

LICENSING ACT COMMITTEE

PROPOSED 'CARNAGE' EVENT – 20TH NOVEMBER 2008

27TH November 2008

Report of the Licensing Manager

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report is to inform Members of the legal position regarding the control over an event known as "Dirty Porn Star Fancy Dress" a students' pub crawl promoted by an organisation called Carnage UK, which was scheduled to be held on 20th November 2008.

This report is public

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the report be noted.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 As Members will be aware following recent local media coverage, there has been much controversy regarding an event promoted by an organisation called Carnage UK. The planned event, known as 'dirty porn star fancy dress' scheduled to be held on 20th November 2008 was intended to take the form of a students' pub crawl around certain participating licensed premises within Lancaster City centre.
- 1.2 It is known that Carnage events similar to the one organised to be held in Lancaster have been met by opposition from the police in other areas. In Blackpool for example, a "dirty porn star fancy dress" event was scheduled to be held on 28th October 2008. However, following crime and disorder concerns raised by Lancashire police, the participating venues in Blackpool decided to withdraw their involvement and the above event was therefore cancelled. It is understood that similar events have also been cancelled in certain other areas following concerns raised by the police.
- 1.3 When it became known that the Carnage was planned to be held in Lancaster, the police licensing officers addressed their concerns to the

licensees of the participating venues. PC Graeme Cheetham, Licensing officer for Lancaster and Wyre subsequently issued the following statement:

“Police have met with all participating venues and indicated that although we do not support this type of event there is no legislation available to prevent this event taking place.

Police have indicated both to the venues and organisers the level of security required to run a safe event and all parties have agreed to produce an operating schedule for the evening outlining their procedures for “Carnage.”

There will be a police operation on the night to prevent crime and disorder issues and to facilitate a safe and enjoyable evening for all participants. The venues have been advised that specialist licensing officers will be on duty during the event and any breach of the licensing regulations will be dealt with robustly.”

1.4 The students’ unions of both Lancaster University and the University of Cumbria have also expressed their concerns regarding the proposed Carnage event in Lancaster. Such concerns have also been supported by a number of city councillors.

1.5 Following the issues raised above, the Council as Licensing Authority was approached by a local newspaper for a statement in relation to the proposed Carnage event. In response to the above, the Chief Executive issued the following statement:

“The Licensing Act 2003 has four overriding objectives – the prevention of crime and disorder, public safety, the prevention of public nuisance and the protection of children from harm. All premises licences contain conditions to ensure that these licensing objectives are met.

The Act does not contain any powers which would enable the licensing authority, or indeed the police, to prevent a particular event taking place. It is the responsibility of all premises, and their designated premises supervisors, to ensure that all licence conditions and other requirements of the legislation are complied with at all times.”

2.0 Conclusion

2.1 As Members will note from the above therefore, there are no legal powers available to prevent events like the one promoted by Carnage UK from taking place. At the time of preparing this report it was unclear as to whether Carnage UK would be proceeding with the “dirty porn star” event on 20th November 2008. However if the event proceeded as planned, Licensing Enforcement officers were scheduled to work in partnership with the police to monitor activities at the participating venues to check whether the conditions of the premises licences and all other requirements of the Licensing Act were being complied with. Members will therefore be updated on developments at the meeting.

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT

(including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)

None.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Any costs associated with Licensing Enforcement officers' work involved in monitoring licensed premises will be met from within existing resources.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The report has been prepared on behalf of the Head of Legal and Human Resources.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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