



Licensing Sub-Committee

MINUTES of the OPEN section of the Licensing Sub-Committee held on Thursday 11 September 2014 at 9.30 am at Ground Floor Meeting Room G02A - 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

PRESENT: Councillor Renata Hamvas (Chair)
Councillor Stephanie Cryan
Councillor Jon Hartley

OTHERS PRESENT: Graham White, Metropolitan Police Service
Keith Dempster, Metropolitan Police Service
Ken Spedding, Metropolitan Police Service
Steven Glover, representative from The George
A. David, representative from The George

OFFICER SUPPORT: Debra Allday, legal officer
Mark Orton, licensing officer
Virginia Wynn-Jones, constitutional officer

1. APOLOGIES

There were none.

2. CONFIRMATION OF VOTING MEMBERS

The members present were confirmed as the voting members.

3. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT

The chair agreed to accept item 5: Licensing Act 2003: The George, 40 Tower Bridge Road, London SE1 1JL as late and urgent.

4. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

There were none.

5. LICENSING ACT 2003: THE GEORGE, 40 TOWER BRIDGE ROAD, LONDON SE1 1JL

The licensing officer presented their report. Members had no questions for the licensing officer.

The representative from the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), the applicant for the review, addressed the sub-committee. Members had questions for the representative from the MPS.

The representatives from the premises addressed the sub-committee. Members had questions for the representatives from the premises.

The licensing sub-committee went into closed session at 10.40am.

The licensing sub-committee resumed at 11.15am and the chair read out the sub-committee's decision.

RESOLVED:

That the premises licence be suspended as an interim step to promote the licensing objectives pending the determination of the review application at the full hearing.

Reasons

This was a hearing to consider if it is appropriate to take interim steps to promote the licensing objectives upon receipt of an application by the Metropolitan Police Service for an expedited summary review of the premises.

The licensing sub-committee heard from the MPS representative who informed them that on Saturday 6 September 2014 at approximately 23.52, the police were called to a fight at the premises involving ten people with weapons being used. A male was inflicted with a serious facial wound by the suspect using a broken pool cue from the venue. After the assault the suspect went back into the venue with the pool cue. The premises were then locked, despite it being an hour and a half before closing time. Police attempted to gain entry to the pub, but it was still locked and at least twenty people could be seen by the police inside the premises drinking, which included both the suspect and the deputy manager. It took at least two minutes of consistent banging on doors and windows for police to gain entry.

The sub-committee were informed that the licence holders were out of the country but were represented by the premises manager and deputy manager, who advised that on the evening in question, he was standing outside the premises having a cigarette. The incident was extremely quick, and it all flared up. The deputy manager said someone took the pool cue and must have snapped it on the way out of the premises. The deputy manager went back into the premises, ushered in patrons from outside, and locked the doors in order to protect them all. The suspect was found inside the pub, but the deputy manager insisted that he was not harbouring him. The police arrived moments later. Believing that the police were in fact the persons involved in the fight outside, he did not open the door for several minutes. Concerning the flower watering system, the deputy manager said that it operates randomly, even though it is on a timer.

The licensing sub-committee considered this incident to be extremely serious. The police were called to a fight and a male received a serious facial wound caused by a pool cue from the venue. After the assault, it is understood from the police that the suspect went back into the premises with the pool cue. The premises were then locked prior to closing time; patrons remained in the premises drinking, including the suspect and deputy manager. When police eventually gained entry, the male who stated he was in charge was the deputy manager who was in attendance at the hearing today. The deputy manager was reported by police as being clearly intoxicated, and denied witnessing the incident. This was contrary to what the deputy manager informed the sub-committee at the meeting. No call was made by the premises for police or ambulance assistance. The suspect was allowed to re-enter the premises, still carrying the pool cue/weapon, although this has not been recovered by the police.

A number of the witnesses from the premises refused to engage or assist with the police investigation. The sub-committee are extremely concerned that this is the third serious assault in the premises or associated with the premises in 2014. Two warning letters have been sent to the premises, and they have failed to submit a variation as requested by the police in June 2014. It was also noted that one of the assaults the police refer to that took place in February 2014, customers and the management were intoxicated. The premises were under the same management as that during the incident on 6 September 2014.

The licensing sub-committee concluded that the premises remaining open posed a risk to public safety and therefore suspended the premises licence pending the full review hearing on 7 October 2014.

Appeal rights

There is no right of appeal to a magistrates' court against the licensing authority's decision at this stage.

The premises licence holder may make representation against any interim steps imposed and a hearing to consider the representation will be held within 48 hours of receipt of the representation.

Any representation should be in writing and cannot be received outside of normal office hours.

The meeting closed at 11.24am.

CHAIR:

DATED: