

**Meeting of:** LICENSING ACT SUB-COMMITTEE

**Date:** 24<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2012

**Report of:** LICENSING MANAGER

**Reference:** WP

**Title:** POULTON EXPRESS, 36-38 POULTON ROAD, MORECAMBE  
APPLICATION FOR PREMISES LICENCE

**Members of the Sub-Committee have the following documents attached to this report:**

- 1. Application form**
- 2. Copy of representations from other persons**
- 3. Copy of representation from Lancashire Constabulary**
- 4. Notice of Hearing**

### **Details of Application**

Mr Mark Alexander has submitted an application under Section 17 of the Licensing Act 2003 for a premises licence for Poulton Express, 36-38 Poulton Road, Morecambe,

The application is for a licence to facilitate the sale by retail of alcohol off the premises between the hours of 09:00 until 22.00 hours 7 days a week.

Details of the application for the premises licence are set out in the application form, which is Document 1 attached to this report.

### **Representations**

Representations were received from Lancashire Constabulary in respect of the application together with those of other persons.

The representations received were on the grounds of all four licensing objectives:-

- The prevention of crime and disorder
- Public safety
- The prevention of public nuisance
- The protection of children from harm

Under Section 18(3) of the Act, it is necessary for a hearing to be held to consider the application, as representations have been received from interested parties and responsible authorities.

Copies of the representations are at Document 2.

Representations can be made in opposition to, or in support of, an application and can be made by any individual, body or business that has grounds to do so.

### **Notice of Hearing**

In accordance with the relevant Regulations, the parties have been given notice of the hearing. It was not felt necessary to request any clarification from the parties. The parties have been required in accordance with the Regulations to indicate at least five working days before the hearing whether they intend to attend and/or be represented at the hearing and if they wish any witness to appear at the hearing. Any responses and any further documentation submitted by any of the parties after the circulation of this agenda will be circulated to Members in advance of the meeting. Members are reminded that documentary or other information submitted on the day of the hearing may only be taken into account with the consent of the Sub-Committee and all the parties.

### **Matter for Decision**

The Sub-Committee is requested to consider the application and the representation.

This is in accordance with Section 18(2), (3), (4) and (5) of the Act which provide as follows:

- (2) Subject to subsection (3), the authority must grant the licence in accordance with the application subject only to –
  - (a) such conditions as are consistent with the operating schedule accompanying the application, and
  - (b) any conditions which must under section 19, 20 or 21 be included in the licence.
- (3) Where relevant representations are made, the authority must-
  - (a) hold a hearing to consider them, unless the authority, the applicant and each person who has made such representations agree that a hearing is unnecessary, and
  - (b) having regard to the representations, take such of the steps mentioned in subsection (4) (if any) as it considers necessary for the promotion of the licensing objectives.
- (4) The steps are-
  - (a) to grant the licence subject to –
    - (i) the conditions mentioned in subsection 2 (a) modified to such extent as the authority considers necessary for the promotion of the licensing objectives and
    - (ii) any condition which must under section 19,20 or 21 be included in the licence;
  - (b) to exclude from the scope of the licence any of the licensable activities to which the application relates;
  - (c) to refuse to specify a person in the licence as the premises supervisor;

(d) to reject the application;

(5) For this purposes of subsection (4)(a)(i) the conditions mentioned in subsection (2)(a) are modified if any of them is altered or omitted or any new condition is added.

Members are reminded that the licensing objectives are:

- the prevention of crime and disorder
- public safety
- the prevention of public nuisance and
- the protection of children from harm

### **Government Guidance under Section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003**

Members may wish to note that paragraph 2.33 of the Guidance issued by the Government under Section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003 states that public nuisance is “not narrowly defined in the 2003 Act and retains its broad common law meaning. It is important to remember that the prevention of public nuisance could therefore include low-level nuisance perhaps affecting a few people living locally as well as major disturbance affecting the whole community”.

### **Relevant Parts of the Council’s Statement of Licensing Policy**

With regard to the prevention of public nuisance, the Policy provides as follows:

#### **8. Prevention of public nuisance**

8.1 The most obvious aspect of public nuisance is noise. The primary source of noise is amplified music, either uncontained outdoors or emanating from premises, which do not have sufficient measures in place to contain the sound. Late at night or in the early hours of the morning, individuals shouting in the street or groups of people talking in an animated fashion generate a substantial level of noise and in some cases this is aggravated by offensive language.

8.2 As customers leave licensed premises, the sound of their conversation can disturb residents. Potentially greater problems arise when customers congregate or accumulate outside the licensed premises. However, it is clear that the person in control of the premises has a responsibility to ensure that disturbance to residents and businesses is kept to a minimum.

8.3 In considering licence applications where relevant representations are received, the Licensing Authority will consider the adequacy of measures proposed to deal with the potential for nuisance and disorder having regard to all the circumstances of the application. When addressing public nuisance, the applicant should identify any particular issues which are likely to adversely affect the promotion of the objective to prevent public nuisance, taking account of the location, size and likely clientele of the premises, and the type of entertainment (if any) to be provided. Such steps as are required to deal with these issues should be included within the applicant’s operating schedule, and may include:

- The steps the applicant has taken or proposes to prevent noise and vibration escaping from the premises, including music, noise from ventilation equipment

and human voices. Such measures may include the installation of soundproofing, air conditioning, noise limitation devices and keeping windows closed during specified hours.

- The steps taken to ensure that all staff involved in the management of the premises have the capability, responsibility and training to supervise other staff and to ensure that the premises are operated in such a manner as to prevent public nuisance
- The steps the applicant has taken or proposes to prevent disturbance by patrons arriving at or leaving the premises, for example warning signs at exits, and warning announcements within the premises, and the use of door supervisors to pass on the message
- The steps the applicant has taken or proposes to prevent queuing, or if queuing is inevitable, to divert queues away from neighbouring premises, or otherwise manage and monitor the queue to prevent disturbance of obstruction, and to prevent patrons congregating outside the premises.
- The implementation of a last admission time, and how the last admission time relates to the closing time of the premises
- The steps the applicant has taken or proposes to take to manage queues so that patrons who will not gain admission before any last admission time are advised accordingly
- The steps the applicant has taken to reduce queuing outside the premises and to minimise the length of time people have to queue at the premises
- The steps the applicant has taken to advise patrons that they will not be admitted if they are causing a disturbance, and the steps taken to implement a procedure for banning patrons who continually leave or arrive at the premises in a manner which causes a public nuisance or disturbance.
- The arrangements made or proposed for parking by patrons and the effect of parking on local residents.
- The arrangements the applicant has made or proposes to make for security lighting at the premises, and the steps the applicant has taken or proposes to take to ensure that lighting will not cause a nuisance to residents.
- Whether there is sufficient provision for public transport for patrons, for example the provision of a free phone taxi service or other arrangements with taxi companies, and whether information is provided to patrons about the most appropriate routes to the nearest transport facilities.
- Whether taxis and private hire vehicles serving the premises or traffic flow from the premises are likely to disturb local residents.
- Whether routes to and from the premises pass residential premises.
- Whether other appropriate measures to prevent nuisance have been taken, such as the use of CCTV or the employment of an adequate number of licensed door supervisors.
- The measures proposed to prevent the consumption or supply of illegal drugs, including any search and disposal procedures.
- The procedures in place for ensuring that no customer leaves with bottles or glasses
- If the applicant has previously held a licence within the area of the Council, the history of any enforcement action arising from those premises.
- Whether the premises would result in increased refuse storage or disposal problems, or additional litter in the vicinity of the premises.
- The steps the applicant has taken or proposes to take in order to ensure that standards of public decency are maintained in any entertainment provided at the premises.
- If appropriate, whether music is played at a lower level towards the end of the evening in a “wind down period”.

- The applicant's proposals for the length of time between the last sales of alcohol, and the closing of the premises
- The steps the applicant has taken to prevent noise and other public nuisance from occurring in any open air parts of the premises, beer gardens, smoking shelters or areas that are used on an ad-hoc basis by patrons with the management consent for smoking

The above list is not intended to be exhaustive, and the applicant should consider all aspects of the operation that may affect public nuisance.

With regard to the prevention of crime and disorder, the Policy provides as follows:

## **9. The prevention of crime and disorder**

- 9.1 The central concerns of licensing in relation to law and order are acts of violence and vandalism brought about by consumption of alcohol and the use of licensed premises as part of a distribution network for illegal drugs.
- 9.2 It is not the function of licensing to impose good practice in the adoption of wider crime reduction measures, such as those for securing premises outside of trading hours. It is also not a purpose of licensing to require that measures be put in place to enhance the opportunities for gathering evidence in relation to crime of a general nature. However, the Licensing Authority recognises that CCTV cameras at premises have an important role in preventing crime and disorder.
- 9.4 The Licensing Authority's starting point is to seek a reduction in crime and disorder throughout the area, consistent with its statutory duty under section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Licences may be granted if applicants can demonstrate that a positive reduction in crime and disorder will result, or that it will not increase, as a result of the application being granted.
- 9.5 Where there are relevant representations, the Licensing Authority will generally not grant a licence where it is likely that the premises will be used for unlawful purposes or where it is considered that the use of the premises is likely to cause an increase in crime and disorder in the area or the premises and this cannot be prevented by the imposition of conditions. When addressing crime and disorder, the applicant should identify any particular issues which are likely to adversely affect the promotion of the objective to prevent crime and disorder, taking account the location, size and likely clientele of the premises, and the type of entertainment (if any) to be provided. Such steps as are required to deal with these issues should be included within the applicant's operating schedule, and may include:
- Use of CCTV inside and outside the premises. The Lancashire Constabulary has produced suggested minimum requirements for CCTV and these are available from the Lancashire Constabulary or from the Licensing Authority's administrative staff
  - Use of metal detection or other search equipment or procedures
  - Crime and disorder risk assessment in relation to the proposed activities
  - Measures to prevent the use or supply of illegal drugs and procedures for searching customers
  - Ensuring that all staff are appropriately trained

- Ensuring that all staff involved in the management of the premises have the capability, responsibility and training to supervise other staff and to ensure that the premises are operated in such a manner as to prevent crime and disorder
- Employment of sufficient security staff where appropriate, controlling admission, monitoring capacity within the premises as a whole and in separate rooms/levels and patrolling the interior and exterior of the premises (any such staff must be licensed by the Security Industry Authority). The Licensing Authority recognises that there is a greater need for security staff in some premises than in others. For example there will be a greater need for security staff in a town centre nightclub than in a village pub. It will be for the applicant to consider the appropriate number of doorstaff required for the particular premises.
- Ensuring that a register of doorstaff and their working times is maintained
- Participation in Pub Watch, Best Bar None or other relevant schemes and using radio links/pages as a means of connecting to other licensed premises.
- Use of plastic or polycarbonate glasses and bottles, where appropriate, or toughened glass. Applicants are advised that the Government believes that a risk-based, rather than blanket, approach to requiring licensed premises to use safer alternatives is the best way to tackle the problem of glass-related injuries
- Wherever possible, agreed protocols with police and other organisations and a commitment to co-operate and provide such evidence as the Police require.
- Adopting the “Night Safe Initiative” and “Safer Clubbing Guide” as statements of best practice
- Following the trade codes of practice, for example BBPA and Portman Group, and not carrying out any irresponsible drinks promotions
- Providing a suitable environment for customers having regard to the activities going on in the premises, in particular appropriate levels of seating
- Ensuring that there are sufficient transport facilities available to ensure that customers can leave the premises safely and swiftly.
- Maintaining an incident log
- The steps the applicant has taken to prevent crime and disorder issues from occurring in any open air parts of the premises, beer gardens, smoking shelters or areas that are used on an ad-hoc basis by patrons with the management consent for smoking, due to location, control within and management of such areas.

It should be noted that this list is not intended to be exhaustive. It may be appropriate for the applicant to consider other steps. Equally, the Licensing Authority recognises that not all the items in the list will be applicable to all premises.

- 9.6.1 Following the receipt of relevant representations, the Licensing Authority will not normally allow a person to be specified as a designated premises supervisor where that is likely to undermine the prevention of crime and disorder by reason of that person’s known past conduct. A person is likely to be considered unsuitable if he has previous unspent convictions for a relevant offence, notwithstanding that he may have been granted a personal licence. However, each case would be considered on its own merits in the light of representations received.

With regard to the public safety, the Policy provides as follows:

**The promotion of public safety**

- 10.1 The Act complements but does not seek to duplicate the statutory requirements of other legislation, which affect those who have responsibility for the conduct of licensed premises such as the Health and Safety at Work Etc. Act 1974.

- 10.2 One of the things which the licensing system can provide is agreement in advance on a standard layout for furniture, location of stage, placing of linked seats etc. so that licensees can be confident about their practical arrangements, provided that they stick to that way of doing things. With other legislative controls, there may be no official inspection of the arrangements made, unless there is an investigation when something has gone wrong.
- 10.3 As a consequence of the many common features of leisure businesses, such as the operation of door policies, competition for taxis and the interaction with people on the street late at night, individual premises necessarily function as part of a network of businesses, sharing information on crime and disorder issues which affect them all.
- 10.4 The Licensing Authority recognises that participation in forums such as Pub Watch and the proper use of network radios are key to the safe operation of the majority of leisure businesses. It may be appropriate for an operating schedule to include these practical matters.
- 10.5 Fire safety requirements are determined principally by specific fire safety legislation. The overall standard of fire safety is an important consideration in determining the suitability of premises for licensable activities.
- 10.6 The Licensing Authority will not use the licensing process to secure routine compliance with fire safety requirements, which arise from other legislation. Nevertheless in circumstances where fire safety inadequacies indicate that premises pose a risk to the health and safety to those who enter them and where specific fire safety enforcement does not provide a sufficient or sufficiently rapid remedy, the Licensing Authority will take appropriate steps to ensure that the risk is removed including, where necessary, and where a review of the licence is requested, revocation of the licence.
- 10.7 In addition the Licensing Authority will also consider and deal with the introduction of further hazards to public safety as part of an event and the exercise of controls over occupancy, so that premises can be cleared safely and efficiently, in the event of an emergency.
- 10.8 Where an applicant identifies an issue with regard to public safety (including fire safety) which is not covered by existing legislation, the applicant should indicate in the operating schedule the steps which will be taken to ensure public safety. Depending on the location, size and likely clientele of the premises, and the type of entertainment (if any) to be provided, the following issues may be of relevance:
  - The maximum capacity of the premises, and the arrangements for ensuring that a capacity limit is not exceeded and for monitoring capacity. This applies to the premises as a whole and to different rooms or levels within the premises.
  - Steps taken to ensure that all staff involved in the management of the premises have the capability, responsibility and training to supervise other staff and to ensure that the premises are operated in such a manner as to ensure the safety of the public
  - The design of the premises and in particular the capability of the structure to bear the likely loads to be imposed at maximum occupancy.
  - The structural condition of the premises and state of repair.
  - The condition of the electrical and gas services, and arrangements for temporary electrical installations.

- The lighting, heating and ventilation systems.
- The fire resisting and fire separation properties of the premises.
- The means of escape from the premises.
- The adequacy of the sanitary arrangements.
- The use of flame retardant materials on fixtures and fittings.
- The protection and safety of the audience, particularly at any indoor sporting event or boxing or wrestling entertainment.
- The availability of qualified first aiders when the premises are open.
- The protection and safety of performers of entertainment.

## **12.0 Protection of Children**

- 12.1 The Licensing Authority recognises the great variety of premises for which licences may be sought. These will include theatres, cinemas, restaurants, pubs, nightclubs, cafes, take-aways, community halls and schools. Access by children to all types of premises will not be limited in any way unless it is considered necessary to do so in order to protect them from physical, moral or psychological harm. Equally, no premises will be obliged to allow access by children.
- 12.2 If relevant representations are received in relation to limiting access to children, the Licensing Authority will judge each application on its own individual merits. Examples which may give rise to concern in respect of children would include premises:-
- where entertainment of an adult or sexual nature is provided
  - where there is a strong element of gambling taking place (but not, for example, the simple presence of a small number of cash prize gaming machines)
  - with a known association with drug taking or dealing
  - where there have been convictions of current members of staff for serving alcohol to those under 18
  - with a reputation for under age drinking
- 12.3 In the case of premises which are used for film exhibitions, conditions will be imposed restricting access only to those who meet the required age limit in line with any certificate granted by the British Board of Film Classification or, in specific cases, a certificate given to the film by the Licensing Authority itself.
- 12.4 The options available for limiting access by children would include:-
- a limit on the hours when children may be present
  - a limitation or exclusion when certain activities are taking place
  - the requirement to be accompanied by an adult
  - access may be limited to parts of the premises but not the whole
  - an age limitation (for under 18s)
- 12.5 The Licensing Authority will not impose any condition which specifically requires access for children to be provided at any premises. Where no restriction or limitation is imposed the issue of access will remain a matter for the discretion of the individual licensee or club.
- 12.6 Under the Act, certain “responsible authorities” must be notified of and are entitled to make representations about applications for premises licences or club premises certificates or major variations of such licences or certificates, or to ask the licensing authority to review a licence or certificate. Applicants for premises licences and club



premises certificates are required to send details of their applications to these bodies. In matters concerning the protection of children from harm, the Licensing Authority regards the Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board as the 'responsible authority' within the terms of Section 13 (4).f of the Licensing Act.

- 12.7 Where a large number of children are likely to be present on any licensed premises, for example a children's show or disco, the applicant may wish to consider including in the operating schedule arrangements for the presence of an appropriate number of adult staff to ensure public safety and the protection of the children from harm. The applicant should also consider whether employees working at the premises for such events and having unsupervised contact with children should have an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check.
- 12.8 Children may also be present at an event as entertainers, and where they are not accompanied by a parent or guardian, the applicant may wish to consider nominating an adult responsible for such child performers at such performances. The applicant should also consider whether a nominated adult should have had an enhanced CRB check.
- 12.9 Applicants may wish to include in their operating schedules arrangements to ensure that children will be restricted from viewing age-restricted films classified according to the recommendations of the British Board of Film Classification or the Licensing Authority itself. The Act provides that it is mandatory for a condition to be included in all premises licences and club premises certificates authorising the exhibition of films for the admission of children to the exhibition of any film to be restricted in accordance with the recommendations given to films either by the British Board of Film Classification or by the licensing authority itself.
- 12.10 The following matters will also be considered in relation to the protection of children from harm:
- Whether access of children to cigarette machines is restricted
  - Whether access of children to any gaming machines is restricted
  - Where appropriate, the procedures for ensuring that any customer coming onto the premises is over the age of 18
  - The steps taken to ensure that, where appropriate, all staff involved in the management of the premises have the capability, responsibility and training to supervise other staff and to ensure that the premises are operated in such a manner as to protect children from harm

The Licensing Authority considers preventing children from obtaining alcohol from licensed premises to be of great importance in protecting them from harm. Applicants must, therefore, be able to demonstrate that they have in place, satisfactory arrangements to prevent sales of alcohol to children including a recognised or appropriate proof-of-age scheme. The Licensing Authority would be supportive of arrangements, which include incorporating any of the following:

- Passport.
- Photo Card driving licence issued in the European Union
- Proof of Age Standards Scheme Card (PASS)
- 'New type' driving licences with photographs.

- Official ID card issued by the HM Forces or by a European Union country bearing a photo and date of birth of holder

Staff should have received suitable training in relation to the proof of age scheme to be applied upon the premises and records evidencing this should be kept.

- 12.11 Applicants may wish to indicate in the operating schedule how the protection of children from harm will be addressed. The above items are not intended to be exhaustive, and the applicant should have considered all relevant aspects of the protection of children from harm applicable to the particular premises.
- 12.12 It is the view of the Licensing Authority that children should not be exposed to entertainments of a sexual nature or to strong language at a too early an age. Conditions may be imposed, if representations are received, aimed at preventing such exposure either intentionally or accidentally. In some premises entertainment of an adult nature may be occasional or restricted to certain times of the day. In these cases, any restrictive conditions to protect children will apply only at these times. When submitting an application, if no reference is made to the provision of adult entertainment or services within an operating schedule at "Box N", then the Authority will interpret this to mean that such entertainment will not be provided and a condition to this effect will be applied to the licence.

The Licensing Authority will expect the applicant to have carried out a risk assessment on these matters in producing the operating schedule. The above list is not intended to be exhaustive, and the Licensing Authority will expect the applicant to have considered all relevant aspects of the safety and suitability of the premises which are not dealt with under other legislation, and which are within the control of the applicant.

Members will of course be mindful that the Policy covers all types of premises in all types of location, and that not all the measures referred to above will be relevant to all premises.

Members are reminded that they should consider each application on its merits, and in the light of all the written and oral information before them at the hearing.

### **Natural Justice and Human Rights**

Members are reminded that they must follow the rules of natural justice, and must also consider human rights implications.

In particular, in accordance with Article 6, all parties are entitled to a fair hearing.

Consideration also needs to be given to the right to respect for private and family life and home, contained within Article 8, although this is a qualified right, and interference is permitted where this is in accordance with the law, or is necessary in a democratic society in the interests of public safety or the prevention of crime and disorder, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others. Article 1 of the First Protocol provides that every person is entitled to the peaceful enjoyment of his possessions, although again this right is qualified in the public interest.

## **Conclusion**

Members should consider whether to grant the application modify any conditions of the licence, refuse to specify a person in the licence as the premises supervisor or to reject the whole application. Members are reminded that they should state the reasons for their decision.