

# Cheltenham Borough Council

## Licensing Sub Committee – 9 January 2014

### Licensing Act 2003: Determination of Application for a Variation of a Premises Licence

#### St James Hotel, Ambrose Street, Cheltenham

#### Report of the Licensing Officer

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Licensing Act 2003 (the Act) allows applicants to apply for a premises licence or a variation of a premises licence at any time. In this case, an application for a variation of a premises licence was received on 13 November 2013 from the licence holders, Arkell's Brewery. A copy of the application is included at **Appendix A**. (See pages 9-26)
- 1.2 A copy of the existing premises licence is at **Appendix B**. (See pages 27-29)
- 1.3 The variations being sought are as follows:

1. To add licensable activities and / or to alter the times at which licensable activities are authorised:

Licensable activities	Dates and times authorised by existing Premises Licence	Dates and times applied for by way of variation of the Premises Licence
Sale / supply of alcohol	Mon – Sat 10:00 – 23:00	Mon – Sat 10:00 – 00:00
	Sun 10:00 – 23:00	Sun 12:00 – 23:00
	Unrestricted to hotel guests	Unrestricted to hotel guests
Performance of live music	None	Mon – Sat 10:00 – 00:00 Sun 12:00 – 23:00
Performance of recorded music	None	Mon – Sat 10:00 – 00:00 Sun 12:00 – 23:00
Performance of dance	None	Mon – Sat 10:00 – 00:00 Sun 12:00 – 23:00

2. To remove the following conditions from the licence:

2(a) Intoxicating liquor shall not be sold or supplied on the premises otherwise than to persons residing there or their private friends, bona fide entertained by them at their own expense, and for consumption by such a person or his private friend so entertained by him, either on the premises or with a meal supplied at, but to be consumed off, the premises

2(c) There shall be afforded in the premises for persons provided with board and lodging for reward, adequate sitting accommodation in a room not used or to be used for sleeping accommodation, for the service of substantial refreshment or for the supply or consumption of intoxicating liquor.

1.4 Representations have been received from a local resident and from a representative of the nearby Parish Church. Their objections are summarised at paragraph 4 of this report and are reproduced in full at **Appendix C**. (See pages 31-40)

## 1.5 Implications

### 1.5.1 Financial

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### 1.5.2 Legal

A sub committee is required to discharge its duty and determine an application with a view to promoting the licensing objectives. These objectives, which are set out in section 4(2) of the Licensing Act 2003, are: (a) the prevention of crime and disorder; (b) public safety; (c) the prevention of public nuisance; and (d) the protection of children from harm.

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## 2. Application (Ref. 13/02058/PRMV)

2.1 Applicant: Arkell's Brewery

2.2 Premises: St James Hotel, Ambrose Street, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL50 3LH

2.3 The applicant has volunteered to take various steps to promote the four licensing objectives, which are as follows. These will become conditions on the licence if the variation is granted.

(a) The Designated Premises Supervisor (DPS) shall maintain an active membership of the Nightsafe / Cheltenham Innkeepers' Association (or successor 'pubwatch' body).

(b) Six colour CCTV cameras will be installed covering the internal and external areas of the premises.

(c) The CCTV system shall be maintained in good working order, shall record at all times that the premises are open, and recordings shall be kept for 14 days and be provided to authorised officers of the council and police on request.

(d) A 30 minute 'drinking up' time shall be provided to allow appropriate dispersal, use of lavatories etc.

(e) Suitable notices shall be posted inside and outside the premises to request patrons to leave the premises quietly and behave in ways that respect the interests of neighbours.

(f) Use of the outdoor area will cease at 23:00 everyday.

(g) The designated premises supervisor (DPS) shall ensure effective overall management of live and recorded entertainment, such as monitoring noise levels outside the premises, to ensure that noise from such activities does not cause a noise nuisance at the nearest noise sensitive premises.

(h) Whenever any regulated entertainment occurs past 22:00 indoors all windows and doors shall be kept shut during these activities.

(i) The 'Challenge 21' (or equivalent scheme) shall be adopted, so that any customer attempting to purchase alcoholic liquor who appears to be under the age of 21 shall be asked for an accredited photographic proof of their age (e.g. passport, photo driving licence or a PASS approved card) and that a sale shall not be made unless this evidence is produced. This will only be treated as a breach where the customer subsequently turns out to be under 18 years of age.

## 3. Responsible Authorities

3.1 No objections were received from responsible authorities.

## 4. Other People

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- 4.1 Two relevant representations have been received. These are summarised below and reproduced in full at **Appendix C** (pages 31-40).

**Mrs Lyn Guy (17 St Georges Tower, Chelsea Square, St Georges Place)** has objected to the application on the grounds that extending the hours for music at the premises will cause a public nuisance.

**Rev R. Littlewood (on behalf of the Parish of Saint Gregory's, St James' Square)** has objected on the grounds that the sound levels at the premises as well as noise from customers leaving the premises will cause a public nuisance.

## 5. Local Policy Considerations

- 5.1 The 2003 Act introduces a unified system of regulation through two new types of licences: the premises licence (club premises certificates for qualifying clubs) and the personal licence. The Borough Council, as the licensing authority, is responsible for licensing all outlets in the borough that sell or supply alcohol or carry out any other 'licensable activities': public entertainment, theatre, cinema, or late night refreshment.
- 5.2 The new system is underpinned by four objectives: i) the prevention of crime and disorder; ii) public safety; iii) the prevention of public nuisance; and, iv) the protection of children from harm. The licensing authority must promote these objectives in carrying out its functions.
- 5.3 The Council's adopted licensing policy statement (Council 10th Feb 2012) includes the following:
- 5.4 The main purpose of this policy is to provide clarity to applicants, interested parties and responsible authorities on how the Council will determine applications for the sale/supply of alcohol, the provision of regulated entertainment and the provision of late night refreshment and also to provide a basis for all licensing decisions taken by the Council over the next three years. It will also inform elected Members of the parameters within which licensing decisions can be made. (Paragraph1.3)
- 5.5 Through this policy the Council hopes that residents of and visitors to Cheltenham will be able to enjoy their leisure time safely and without fear of violence, intimidation or disorder while at licensed premises. (Paragraph1.4)
- 5.6 An effective licensing policy, alongside other initiatives, will work towards promoting the positive aspects of deregulation under the Act, such as promoting tourism, increasing leisure provision and encouraging the regeneration of the town centre as well as controlling the negative impacts such as increase in noise, nuisance, anti-social behaviour and crime and disorder. (Paragraph1.5)
- 5.7 It should be understood that this policy and the section 182 Guidance cannot anticipate every scenario or set of circumstances that may arise and as such there may be circumstances where the policy or guidance may be departed from in the interests of the promotion of the licensing objectives and where it is deemed appropriate to do so. In such cases the Council will give full reasons for departing from this policy. (Paragraph1.6)
- 5.8 The Council will carry out its licensing functions under the Act with a view to promoting the four licensing objectives, which are:-
- (a) The prevention of crime and disorder;
  - (b) Public safety;
  - (c) The prevention of public nuisance; and
  - (d) The protection of children from harm. (Paragraph 4.1)

- 5.9 The aim of the licensing process is to regulate licensable activities so as to promote the licensing objectives. (Paragraph 4.2)
- 5.10 In determining a licensing application, the overriding principle adopted by the Council will be that each application is determined on its merits. Licence conditions will be tailored to the individual application and only those appropriate to promote the licensing objectives will be imposed. (Paragraph 4.3)
- 5.11 Each of the four objectives is of equal importance and will be considered in relation to matters centred on the premises or within the control of the licensee and the effect which the operation of that business has on the vicinity. (Paragraph 4.5)
- 5.12 Through their operating schedule, applicants will be expected, where necessary, to demonstrate the positive steps taken to promote the licensing objectives. (Paragraph 5.3)
- 5.13 The operating schedule is a key document and, if prepared comprehensively, will form the basis on which premises can be licensed without the need for additional extensive conditions. The Council expects an operating schedule to indicate the steps that the applicant proposes to take to promote the licensing objectives. (Paragraph 5.4)
- 5.14 Applicants will be expected to propose practical measures to prevent disturbance to local residents and to indicate what action will be taken to prevent or reduce noise emanating from the premises. (Paragraph 5.6)
- 5.15 The complexity and detail required in the operating schedule will depend upon the nature and use of the premises. For premises such as a public house where public entertainment is not provided, only a relatively simple document will be required. For a major public entertainment venue it will be expected that issues such as public safety and crime and disorder will be addressed in detail. (Paragraph 5.7)
- 5.16 Applicants will be expected to demonstrate in their operating schedule that suitable and sufficient measures have been identified and will be implemented and maintained to reduce or prevent crime and disorder on and in the vicinity of their premises, relevant to the individual style and characteristics of their premises and events. (Paragraph 5.12)

### **Public Nuisance**

- 5.17 The Council will expect applicants to set out in their operating schedules the steps taken, or proposed to be taken, to deal with the potential for public nuisance arising from the operation of the premises. (Paragraph 5.22)
- 5.18 Applicants should identify and describe through a risk assessment how these risks will be managed. Public nuisance could include low-level nuisance perhaps affecting a few people living locally as well as major disturbance affecting the whole community. (Paragraph 5.23)
- 5.19 The role of the Council is to maintain an appropriate balance between the legitimate aspirations of the entertainment industry and the needs of residents and other users of the town including businesses, workers, shoppers and visitors. (Paragraph 5.24)
- 5.20 Playing of music can cause nuisance both through noise breakout and by its effect on patrons, who become accustomed to high sound levels and to shouting to make themselves heard, which can lead to them being noisier when leaving premises. Other major sources of noise nuisance are vehicles collecting customers, the slamming of car doors and the sounding of horns. These noises can be particularly intrusive at night when ambient noise levels are lower. (Paragraph 5.25)

- 5.21 Where relevant representations are received, the Council may attach appropriate conditions to licences, appropriate to support the prevention of undue noise disturbance from licensed premises. Where premises remain open after midnight the licence holder, will be expected to provide facilities which are relevant to controlling noise and the patrons of those premises late at night. The Council also expects that premises which produce noise generating licensable activities are acoustically controlled and engineered to a degree where the noise from the premises when compared to the ambient noise level will not cause undue disturbance. (Paragraph 5.26)
- 5.22 Licensees and their staff are expected to have sufficient measures in place to prevent such problems arising including a suitable litter and waste management program to ensure that the area outside the premises is kept free of litter at all times. (Paragraph 5.29)
- 5.23 Where the Council receives relevant representations, or where a responsible authority or an interested party seeks a review, the Council may consider imposing conditions to improve the management of the outside area or prohibiting or restricting the use of these areas in order to promote the public nuisance objective. (Paragraph 5.30)
- 5.24 Conditions may include maximum noise levels over particular time periods, the installation of acoustic lobbies; provision of signs, publicity and dispersal policies. (Paragraph 5.31)

## 6. National Guidance

- 6.1 Statutory guidance has been issued under Section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003. The committee must have regard to the guidance when determining this application. Below are relevant extracts for the benefit of the committee. Emphasis added.

### Licensing objectives and aims

- 6.2 The legislation provides a clear focus on the promotion of four statutory objectives *which must be addressed when licensing functions are undertaken*. (1.2)
- 6.3 The licensing objectives are:
- The prevention of crime and disorder;
  - Public safety;
  - The prevention of public nuisance; and
  - The protection of children from harm. (1.3)
- 6.4 *Each objective is of equal importance. There are no other statutory licensing objectives, so that the promotion of the four objectives is a paramount consideration at all times*. (1.4)
- 6.5 However, the legislation also supports a number of other key aims and purposes. These are vitally important and should be principal aims for everyone involved in licensing work.

They include:

- protecting the public and local residents from crime, anti-social behaviour and noise nuisance caused by irresponsible licensed premises;
- giving the police and licensing authorities the powers they need to effectively manage and police the night-time economy and take action against those premises that are causing problems;
- recognising the important role which pubs and other licensed premises play in our local communities by minimising the regulatory burden on business, encouraging innovation and supporting responsible premises;

- providing a regulatory framework for alcohol which reflects the needs of local communities and empowers local authorities to make and enforce decisions about the most appropriate licensing strategies for their local area; and
- encouraging greater community involvement in licensing decisions and giving local residents the opportunity to have their say regarding licensing decisions that may affect them. (1.5)

### **Legal status**

- 6.6 *Section 4 of the 2003 Act provides that, in carrying out its functions, a licensing authority must ‘have regard to’ guidance issued by the Secretary of State under section 182. This Guidance is therefore binding on all licensing authorities to that extent. However, this Guidance cannot anticipate every possible scenario or set of circumstances that may arise and, as long as licensing authorities have properly understood this Guidance, they may depart from it if they have good reason to do so and can provide full reasons. Departure from this Guidance could give rise to an appeal or judicial review, and the reasons given will then be a key consideration for the courts when considering the lawfulness and merits of any decision taken. (1.9)*

### **Licence conditions – general principles**

- 6.7 Conditions on a premises licence or club premises certificate are important in setting the parameters within which premises can lawfully operate. The use of wording such as “must”, “shall” and “will” is encouraged. Licence conditions:

- must be appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives;
- must be precise and enforceable;
- must be unambiguous and clear in what they intend to achieve;
- should not duplicate other statutory requirements or other duties or responsibilities placed on the employer by other legislation;
- must be tailored to the individual type, location and characteristics of the premises and events concerned;
- should not be standardised and may be unlawful when it cannot be demonstrated that they are appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives in an individual case;
- should not replicate offences set out in the 2003 Act or other legislation;
- should be proportionate, justifiable and be capable of being met, (for example, whilst beer glasses may be available in toughened glass, wine glasses may not);
- cannot seek to manage the behaviour of customers once they are beyond the direct management of the licence holder and their staff, but may impact on the behaviour of customers in the immediate vicinity of the premises or as they enter or leave; and
- should be written in a prescriptive format. (1.16)

### **Each application on its own merits**

- 6.8 *Each application must be considered on its own merits and in accordance with the licensing authority’s statement of licensing policy; for example, if the application falls within the scope of a cumulative impact policy. Conditions attached to licences and certificates must be tailored to the individual type, location and characteristics of the premises and events concerned. This is essential to avoid the imposition of disproportionate and overly burdensome conditions on premises where there is no need for such conditions. Standardised conditions should be avoided and indeed may be unlawful where they cannot be shown to be appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives in an individual case. (1.17)*

### **Public nuisance**

- 6.9 The 2003 Act enables licensing authorities and responsible authorities, through representations, to consider what constitutes public nuisance and what is appropriate to

prevent it in terms of conditions attached to specific premises licences and club premises certificates. It is therefore important that in considering the promotion of this licensing objective, licensing authorities and responsible authorities focus on the effect of the licensable activities at the specific premises on persons living and working (including those carrying on business) in the area around the premises which may be disproportionate and unreasonable. The issues will mainly concern noise nuisance, light pollution, noxious smells and litter. (2.18)

- 6.10 Public nuisance is given a statutory meaning in many pieces of legislation. It is however 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. It may also include, in appropriate circumstances, the reduction of the living and working amenity and environment of other persons living and working in the area of the licensed premises. Public nuisance may also arise as a result of the adverse effects of artificial light, dust, odour and insects or where its effect is prejudicial to health. (2.19)
- 6.11 Conditions relating to noise nuisance will usually concern steps appropriate to control the levels of noise emanating from premises. This might be achieved by a simple measure such as ensuring that doors and windows are kept closed after a particular time, or more sophisticated measures like the installation of acoustic curtains or rubber speaker mounts. Any conditions appropriate to promote the prevention of public nuisance should be tailored to the type, nature and characteristics of the specific premises. Licensing authorities should be aware of the need to avoid inappropriate or disproportionate measures that could deter events that are valuable to the community, such as live music. Noise limiters, for example, are very expensive to purchase and install and are likely to be a considerable burden for smaller venues. (2.20)
- 6.12 As with all conditions, those relating to noise nuisance may not be appropriate in certain circumstances where provisions in other legislation adequately protect those living in the area of the premises. But as stated earlier in this Guidance, the approach of licensing authorities and responsible authorities should be one of prevention and when their powers are engaged, licensing authorities should be aware of the fact that other legislation may not adequately cover concerns raised in relevant representations and additional conditions may be appropriate. (2.21)
- 6.13 Where applications have given rise to representations, any appropriate conditions should normally focus on the most sensitive periods. For example, music noise from premises usually occurs from mid-evening until either late-evening or early-morning when residents in adjacent properties may be attempting to go to sleep or are sleeping. In certain circumstances, conditions relating to noise immediately surrounding the premises may also prove appropriate to address any disturbance anticipated as customers enter and leave. (2.22)
- 6.14 Beyond the immediate area surrounding the premises, these are matters for the personal responsibility of individuals under the law. An individual who engages in anti-social behaviour is accountable in their own right. However, it would be perfectly reasonable for a licensing authority to impose a condition, following relevant representations, that requires the licence holder or club to place signs at the exits from the building encouraging patrons to be quiet until they leave the area and to respect the rights of people living nearby to a peaceful night. (2.24)

## 7. Licensing Comments

- 7.1 The committee must have regard to the statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State, the Council's adopted policy statement, the representations made and the evidence it hears when determining this application. In particular, the committee must seek to promote the four licensing objectives when determining the application.

- 7.2 A plan showing the location of the premises in relation to the addresses of the objectors is attached at **Appendix D** (See page 41).
- 7.3 Members should take into consideration only those objections which relate to one or more of the licensing objectives, which are:
- The prevention of crime and disorder
  - Public safety
  - The prevention of public nuisance
  - The protection of children from harm
- Members should disregard objections which do not relate to the licensing objectives.
- 7.4 **Other premises** – Both objectors have referred in their representations to other, nearby premises. Members are reminded that this application must be determined on its own merits and not in relation to other premises. If residents or other people have relevant complaints with regards to other licensed premises, they have the recourse of applying for a review of the licences of those premises.
- 7.5 The committee, having regard to the all of the above, must take such steps as it considers appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives which can include:
- Granting the application as requested;
  - Modifying the conditions of the licence; or
  - Rejecting all or part of the application.

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**Background Papers**

Service Records

**Report Author**

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