 27 incidents had involved a pool cue.

Mr Mark Rustage, representing Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS), drew the Sub-Committee's attention to the statement from KFRS on page 25 of the report. He stated that it was not uncommon for the requested work not to be carried out on time; the deadline was normally three months. Mr Rustage explained that Mr Wright had now carried out all the work, some to a level exceeding what was requested. He reported that the occupancy limit was based on the size of the premises, versus the number of available exits.

In response to a question, Mr Wright advised that there was one main entrance and two fire escapes in the premises.

In response to a question, PC Holroyd explained that, at the time of the review being called, the fire risk assessment had not been completed.

Mr Wright responded by stating that the risk assessment had been booked as the review process had commenced; he explained that the completion date for the work was 31 May 2016, and that every job had been completed.

Mr Wright outlined his statement. He advised that some processes had been amended, for example, the Police were now called whenever there was an incident. Plastic drinking vessels were being used after 10pm throughout the premises; spare reflector armbands were available for the Security Industry Authority (SIA) staff; a drugs box had been installed; and door staff were now positioned at the front door. Mr Wright stated that immediately after the action plan meeting, measures decided at the meeting had been put in place. He advised that multiple drinks were poured on occasions where numerous customers were expected, and this helped to regulate the bar area. Mr Wright advised that there were now four SIA staff on a Friday and Saturday night.

In response to a question, Mr Wright explained that not many of the 27 incidents had taken place in the last two months.

Discussion ensued on the type of polycarbonate/plastic drinking vessels that could be used and whether they be implemented after a certain time or at all times throughout the premises. Mr Wright was happy to implement plastic vessels at regulated events.

The Senior Lawyer (Contentious) suggested each party looked at the five points being considered in the review.

Members of the Sub-Committee adjourned to make their decision at 3.40pm. Members of the Sub-Committee, the Senior Lawyer (Contentious) and the Democratic Services Officer returned at 4.45pm, when the meeting was re-convened.

The decision, as set out at Appendix I to these minutes was announced.

Resolved: The Sub-Committee agreed to modify the conditions of the licence.

Chairman

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All Minutes are draft until agreed at the next meeting of the Committee/Panel