

LICENSING HEARING PANEL (LICENSING 2003 ACT) SUB COMMITTEE

1 September 2025,

1.00 - 2.00 pm

Present: Councillors Blackburn-Horgan, Divkovic and Moore

Officers

Env Health & Licensing Support Team Leader: Wangari Njiiri

Legal Adviser: Ian Hawkings

Committee Manager: Claire Tunnicliffe, Sarah Michael

Present for the Applicant

Marcus Lavell – Advocate for the Applicant – keystone

Asha Singleton – Boom Regional Manager

Riyaz Miah – Escape Hunt Regional Manager

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

25/4/Lic Sub Appointment of a Chair

Cllr Moore was appointed Chair for the meeting.

25/5/Lic Sub Declarations of Interest

No declarations were declared.

25/6/Lic Sub Meeting Procedure

All parties noted the procedure.

25/7/Lic Sub Premises Licence - Boom Battle Bar variation

The Licensing Officer presented their report.

In response to questions from the sub committee, the Licensing Officer stated that:

- i. Environmental Health had received two complaints regarding noise at this premises in May and June 2025, which were investigated during visits and noise monitoring. Site manager made aware of complaints

and had taken action by keeping the required windows and doors closed.

- ii. Conditions around body-worn video cameras had been agreed with police prior to this meeting.

Applicant

- i. The application had been widely advertised and there had been just one objection. The applicant had engaged with the police during the process.
- ii. The premises had already reduced music noise levels and were continuing to monitor these.
- iii. The business was a gaming experience and not a nightclub. Over 50% of turnover was from food, non-alcoholic drinks and games. Alcohol sales were secondary to their reason for operating.
- iv. Within the Cumulative Impact Zone in Oxford Street, London, Boom Battle Bar had been granted a similar late-night licence because they offered an alternative to other premises within the area.
- v. The requested amendment to allow persons under the age of 18 to access Escape Hunt after 9pm was to allow families with older children to use the escape rooms only.
- vi. Clarified that the door security provision amendment would be from Sunday to Wednesday only, when the premises is less busy. It would remain as in the original conditions on busy days, and had noted the police recommendation for body-worn video cameras.
- vii. Regarding the amendment to Condition 18, the applicant explained how the beer pong game would work, with one pint of beer allocated to each game and divided between 10 cups, so players would drink a maximum of one pint of beer per game.
- viii. The applicant explained how the axe throwing game would work and that the last game would take place each day at 10pm. They explained that every time a customer took part, they would be risk assessed by a trained member of staff. The request was for customers to be allowed to drink alcohol between throws and they would be risk assessed each time they took part. Allowing alcohol had not caused any issues in other venues.

In response to Members' questions, the applicant said the following:

- i. Alcohol would be part of the night out, not the reason for the night out.
- ii. To ensure vessels used in beer pong were safe, they would use materials that would not change properties if broken. The nature of glass is that it changes and could become dangerous. Metal was an option, but could use only plastic.

- iii. Under-18s could not access Boom Battle Bar when using Escape Hunt as the entrance was separate.
- iv. There had been no recorded instances of abuse towards members of staff when assessing a person's ability to participate.
- v. Escape Hunt did serve alcohol but only in waiting room. Under-18s would be accompanied by an adult. All staff were trained to check the age of those buying alcohol.
- vi. There had been no instances of police being called to attend an incident inside the property and one instance outside the property.
- vii. There was no axe throwing after 11pm at any Boom Battle Bar.
- viii. All participants signed waivers and were accompanied at all times during axe throwing. All team members were fully trained to safely host the activity and identify any intoxication.
- ix. Although not present in the beer pong game, glass vessels were used elsewhere on site.
- x. The application was not proposing to increase opening hours Sunday to Wednesday.
- xi. A written risk assessment as to why there were fewer SIA door supervisors on quieter days could be shared with police and licensing officers.
- xii. The games were not technically 'indoor sporting events' but the application referred to them as such as a matter of caution, should anyone interpret someone undertaking a game as a performance.
- xiii. No sporting events would be proposed beyond the games that were already taking place.
- xiv. Currently the first floor was fully accessible and the business was in the process of ensuring floors two and three were accessible.

Summing Up

Licensing Officer

- i. Referred to the Officer's report, paragraph 5.2, Members should take such steps that they consider are necessary for the promotion of the licensing objectives. The sub committee may resolve:
 - a. To grant the variation as applied for;
 - b. To modify the conditions of the licence;
 - c. To reject the whole or part of the application.
- ii. Members must give reasons for their decision.

Applicant

- i. Reiterated that the venue was not a nightclub or late bar, but was an alternative night out with a different focus and that the organisation had engaged with authorities throughout the process.

The Legal Advisor asked to see all current conditions alongside suggested amendments, along with the relevant section of the standard operating policy relating to axe throwing and risk assessments, which the Applicant agreed to provide.

The Chair closed the meeting at 2:00pm for the Licensing Sub Committee to consider the application on its individual merit in private session. A decision would be reached within five working days.

The Decision

The Sub Committee resolved to:

GRANT the variation subject to the agreed police conditions and the modified conditions set out in the application

The Sub Committee's reasons for reaching the decision were as follows:

- i. Mindful that the premises was within a Cumulative Impact Area and noted that the applicant had engaged with responsible authorities and that none objected.
- ii. Cambridgeshire Constabulary agreed strengthened conditions.
- iii. Reviewed the single representation alleging noise and safety concerns. In light of the lack of supporting evidence, the distance of the representor from the premises, and the absence of Environmental Health objection (notwithstanding two complaints in May and June 2025 that resulted in advice but no formal action), afforded the representation limited weight.
- iv. Considered public safety in relation to games and accepted the operator's controls - training, supervision, written risk assessments and the ability to refuse participation addressed the risks.
- v. Took into account existing conditions on doors and windows, the entry cut-off, wind-down period and staggered dispersal, minimum door-supervision levels and body-worn video requirements.
- vi. Having considered the CIA policy and Section 182 Guidance, concluded that the applicant had demonstrated that the variation would not add to cumulative impact, and that granting the application with conditions was appropriate and proportionate for the promotion of the licensing objectives.
- vii. Emphasised that the licence remains subject to review should evidence of nuisance or safety issues emerge.

The meeting ended at 2.00 pm

CHAIR