

LICENSING COMMITTEE

5 January 2011
10.00 - 11.38 am

Present: Councillors Saunders, Stuart and Znajek

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

11/1/licsub To appoint a Chair for the meeting

Councillor Stuart was appointed Chair for this meeting.

11/2/licsub Declarations of Interest

Councillor Saunders declared a personal interest as he works part time in the wine trade.

11/3/licsub Licensing Sub-Committee Procedure

All parties noted the procedure

11/4/licsub Application for a new Premises licence: The Varsity Hotel, Thompson's Lane, Cambridge

Applicant

William Davies

Interested Parties

Nicholas Simms-Williams on behalf of Park Street Residents Association.
Ward Councillor Colin Rosenstiel

Officers Present

Christine Allison, Licensing Manager
Victoria Jameson, Assistant Licensing Officer

Toni Birkin, Committee Manager
Carol Patton, Legal Advisor

The Licensing Manager presented her report and outlined the application. She stated that the Council, as the licensing authority, had received an application for a New Premises Licence for "The Varsity hotel" at Thompson's Lane, Cambridge.

The Hearing was to consider representation from interested parties. The Licensing Manager advised the Panel of the decision-making options available to them.

The applicant addressed the committee and made the following points:

- Both the Police and Environmental Health had visited the site prior to the application being submitted and had had extensive dialogue on the proposals.
- The premises are upmarket with the hotel currently rating number one on the website Trip Advisor.
- The prices are higher than average (more than Hotel Du Vin).
- Clientele were affluent and tend to be older age groups.
- The Boutique style, non-chain venue was attracting a different demographic that was good for the City.
- The Bar would be small, high end and located in the lobby.
- Would not add to cumulative impact of city centre evening economy.
- Guest currently had to go out to purchase alcohol and found this strange.
- The roof area will be closed at 10.30pm and would be staffed at all times when in use.
- The roof area will only be available to residents and their guests or to pre-booked events.
- The off-licence application is not essential and would be deleted from the application.

Members of the Sub-Committee sought clarification on the following points.

- There is no mini bar arrangement.
- Residents are free to bring in their own alcohol and consume when and where they choose.
- The bar would not be available to non-residents.
- The hotel had 48 rooms of various sizes.
- The roof garden would have a maximum number of 60 persons.

- The main doors to the property are locked at 10.30pm.
- There were two porters on duty at all times.

Mr Simms-Williams on behalf of Park Street Residents Association and Cllr Colin Rosenstiel addressed the committee as interested parties and made the following points:

- There was no objection to the licence for a bar in the lobby
- Residents were concerned about the noise and loss of privacy resulting from a rooftop use.
- Properties will be overlooked.
- Drinking leads to increased noise and is a public nuisance.
- The current proposal did not include a restriction on numbers using the roof area.

Mr Davies responded. Environmental health raised no concerns over noise levels. The rooftop area would be supervised at all times. The most expensive rooms in the hotel are directly under the roof garden and self-interest would ensure that hotel managed noise effectively.

In response to member questions, Mr Davies confirmed that the roof area would only be available to residents when it was staffed. The parapet is steel and glass with the views being unimpressive.

All parties were given the opportunity to sum up and to highlight or respond to issues raised during the submissions. The members withdrew at 10.25am.

The members returned at 11.00am.

Cllr Stuart asked if it would be acceptable to all parties to limit the number of occasions per year that the rooftop area was used for events. A short break was agreed to consider this proposal.

The meeting resumed at 11.15am.

Mr Davies suggested that the proposal was reasonable if agreement could be reached over numbers. He reminded members that rooms under the roof cost almost £500 per night and this was the core business. Self-interest would not allow the rooftop area to become a disturbance. The roof would be marketed to corporate events. Due to the early closure time it would not attract parties or young person events.

Cllr Rosenstiel was concerned that the interested residents had left the meeting and could not be contacted. He suggested that the concern was the time of day rather than the number of events per year. However, a limit on the number of events would be a useful additional condition. The definition of an event was also problematic.

Cllr Stuart clarified that residents and their guests are currently able to use the roof area to consume alcohol purchased elsewhere. She stated that hotel guests might not be disturbed by noise at 10.00pm in the evening but families with small children would be. She felt a restriction on the number of events per week during the summer months would be a useful compromise.

The Licensing Manager confirmed that current consumption of alcohol purchased elsewhere was not a licensable activity. Noise nuisance this might cause would be addressed by environmental health regulations.

All parties were given a further opportunity to sum up and to highlight or respond to issues raised during the submissions. The members withdrew at 11.35am.

Resolved (unanimously):

The application was approved as outlined below.

The Sub Committee decided to grant an on-licence, in the following terms :

Sale/supply of alcohol (on the premises)

Mon - Sun 00.00 to 00.00

Hours premises are open

Mon - Sun 00.00 to 00.00

And subject to the following conditions:

The Prevention of Crime and Disorder

- 1. The reception will be manned 24 hours per day.**
- 2. CCTV will be installed at the premises and maintained in working order, with recordings retained for 14 days.**
- 3. CCTV will record and display dates and times.**

Public safety

- 4. At least one member of staff shall be trained in first aid.**
- 5. All staff will be trained in emergency planning.**
- 6. There will be clear fire signage throughout the building and staff will be familiar with evacuation techniques and fire fighting equipment.**
- 7. An external fire safety office shall be employed.**

The Prevention of public nuisance

- 8. Staff shall ensure that noise levels will be kept to a minimum to avoid disturbance to residents.**
- 9. Waste will be stored in the bins within the undercroft.**
- 10. Waste will be collected between the hours of 07.00 and 22.00**
- 11. The roof terrace shall only be used between the hours of 07.00 and 22.30.**
- 12. The roof terrace may be used only under supervision by a member of staff.**
- 13. No more than 60 persons may use the roof terrace at any time.**

The Protection of Children from harm

- 14. All children must be accompanied by an adult, within the premises where licensable activities may be taking place.**
- 15. The hotel must operate a proof of age scheme.**

The Sub Committee decided to grant the application because they had heard the applicant's submissions about the self-contained nature of the hotel operation, which, together with the lack of objection by the Police and the Team Leader, Environmental Protection, and the withdrawal of the application for an off-licence by the applicant, suggested that the granting of an on-licence with the 13 conditions listed above will not add to the cumulative impact already experienced by residents in the area.

The meeting ended at 11.38 am

CHAIR