

29th September 2021

For the attention of the Licencing Sub-Committee RE. THE 2 PIGS

It is with regret that I find myself having to complain about the Licencing Committees' arrogance and insensitivity, regarding sexual entertainment at the 2 Pigs, in Cheltenham.

I was naive enough to believe that the safety and perception of women had changed, within the county. That they were no longer regarded as chattel but that men had an enlightened view and mutual respect between the sexes. This gave me hope for the future of young people.

Sexual bullying and violence occurs as we know in, too many households. When men visit places showing sexually provocative behaviour they don't leave their desires in the pub, but the alcohol and sexual excitement continue, especially when they are with other men. When they arrive home some men treat their wives and children in an aggressive and sexual way, one man is too many.

We know some men can behave like this because they do so through on line means, which is bad enough. However the Council Officers should know better. You see it isn't simply their behaviour when they leave the pub but when they arrive home. Pornography is used to excite not to subdue and if it is more exciting to behave in an aggressive sexual manner so be it. You are encouraging this you are saying it is alright!

I recognise that money is needed however you may find that another area of the Council is having to spend more because you have encouraged the outcome I have said.

As an innocent person I have been assaulted and provoked, whilst waiting for a bus to go home. No I wasn't dressed in a provocative manner an excuse often used, I wasn't a teenager and even if I were it is a truly unpleasant experience. It was 10 30 p.m. and it happened in Cheltenham, this kind of behaviour will never stop but you shouldn't be enabling it.

Dear Sirs

I wish to object to the above sexual entertainment license application by the 2Pigs public house.

I believe this should be opposed on the following grounds:

1. The entertainment creates a high risk of sexual attacks on women and girls because of sexual arousal of men who are under the influence of drink and are unable to control their sexual desires after watching such entertainment.
2. The area around the pub is dark, dingy and has a hidden grass area which is ideal for wanted or unwanted sexual activity.
3. Women and girls feel unsafe to walk around this area as the lighting is poor and the walkways are backwaters.
4. We should be protecting the Church and its grounds and not creating additional nuisance.
5. Cheltenham already has a dismal reputation during Race Week, and many residents in the town do not feel safe at night or even in daytime and avoid coming into town during this period.
6. Cheltenham has already been mentioned in the ITV's sex trafficking programme, do we want to improve the town's reputation or see it go downhill.

In the light of the recent publicity on Sexual Violence against Women, I wish the Licensing Committee to oppose this application and hopefully protect women and girls from harm.

Objection to application 21/01377/SEXR

I wish to register an objection to the application to renew the Sex Establishment licence held by Two Pigs public house in Church Street, Cheltenham.

1. 1. I understand that under the Public Sector Equality Duty (2011), it is necessary for Cheltenham Borough Council to ensure public equality access to all areas of the town, at all times. I do not feel comfortable being in the town centre during the evening on race days, particularly in the area of the Two Pigs & the Minster. I therefore experience inequality of access to these areas.
2. 2. I note in Cheltenham Borough Council's Conditions attached to the Provision of Sexual Entertainment Licence, that "premises shall only permit adult entertainment between the hours of 20:00 hours and 05:00 hours the following morning". The current application to open on some days at 18.00 hours, would therefore appear to be breaching CBC's conditions.

I am asking the Licensing Committee to reject this application.

Despite this not being available on the council website I have been reliably informed that there is renewal application on behalf of the Two Pigs public house in Cheltenham to host sexual entertainment on the following dates/times:

Monday 14th March 8.00pm – 5.00 am Tuesday 15th March

Tuesday 15th March 6.00pm – 5.00am Wednesday 16th March

Wednesday 16th March 6.00pm – 5.00am Thursday 17th March

Thursday 17th March 6.00pm – 5.00am Friday 18th March

Friday 18th March 6.00pm – 5.00 am Saturday 19th March

Saturday 19th March 8.00 pm – 5.00am Sunday 20th March

As the minister for The Minster I would like my objection and that of the congregation at The Minster with St Matthews to such a renewal to be noted. The Two Pigs is in close proximity to The Minster churchyard and building. It is highly inappropriate to promote entertainment of a sexual nature in such close proximity to an ancient and active place of worship. The churchyard is an area where families and children gather for recreation in our town centre. It is also the place visitors to our town are recommended to visit. This aspect of the regular use of the grounds will be increasing as the Minster Exchange is built and the grounds upgraded and improved in 2022. There is a conflict of interests in having a place offering sexual entertainment close to somewhere the Borough Council is working to improve and encourage people to use for recreation.

In addition all the numerous objections we have made to previous applications for such a licence still stand.

I ask that this application is refused.

To whom it may concern

re Case number 21/01377/SEXR

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I ask that this application is refused.

I am writing to object to the application made by the Two Pigs pub for an extended sexual entertainment licence for the week of the races next March.

We can be proud of the sporting festival that Cheltenham hosts, but the exploitation of women around the fringe of the Festival is not acceptable.

As a local resident, the behaviour of men in town makes the town centre a no-go area that week every year. Women are scared to walk around town, even in the afternoon and early evening, and three years ago I had a very frightening experience just using the train station in the afternoon of a race day to travel north by train.

The Three Pigs is located just off the main shopping street, where all ages wish to shop, and immediately next to the Minster, the oldest building in Cheltenham and a site of Christian worship for hundreds of years. The activities and mess left by the 'punters' who frequent the pub on race days makes the area a scary place for parishioners and worshippers to go to.

I also note the planned Innovation exchange planned for the area adjoining the Minster whose vicinity will be spoiled by the activities of the Two Pigs.

<https://www.stmstm.org.uk/minster-innovation-exchange/>

Please do listen to local residents' objections to the granting of this licence in this year of horrific attacks on women, and ensure that 50% of the population is treated respectfully all year round.

Thank you.

Kind regards,

Comment: 01/10/2021 12:10 PM I have read Cheltenham Borough Council's Sexual Entertainment Venue Policy Statement and I do not believe that the location of the venue is compatible with the definition of an appropriate siting.

There is a strong residential presence that has been developing in the area; the vicinity of the Minster Church and its surrounding burial ground; the proximity of the main Library and also of the nearby shops. There is also an access lane between the High Street and Clarence Street which runs past the venue. These are all no-go areas to local residents when the venue is holding these events.

I believe that the Licensing Authority has a duty of care under the Equalities Act of 2011 to eliminate discrimination and to ensure that they work to prevent people feeling victimised or harassed by the actions of others. Also, to allow all people to have safe access to all areas of the town. I do not feel that this requirement is met during periods when these entertainments are held.

During times when the Races are on - which coincide with the dates for which previous applications have been made and relate to the renewal application - I am too uncomfortable and have felt too unsafe in venturing into town. A survey was recently commissioned which I, and friends, completed. I understand the vast majority expressed their fears and discomfort at being in the town at night, particularly when the Races are on.

In view of the heightened awareness of the level of violence on the streets, particularly towards women, and that this is known to be exacerbated by large numbers gathering together and having access to alcohol I feel that granting a renewal of the license for sexual entertainment for periods up to 11 hours from early evening to the early hours of the morning can only add to the danger of assault, harassment and intimidation.

Objection to the SEV licence request – to be received by Tuesday 5th October

Gloucestershire Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre

Case 21/01377/SEXR

Having listened this morning on Radio 4 to the Victims' Commissioner, Dame Vera Baird, it is clear that there is a societal problem of women's safety that needs addressing. Casual sexism and 'low level' harassment if not checked and challenged can lead to further, more extreme violence against women and girls (as has been reported very recently). On behalf of GRASAC, I am therefore seeking those making the decision regarding this licence request to reject this application (renewal) on the basis of their duties under the Public Sector Equality Duty within the Equality Act 2010.

Cheltenham Borough Council has very recently taken the time to survey residents of the town regarding the safety of women in the night time economy and the response rate was high – 638 - with more respondents to Cheltenham Borough Council's survey than to a similar survey covering the whole of Gloucestershire, therefore safety of women is clearly a real issue in the town.

The responses showed that during the evenings – 71% of respondents said they did not feel safe, rising to 75% during race weeks. In terms of sexual harassment, 82% described some form of low level sexual harassment, with 32% reporting sexual assault.

Respondents reported that only 7% reported to the police, with a variety of reasons given for this very low level of reporting.

A specific question around respondents changing behaviours, only 6% of respondents had **not** changed their behaviour during the evening in order to keep themselves safe. In this regard, the Council has a duty to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation under the Equality Act 2010 and GRASAC on behalf of its clients, would expect and hope that the Council will do all in its power to ensure the safety of women and girls in the town.

GRASAC are aware that under the current legislation, licenced premises can provide entertainment on an infrequent basis (11 occasions within a 12 month period) and if this application was agreed, would result in more evenings of sexual entertainment than the legal limit (hence the application) and therefore GRASAC urges the committee to consider the application under the Act, having due regard to its equality duty when making its decision to renew this licence.

Dear Sir/ Madam

I wish to object to the application for an SEV licence for The Two Pigs as set out in SEV Licensing application 21/01377/SEXR

Please can you confirm receipt of this objection, as I have heard that the council's email filters sometimes filter terms inevitably used when referring to the sex industry.

External Advertising/ Objects on the pavement

Throughout Race Week and during other race events when the Two Pigs is hosting the Eroticats lap dancing under its SEV licence, it regularly has external advertising objects on the pavement during its opening hours. One outside Spec Savers on the High Street, near the corner of Church Street, partially blocking the pavement. One at the High Street entrance to the alleyway down the side of Cobblers Corner leading to the Two Pigs. This object more or less blocks this access to the alley, especially when there is also one of the promotions staff standing next to the barrier with fliers. These objects consist of fabric banners in pink and black promoting 'Club Eroticats' stretched between two metal posts.

Contrary to the licence term " No flyers or similar promotional material for the premises shall be distributed within the Town", flyers promoting Club Eroticats are distributed throughout the town centre by teams of promoters wearing pink hi-vis jackets branded Club Eroticats. The flyers have the same pink and black branding as the on-street banners on the High Street outside the Two Pigs. They don't contain the locations, instead they promote the Eroticats courtesy van which drops punters off at the Two Pigs as well as whichever other premises are hosting Eroticats that evening. The flyers also promote the Eroticats website, the front page of which offers XXX live cam chat and XXX chatlines. The flyers can still be found on the pavements round the town centre the following day despite the best efforts of the Ubico street cleaning team.

Discriminatory door policy

The Two Pigs when operating as Fantasy has a history of a sexist and homophobic door policy, refusing to admit women unless they are performers, as stated by their solicitor at an earlier licensing hearing.

"In terms of mitigating any risk of crime and disorder (e.g. increased risk of prostitution on the premises) the Solicitor confirmed that lone females were not allowed on the premises unless they were performers".

(Yet they deny that lap dancing has any relationship to prostitution...)

Can the licensing committee ensure that the club's policy does not discriminate on the grounds of either sex or sexual orientation, and make clear to any potential customers how to complain if they feel they have been discriminated against.

Involuntary involvement in the sex industry

Working in the sex industry may be an active choice for the performers and management, but it is not so for everybody involved, including some of the staff at the Two Pigs who are used to working in a pub and music venue the rest of the year. When Eroticats takes over the pub for days at a time, the Two Pigs' usual staff are either co-opted into working in the lap dancing club, collecting glasses etc, or are laid off for days at a time.

The promoters hired via Griffins promotions in previous years are mostly 18-21 year olds shipped into Cheltenham for the evening. Their usual jobs are promoting night clubs around the southwest of England and Wales, and they aren't told before they arrive that they will be promoting a sexual entertainment venue.

24 Hours exemption

If the Two Pigs is not granted a licence, it can still host lap dancing once a month under a 24 hour exemption. It is argued regularly that the licence gives more control than the exemption. Previous advocates for Red Apple/ Eroticats have argued that it enables them to concentrate lap dancing in one venue. Neither of those are the case. Eroticats does not restrict itself to the Two Pigs for race events. They regularly host lap dancing in other venues around the town centre during race events. Having a licence has not prevented the Two Pigs from having external advertising on the pavements and benefiting from promotion staff and flyers throughout the town centre. Operating under the exemption would limit the operation of Eroticats at the Two Pigs to one night per month.

The 24 hour exemption makes a mockery of local decision making on licensing applications and policies. The process is not transparent or publicly accountable. Members of the public wanting to avoid lap dancing activity or to find out the extent of it during race events are not able to do so. The extent to which the 24 exemption is used during race events is peculiar to Cheltenham. It doesn't appear to happen elsewhere in the country during major sporting events. For most of the country this 'loophole' which was apparently designed not to penalise pubs or clubs from hosting the occasional stripper has little effect. But in Cheltenham, it has become the basis of an industry. It is up to the UK parliament to review this legislation, but it would be appreciated if Cheltenham's local politicians could press for this review.

The effects of sexual entertainment

Sexual harassment and assault is unfortunately a fact of life for many women, especially young women. The level of sexual harassment increases during race events, leading to many women choosing to avoid the town centre or certain venues. The many women who work in the licensed trade can't avoid it, and these women are especially likely to suffer sexual harassment. A 2018 survey by the Unite union of hospitality workers in the UK found that 89% had suffered sexual harassment – of those 60% didn't think a complaint would be taken seriously by their workplace – let alone by the police.

I have experienced greater levels of sexual harassment when in the town centre during race week. This is worse in the evenings when the majority of SEVs operate. But even during the day, when I worked in the town centre in a customer facing role during race week, I would experience frequent sexual harassment (which I rarely did at other times of the year). On many occasions, the men doing the harassing would refer to lap dancing or other aspects of the sex industry. I have heard similar experiences from many female friends of mine, many of whom take active steps to avoid town during race week.

Sexual harassment and assault continue to be under reported. Although the GRASAC campaign during race week is to be commended, it is hard for women, including myself, to break the habits of a lifetime. We are also aware how overstretched the police are during these events.

The links between sporting entertainment, sexism, and the sex industry are not inevitable, and it is time that it was challenged, to make the atmosphere in the town centre more welcoming for

everyone, not just for men wanting to turn the clock back. Notably during race events, the gender balance in the town centre changes to a very male dominated space.

In August 2021, the council held a consultation to find out how safe women feel in the evening and at night in Cheltenham's Town Centre, with the aim of applying to the Home Office for funding. Perhaps the council could also ask the Home Office to review the 24 hours exemption as well as asking for funding.

Lap dancing perpetuates and promotes sexual inequalities. Lap dancing is done exclusively by female performers, almost always for a male audience. It is done in booths in a one to one encounter. Though some performers may be paid per dance, they also rely on tips from the punter, which can make it hard for performers to enforce boundaries. As female sex workers, they routinely face discrimination. The employment terms and conditions for performers in lap dancing clubs are usually worse than other workers in the gig economy. This is quite different from the Dreamboys (for example) who are often touted as a false equivalent. The Dreamboys perform a floorshow as a troupe, not one to one in an enclosed space. Male performers do not experience the same discrimination as female lap dancers.

The female performers are also at risk of sexual assault and even rape, such as in the recent case in Birmingham where a female performer was gang raped by the manager of the Rocket Club (a licensed SEV), and up to 3 other males. The club's SEV licence did not protect her.