

Meeting of: LICENSING ACT SUB-COMMITTEE

Date: 18TH NOVEMBER 2015

Report of: LICENSING MANAGER

Reference: WP/DWE

Title: DALTON ROOMS, 14 DALTON SQUARE, LANCASTER, LA1 1PL
LICENSING ACT 2003 – APPLICATION FOR REVIEW OF PREMISES
LICENCE

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

1. Copy of application for review of premises licence (pages 8 to 15)
2. Copy of the current premises licence (pages 16 to 23)
3. Copy of notice of review posted on the premises (page 24)
4. Notice of hearing (pages 25 to 32)
5. Copies of Police Representation and those of Other Persons (pages 33 to 46)

Current Licence under Licensing Act 2003

The Dalton Rooms, 14 Dalton Square, Lancaster, LA1 1PL, is currently covered by a premises licence under the Licensing Act 2003. The licence provides for the following licensable activities:-

Plays: Monday to Sunday 10:00 – 02:30

Films: Monday to Sunday 10:00 – 04:00

Regulated Entertainment: Monday to Sunday 10:00 – 04:00

Late Night Refreshment: Monday to Sunday 10:00 – 04:00

Sale by Retail of Alcohol: Monday to Sunday 10:00 – 03:45

Details of the application for Review:

Under Section 51 of the Licensing Act 2003, Lancaster City Council's Environmental Health Services for Community Protection as Responsible Authority has submitted an application for a review of the premises licence for The Dalton Rooms, 14 Dalton Square, Lancaster, LA1 1LU. The grounds for a review are listed as the prevention of public nuisance.

A copy of the application for review of the above premises licence is at Document 1.

A copy of the current premises licence for Dalton Rooms is at Document 2.

A copy of the Notice of Review of the premise licence is at Document 3.

The application for review is to consider historical and on-going complains relating to public nuisance from licensable activities associated with the playing of recorded amplified music and noise associated with patrons congregating outside the premises. Environmental Health Services for Community Protection contend local residents have been substantially adversely impacted over a number of years.

During the statutory 28 day consultation period a representation was received from PC 2338 Andrew Taylor, Licensing Officer of Lancashire Constabulary in support of the application together with one from a local resident. There are 3 representations from Other Persons in support of Lancaster Lounge & Bars Limited (the licence holder) and the current operation of the premises. A copy of the representations is at Document 4.

On 2nd November 2015 Police contacted the Licensing Department to withdraw their representation following mediation with the premise licence holder and his solicitor which resulted in an agreement that the following condition is attached to the licence:-

The doors which open on to Dalton Square will not be used, except for emergencies, between the hours of 02:00 and close of business.

A copy of this e mail agreement is attached at Document 4.

Legal background to Review Application

Under Section 51 (1) of the Licensing Act 2003, a responsible authority or interested party may apply to the licensing authority for the review of a licence.

The grounds for review must relate to one or more of the licensing objectives and as Members will be aware, these are:

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

An application for review must be copied to the premises licence holder and to the responsible authorities. Once such an application is received, the licensing authority must place a notice at the premises, and there is then a period of 28 days during which representations may be made to the licensing authority.

A copy of the notice which was displayed at the premises during the 28 day period is attached at Document 5. Licensing Enforcement Officers made occasional checks throughout the 28 day period to satisfy that the notice was still in place.

The licensing authority is required to arrange a hearing within 20 working days of the expiry of the period for making representations, and ten working days' notice of the hearing must

be given. These time limits have been complied with, and a copy of the Notice of Hearing is attached as document 6.

Matter for Decision

The Sub-Committee is requested to consider Lancaster City Council's Environmental Health Services Community Protection application for review of the premises licence.

In accordance with Section 52 (3) and (4) of the Licensing Act 2003, the Sub-Committee must take such of the following steps as it considers necessary for the promotion of the licensing objectives:

- (a) to modify the conditions of the licence,
- (b) to suspend the licence for a period not exceeding three months,
- (c) to revoke the licence

The matter for decision, therefore, is which, if any, of these steps should be taken.

Government Guidance under Section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003

In relation to crime and disorder, Members may wish to note that paragraph 2.1 of the Guidance issued by the Government under Section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003 states that "The steps any licence holder or club might take to prevent crime and disorder are as varied as the premises or clubs where licensable activities may be carried on. Licensing authorities should therefore look to the police as the main source of advice on these matters".

With regard to the powers of the Licensing Authority on the determination of a review, paragraph 11.16 states that "The licensing authority may decide that no action is necessary if it finds that the review does not require it to take any steps necessary to promote the licensing objectives. In addition, there is nothing to prevent a licensing authority issuing an informal warning to the licence holder and/or to recommend improvement within a particular period of time. It is expected that licensing authorities will regard such warnings as an important mechanism for ensuring that the licensing objectives are effectively promoted and that warnings should be issued in writing to the holder of the licence. However, where responsible authorities like the police or environmental health officers have already issued warnings requiring improvement – either orally or in writing – that have failed as part of their own stepped approach to concerns, licensing authorities should not merely repeat that approach".

Relevant Parts of the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy

With regard to the prevention of crime and disorder and prevention of public nuisance, 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.

9.6 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.

Prevention of public nuisance

- 13.1 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.
- 13.2 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.
- 13.3 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.

13.4 Since the introduction of the Health Act 2006 the requirement for patrons to go outside a premises to smoke has caused an increase in the number of noise and anti-social behaviour complaints received by this and other Councils. It is therefore

expected by the Licensing Authority that the management of licensed premises will ensure that adequate provision is made to supervise those patrons who leave the premises for a short time to smoke, having regard to the health and safety of their staff. In certain cases some form of regular engagement between businesses and residents can lead to better understanding of the needs of each party and inspire a degree of trust. Wherever possible licence holders should try and ensure that smoking areas are away from doors that are open for access and egress.

- 13.5 The cumulative effects of litter around premises carrying on licensable activities can amount to public nuisance. The Licensing Authority requires that any premises that can cause litter, be it from a take away food establishment or cigarette debris left by its customers, must remove it at regular intervals. At the end of trading, management of the premises should arrange for a final check of the area immediately outside the premises, to ensure that no litter, spilled food or cigarette debris is left. In some cases it may be necessary to impose conditions on licences for take away premises which require litter bins to be provided or for litter dropped around of the premises to be collected and removed at regular intervals.

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.

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.

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 the application for review of the premises licence and any steps it considers necessary for the promotion of the licensing objectives.