

**LICENSING AND APPEALS SUB-COMMITTEE**  
**Wednesday 19 December 2018**

**\*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

**AGENDA ITEM No.**

**LICENSING ACT 2003**

**APPLICATION BY HITCHIN TOWN CRICKET GROUND LTD  
FOR THE GRANT OF A PREMISES LICENCE IN RESPECT OF  
HITCHIN TOWN CRICKET GROUND, LUCAS LANE, HITCHIN,  
HERTFORDSHIRE, SG5 2JA**

**REPORT OF THE SENIOR LICENSING OFFICER**

**1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 No premises licence under the Licensing Act 2003 ("the Act") is currently in place for the proposed venue.
- 1.2 The premises previously held two club premises certificates for the clubhouse that has been demolished to make way for the new premises to be built. One club premises certificate covered October to March of each year in line with the hockey season and the other April to September in line with the cricket season.
- 1.3 Both club premises certificates were surrendered in August 2018.
- 1.4 A copy of both surrendered club premises certificates have been included within this report to assist the Members in deciding how much weight to apportion to some representations which refer to previous experiences of activities at the club.
- 1.5 Both previous club premises certificates are attached as **Appendix A**.
- 1.6 Members are reminded that this application for a premises licence should be determined on its own merits and previous licences should not be seen as setting a precedent

**2. APPLICATION**

- 2.1 The application is for the grant of a premises licence under section 17 of the Act.
- 2.2 The original licensable activities, hours applied for and supporting documentation is attached as **Appendix B**.

**3. APPLICATION PROCESS**

- 3.1 On 24 October 2018, Hitchin Town Cricket Ground Ltd made an application for the grant of a premises licence.
- 3.2 The application was received electronically so copies were served by the Council to Hertfordshire Constabulary and the other responsible authorities.

- 3.3 A public notice was displayed on the premises for a period of not less than twenty-eight (28) consecutive days in accordance with the requirements of the Act.
- 3.4 A newspaper advertisement was placed in The Comet in accordance with the requirements of the Act.
- 3.5 Hertfordshire Constabulary had initial concerns with the application and entered into negotiations with the applicant during the consultation period. The applicant subsequently amended the application to include additional operating schedule conditions which resolved the officer's concerns. The amendments made following negotiations with Hertfordshire Constabulary are attached as **Appendix C**.
- 3.6 NHDC Environmental Protection had initial concerns with the application and entered into negotiations with the applicant during the consultation period. The applicant subsequently amended the application to include additional operating schedule conditions which resolved the officer's concerns. The amendments made following negotiations with the environmental protection officer are attached as **Appendix D**.
- 3.7 To assist the sub committee, a revised application including all of the conditions agreed with the responsible authorities is attached as **Appendix E**. It is this revised application in **Appendix E** that the sub committee are being asked to determine.

#### 4. REPRESENTATIONS

- 4.1 No representation was received from Hertfordshire Constabulary following amendments to the application to incorporate additional conditions.
- 4.2 No representations were received from any other responsible authorities following amendments to the application to incorporate additional conditions.
- 4.3 Forty (40) representations objecting to the application were received from 'other persons' but five (5) were deemed as not relevant in their entirety. The remaining thirty-five (35) are attached as **Appendix F**.
- 4.4 Seventy-eight (78) representations supporting the application were received from 'other persons' but twenty (20) were deemed as not relevant in their entirety. The remaining fifty-eight (58) are attached as **Appendix G**.
- 4.5 The Councils Scheme of Delegation requires the licensing officer to determine whether a representation is relevant as specified within the Act. Where representations include paragraphs that are not relevant to the Act, these paragraphs have been clearly crossed through and marked as '*not relevant*' by the licensing officer and should not be considered as part of the determination process. **Other persons must not refer to these paragraphs in any oral presentation at the hearing.**
- 4.6 Where the licensing officer has determined that the representations are relevant, it is for the sub-committee to determine what weight to apportion to each representation.
- 4.7 The applicant has been served with a copy of all representations by way of this report.

- 4.8 The applicant, and the 'other persons' making relevant representations have been invited to attend the hearing to present their cases respectively. They have been advised that they may be legally represented and of the hearing procedure.

## 5. OBSERVATIONS

- 5.1 In determining this application, the sub-committee must have regard to the representations and take such steps, as it considers appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives.
- 5.2 In making its decision, the sub-committee must act with a view to promoting the licensing objectives. It must also have regard to the licensing authority's Statement of Licensing Policy and National Guidance.
- 5.3 The sub-committee has the following options when issuing the Decision Notice:
- i) Grant the application as made
  - ii) Grant the application with conditions and/or amendments to the licensable activities and/or timings (conditions should only be added where they are appropriate to promote the licensing objectives).
  - iii) Refuse the application.

## 6. LICENSING POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 The following paragraphs from the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy 2016 may be relevant to this application. This section does not prevent the sub-committee from considering other paragraphs of the Statement of Licensing Policy where they deem it appropriate:

*B6*

*Our vision is:*

***"To ensure that North Hertfordshire continues to offer a diverse range of well managed entertainment venues and community and cultural activities within a safe and enjoyable environment."***

*B7*

*The Council is committed to the continued promotion of the diverse cultural and community activities within the district and providing a safe and sustainable night-time economy for residents and visitors alike. Licensing Policy will be approached with a view to encouraging new and innovative forms of entertainment that promote this vision and are consistent with the four licensing objectives.*

*B8*

*The Council encourages greater live music, dance, theatre and other forms of entertainment for the benefit of the community. Where activities require a licence, the Council will seek to balance the potential for disturbance of local residents and businesses against the wider community and cultural benefits.*

*D1.5*

*The Council expects applicants to address the licensing objectives in their operating schedule and have due regard to this Policy. To achieve this, the Council supports the principles set out in sections 8.33 – 8.36 of the Statutory Guidance which state:*

**8.33**

***In completing an operating schedule, applicants are expected to have regard to the statement of licensing policy for their area. They must also be aware of expectations of the licensing authority and the responsible authorities as to the steps that are***

appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives, and to demonstrate knowledge of their local area when describing the steps they propose to take to promote the licensing objectives. Licensing authorities and responsible authorities are expected to publish information about what is meant by the promotion of the licensing objectives and to ensure that applicants can readily access advice about these matters. However, applicants are also expected to undertake their own enquiries about the area in which the premises are situated to inform the content of the application.

#### 8.34

Applicants are, in particular, expected to obtain sufficient information to enable them to demonstrate, when setting out the steps they propose to take to promote the licensing objectives, that they understand:

- the layout of the local area and physical environment including crime and disorder hotspots, proximity to local residential premises and proximity to areas where children may congregate;
- any risk posed to the local area by the applicants' proposed licensable activities; and
- any local initiatives (for example, local crime reduction initiatives or voluntary schemes including taxi-marshalling schemes, street pastors and other schemes) which may help to mitigate potential risks.

#### 8.35

Applicants are expected to include positive proposals in their application on how they will manage any potential risks. Where specific policies apply in the area (for example, a cumulative impact policy), applicants are also expected to demonstrate an understanding of how the policy impacts on their application; any measures they will take to mitigate the impact; and why they consider the application should be an exception to the policy.

#### 8.36

It is expected that enquiries about the locality will assist applicants when determining the steps that are appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives. For example, premises with close proximity to residential premises should consider what effect this will have on their smoking, noise management and dispersal policies to ensure the promotion of the public nuisance objective. Applicants must consider all factors which may be relevant to the promotion of the licensing objectives, and where there are no known concerns, acknowledge this in their application.

#### D1.6

Applicants should be aware that if they fail to have due regard to this Policy it is more likely that the licensing authority or responsible authorities may deem it appropriate to make a representation. If representations are made as a result of the applicants' failure to address this Policy in its operating schedule, the Licensing and Appeals Sub-Committee may take this into consideration when determining the application.

#### D1.8

Whilst there is no requirement for applicants to consult with the responsible authorities prior to submitting an application the Council encourages pre-application dialogue to take place.

#### D2.1

Each licence application will be decided by reference to this Policy, the National Guidance issued by the Secretary of State, relevant legislation and to the individual circumstances of the particular application. The Council may depart from the Policy where the individual circumstances of any application merit such a decision in the interests of the promotion of the Licensing Objectives. Full reasons will be given for decisions taken by the Council when undertaking its licensing functions.

#### D2.4

In determining applications, the Council will focus primarily on the direct impact of the proposed activities on persons that may be adversely affected in relation to the licensing objectives. The scope of those persons that may be affected will be determined on a case by case basis taking into account all relevant factors.

#### *D2.5*

*The Council acknowledges that the licensing process can only seek to impose conditions that are within the direct control of the licence holder. The Council does not consider that the term 'direct control' can be generically defined and will consider its definition relative to the specific circumstances of each application. For example, licensed premises at the end of road leading to a car park may be able to control its patrons leaving the premises and using the car park. In general terms, to be considered to be under the 'direct control' of a licence holder, there will need to be a direct causal link between the problems or likely problems and the specific premises.*

#### *D2.6*

*Where problems with a direct causal link to premises exist in relation to the promotion of the licensing objectives but they cannot be mitigated by the imposition of appropriate conditions, a Licensing Sub-Committee will seriously consider refusal of the application. For example, patrons from a licensed premise that are causing disorder in a town centre after leaving the premises cannot be controlled by conditions, however the problem may be resolved by the refusal of the application or revocation of the licence.*

#### *D2.8*

*The Council recognises that the exercise of its licensing function is only one of a number of means of securing the promotion of the licensing objectives. The exercise, by the Council, of its licensing function should not be seen as a panacea for all problems within the community. The Council will encourage co-operation between its licensing function, planning function and environmental health functions to ensure that any problems are addressed using the most appropriate means and that its licensing function does not duplicate any other statutory responsibilities.*

#### *D2.9*

*The Council will carry out its licensing functions in the promotion of the licensing objectives and, in addition, will support the stated aims of the Act which are as follows:*

- (i) protecting the public and local residents from crime, anti-social behaviour and noise nuisance caused by irresponsible licensed premises;*
- (ii) 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;*
- (iii) 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;*
- (iv) 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*
- (v) encouraging greater community involvement in licensing decisions and giving local residents the opportunity to have their say regarding licensing decisions that may affect them.*

#### *D6.2*

*The Council recognises that each application must be considered on its own merits and any conditions attached to licences and certificates must be tailored to the individual style and characteristics of the premises and activities concerned. This is essential to avoid the imposition of disproportionate and overly burdensome conditions on premises. A standardised approach to imposing conditions must be avoided and conditions will only be lawful where they are deemed appropriate to promote the licensing objectives in response to relevant representations.*

#### *D6.3*

*Conditions will only be imposed when they are appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives and will focus upon matters within the control of the individual licensee such as the premises, places or events being used for licensable activities or the surrounding areas of the premises, places or events. Conditions are likely to be*

*focused towards the direct impact of those activities on persons living in, working in or visiting areas affected by, or likely to be affected by, those activities.*

*D6.7*

*The Council strongly believes that a carefully considered operating schedule that fully considers the impact of the proposed activities in relation to the promotion of the licensing objectives, having regard to this Policy and the Guidance, is less likely to result in the imposition of conditions by a Licensing Sub-Committee following representations.*

*D6.8*

*It is the Council's view that the imposition of conditions should be restricted to those that are proportionate in addressing any concerns in relation to the promotion of the licensing objectives. Conditions should not be used as a tool to attempt to mitigate every possible scenario; this will serve only to place undue burden on applicants and is not consistent with the general principles of the Guidance.*

*D6.9*

*Operating schedules and licence conditions should be drafted in such a way that it is clear to licence holders exactly what is required of them and these requirements should be concise and well-worded to assist the licence holder in managing their premises. The Council is strongly of the view that the imposition of a substantial list of conditions in order to grant an application calls into question the suitability of the applicant to hold a licence. Where a Licensing Sub-Committee determines that it is appropriate to impose a substantial list of conditions to the extent that they are effectively determining the day-to-day management of the premises, they will give serious consideration to refusing the application.*

*D8.1*

*The Council recognises the need to encourage and promote live music, dancing and theatre for the wider cultural benefit of the community.*

*D8.2*

*Only appropriate, proportionate and reasonable licensing conditions will be imposed on licences so as not to discourage the promotion of entertainment. Conditions will relate to the minimum needed to ensure the promotion of the licensing objectives.*

*D8.3*

*The Council will ordinarily avoid any measure which deters live music, dancing and theatre by imposing indirect costs of a substantial nature (for example, noise limiting devices for smaller or community premises). The Council acknowledges, however, that on occasions the imposition of appropriate conditions with cost implications may be the only alternative to refusing an application where there is sufficient evidence in relation to the effect, or likely effect on the licensing objectives.*

*E2.1*

*The Council recognises that the public safety objective is concerned with the physical safety of the people using the relevant premises and not with public health, which is dealt with in other legislation. Physical safety includes the prevention of accidents and injuries and other immediate harms that can result from alcohol consumption such as unconsciousness or alcohol poisoning.*

*E2.4.1*

*"Safe capacities" should only be imposed on licences where necessary for the promotion of public safety or the prevention of disorder. If a capacity has been imposed through other legislation it would be unnecessary to reproduce it as a licence condition. It would also be wrong to impose conditions that conflict with other legislation. If no safe capacity has been imposed by other legislation, however, a responsible authority may consider it necessary for a new capacity to be attached. For example, a capacity limit may be necessary to prevent disorder as overcrowded premises can increase the risk of crowds becoming frustrated and hostile.*

### *E2.7.1*

*The Council expects premises licence holders and applicants to undertake a public safety risk assessment to ensure the safety of persons using their premises. The assessment should consider issues such as, but not limited to:*

- safe capacities in identifiable areas of the premises that can be evacuated quickly in the case of an emergency*
- policies in relation to persons wishing to smoke at the premises, including provision of identified areas and separation from admission queues*
- policies in relation to admission and readmission particularly control of capacity and queuing*
- policies in relation to the safe dispersal of patrons from the premises and locality*
- sufficient basic first aid provision and responsibilities for contacting the emergency services.*

### *E3.1.1*

*Licensed premises may have significant potential to impact adversely on communities through public nuisances that arise from their operation. The Council interprets 'public nuisance' in its widest sense and takes it to include such things as noise, light, odour, litter and anti-social behaviour, where matters arising at licensed premises impact on those living, working or otherwise engaged in activities in the locality. Ordinarily, the Council's Environmental Protection & Housing Team, in their role as a responsible authority, would take the lead in respect of nuisance issues.*

### *E3.3.1*

*This may include noise and disturbance from customers on the premises and customers in outdoor areas such as terraces, beer gardens and smoking areas. It will also include noise, disturbance and obstruction from customers in the vicinity of premises smoking and/or drinking and customers arriving at, leaving or queuing outside premises. Measures to prevent a public nuisance may include, but are not limited to:*

- use of time restrictions on specified areas of the premises (different times can apply to different areas);*
- cessation of the use of certain areas of the premises;*
- supervision of outdoor areas, entrances and exits;*
- suitably worded, clear and prominent signage;*
- restriction of seating in outdoor areas of the premises;*
- restriction of times that drinks can be taken in specified outdoor areas of the premises;*
- restriction of the number of customers permitted in specified outdoor areas of the premises, including time.*

### *E3.8.1*

*Measures to prevent a public nuisance may include:*

- entering into a waste contract agreement;*
- provision of external litter bins for customers;*
- regular litter picks in the immediate surrounding area of the premises.*

### *E3.8.2*

*The Council is aware that it would be unreasonable and disproportionate to require licence holders to be responsible for littering associated with their products when patrons have gone beyond their control. The Council will, however, expect licence holders to take responsibility for ensuring that the immediate surrounding area is regularly cleared of litter associated with their business operation.*

### *E3.9.1*

*The Council is fully aware of the nuisance that can be caused by poorly managed or inappropriately located premises, however will seek to strike an appropriate balance with its vision of promoting a diverse and vibrant night-time economy.*

#### *E3.9.2*

*The provision of well-managed and controlled entertainment will be encouraged to promote the vision, however the potential disturbance to residents and businesses will need to have been adequately considered by applicants as part of their operating schedule*

#### *E4.1*

*The Council recognises that the protection of children from harm objective relates primarily to children accessing or using licensed premises, or being exposed to activities taking place without having to access the premises (for example, underage alcohol sales, exposure to performances or advertising of an adult nature whether within or outside a premises).*

#### *F4.1*

*In order to avoid duplication with other regulatory regimes the Council will not, as far as reasonably possible, attach conditions to licences unless they are appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives and inadequately covered by other legislation. Ordinarily, conditions will be considered unnecessary if they are already adequately covered by other legislation.*

#### *F4.2*

*Notwithstanding the above, it is the responsibility of the applicants to ensure that they have all necessary consents, whether statutory or otherwise, and it should not be assumed that an authorisation under the Licensing Act 2003 removes this responsibility.*

#### *F4.3*

*The decision of one statutory authority (for example, the licensing authority or the planning authority) is no indication of the likely decision of the other. Indeed, statutory authorities may make representations to each other under each authority's legislation.*

#### *F8.1*

*The Council acknowledges that conditions cannot be imposed on an authorisation where it would be either impracticable or impossible for the licence holder to comply with such conditions when customers have left the premises and are beyond the control of the licence holder.*

#### *F8.2*

*That said, if behaviour of customers beyond the control of the licence holder can be causally linked to a specific premises and it is causing crime and disorder or a nuisance it is wrong to assume that the Act cannot address this; section 4 of the Act gives the Council a positive duty to deal with it proportionately. Whilst conditions would be inappropriate in these scenarios, the Council is strongly of the view that activities and/or operating times of an authorisation should be restricted, or an authorisation refused or revoked, where appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives.*

#### *F8.3*

*The Council recognises that initiatives are available that assist with calming or reducing the incidences of disorder or nuisance as customers leave a premises and expects these to be fully considered in the operating schedule.*

## **7. RELEVANT EXTRACTS OF STATUTORY GUIDANCE**

- 7.1 The following paragraphs from the Guidance issued by the Home Office under section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003 (April 2018 version) may be relevant to this application. This section does not prevent the sub-committee from considering other paragraphs of the Guidance where they deem it appropriate and the determination should be based upon consideration of the full document:



### 1.3

The licensing objectives are:

- The prevention of crime and disorder;
- Public safety;
- The prevention of public nuisance; and
- The protection of children from harm.

### 1.4

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.

### 1.5

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.

### 1.16

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.

### 1.17

The licensing authority should only impose conditions on a premises licence or club premises certificate which are appropriate and proportionate for the promotion of the licensing objectives. If other existing law already places certain statutory responsibilities on an employer at or operator of a premises, it cannot be appropriate to impose the same or similar duties on the premises licence holder, or club. It is only where additional and supplementary measures are appropriate to promote the

*licensing objectives that there will be a requirement for appropriate, proportionate conditions to be attached.*

#### *2.1*

*Licensing authorities should look to the police as the main source of advice on crime and disorder. They should also seek to involve the local Community Safety Partnership (CSP).*

#### *2.15*

*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.*

#### *2.16*

*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 may 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.*

#### *2.17*

*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 persons are not permitted in garden areas of the premises after a certain time. More sophisticated measures like the installation of acoustic curtains or rubber speaker mounts to mitigate sound escape from the premises may be appropriate. However, conditions in relation to live or recorded music may not be enforceable in circumstances where the entertainment activity itself is not licensable (see chapter 16). Any conditions appropriate to promote the prevention of public nuisance should be tailored to the type, nature and characteristics of the specific premises and its licensable activities. Licensing authorities should avoid inappropriate or disproportionate measures that could deter events that are valuable to the community, such as live music. Noise limiters, for example, are expensive to purchase and install and are likely to be a considerable burden for smaller venues.*

#### *2.18*

*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.*

#### *2.19*

*Where applications have given rise to representations, any appropriate conditions should normally focus on the most sensitive periods. For example, the most sensitive period for people being disturbed by unreasonably loud music is at night and into the early morning when residents in adjacent properties may be attempting to go to sleep or are sleeping. This is why there is still a need for a licence for performances of live music between 11 pm and 8 am. In certain circumstances, conditions relating to noise*

*emanating from the premises may also be appropriate to address any disturbance anticipated as customers enter and leave.*

#### *2.22*

*The protection of children from harm includes the protection of children from moral, psychological and physical harm. This includes not only protecting children from the harms associated directly with alcohol consumption but also wider harms such as exposure to strong language and sexual expletives (for example, in the context of exposure to certain films or adult entertainment). Licensing authorities must also consider the need to protect children from sexual exploitation when undertaking licensing functions.*

#### *2.27*

*Conditions, where they are appropriate, should reflect the licensable activities taking place on the premises. In addition to the mandatory condition regarding age verification, other conditions relating to the protection of children from harm can include:*

- restrictions on the hours when children may be present;*
- restrictions or exclusions on the presence of children under certain ages when particular specified activities are taking place;*
- restrictions on the parts of the premises to which children may have access;*
- age restrictions (below 18);*
- restrictions or exclusions when certain activities are taking place;*
- requirements for an accompanying adult (including for example, a combination of requirements which provide that children under a particular age must be accompanied by an adult); and*
- full exclusion of people under 18 from the premises when any licensable activities are taking place.*

#### *9.42*

*Licensing authorities are best placed to determine what actions are appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives in their areas. All licensing determinations should be considered on a case-by-case basis. They should take into account any representations or objections that have been received from responsible authorities or other persons, and representations made by the applicant or premises user as the case may be.*

#### *9.43*

*The authority's determination should be evidence-based, justified as being appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives and proportionate to what it is intended to achieve.*

#### *9.44*

*Determination of whether an action or step is appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives requires an assessment of what action or step would be suitable to achieve that end. While this does not therefore require a licensing authority to decide that no lesser step will achieve the aim, the authority should aim to consider the potential burden that the condition would impose on the premises licence holder (such as the financial burden due to restrictions on licensable activities) as well as the potential benefit in terms of the promotion of the licensing objectives. However, it is imperative that the authority ensures that the factors which form the basis of its determination are limited to consideration of the promotion of the objectives and nothing outside those parameters. As with the consideration of licence variations, the licensing authority should consider wider issues such as other conditions already in place to mitigate potential negative impact on the promotion of the licensing objectives and the track record of the business. Further advice on determining what is appropriate when imposing conditions on a licence or certificate is provided in Chapter 10. The licensing authority is expected to come to its determination based on an assessment of the evidence on both the risks and benefits either for or against making the determination.*

## 8. LICENSING OFFICER COMMENTS

- 8.1 The comments within this section of the report are provided by the licensing officer to assist the sub-committee with the interpretation of the Act, the Guidance and existing case law. It is for the sub-committee to determine what weight they attach to this advice.

### Definition of 'appropriate'

- 8.2 The previous Statutory Guidance first issued in July 2004 and subsequently updated up until April 2018, specifically required Licensing Sub-Committees to ensure that their decisions were based on measures that were 'necessary' for the promotion of the licensing objectives. This placed a burden on the licensing authority to demonstrate that no lesser steps would satisfy the promotion of the licensing objectives and any conditions imposed on a licence would only be those necessary for the promotion of the licensing objectives with no opportunity to go any further.
- 8.3 The revised Statutory Guidance issued on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2012, which is reviewed and amended regularly most recently in April 2018, has amended the 'necessary' test to one of 'appropriate'. This has changed the threshold which licensing authorities must consider when determining applications by requiring that they make decisions which are 'appropriate' for the promotion of the licensing objectives.
- 8.4 The Guidance explains 'appropriate' as:

#### 9.43

*The authority's determination should be evidence-based, justified as being appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives and proportionate to what it is intended to achieve.*

#### 9.44

*Determination of whether an action or step is appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives requires an assessment of what action or step would be suitable to achieve that end. While this does not therefore require a licensing authority to decide that no lesser step will achieve the aim, the authority should aim to consider the potential burden that the condition would impose on the premises licence holder (such as the financial burden due to restrictions on licensable activities) as well as the potential benefit in terms of the promotion of the licensing objectives. However, it is imperative that the authority ensures that the factors which form the basis of its determination are limited to consideration of the promotion of the objectives and nothing outside those parameters. As with the consideration of licence variations, the licensing authority should consider wider issues such as other conditions already in place to mitigate potential negative impact on the promotion of the licensing objectives and the track record of the business. Further advice on determining what is appropriate when imposing conditions on a licence or certificate is provided in Chapter 10. The licensing authority is expected to come to its determination based on an assessment of the evidence on both the risks and benefits either for or against making the determination.*

- 8.5 It is anticipated that, in due course, case law will provide clarity on the meaning of 'appropriate' as referred to in paragraphs 9.43 and 9.44 of the Guidance. The sub-committee is therefore advised to give 'appropriate' its ordinary meaning, as expanded upon by paragraph 9.44 of the Guidance, subject to the over-riding requirement on all local authority decisions of reasonableness.

- 8.6 This approach, of allowing the courts to provide clarity, is reflected in the following paragraphs of the Guidance:

1.9

*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.*

1.10

*Nothing in this Guidance should be taken as indicating that any requirement of licensing law or any other law may be overridden (including the obligations placed on any public authorities under human rights legislation). This Guidance does not in any way replace the statutory provisions of the 2003 Act or add to its scope and licensing authorities should note that interpretation of the 2003 Act is a matter for the courts. Licensing authorities and others using this Guidance must take their own professional and legal advice about its implementation.*

- 8.7 The sub-committee should also be aware that their decision must be proportionate to the evidence received in respect of the application and representation. Proportionality is a key factor in assisting with the definition of 'appropriate'.

### **Case law**

- 8.8 As paragraph 2.16 of the Guidance confirms, public nuisance under the Licensing Act 2003 has a wide interpretation and it is for the sub-committee to determine, based on the evidence, whether they consider these issues to be a public nuisance.
- 8.9 The Guidance states at paragraph 2.21 that conditions relating to public nuisance beyond the vicinity of the premises are not appropriate and the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy supports that view. Conditions that it would be either impracticable or impossible for the licence holder to control would clearly be inappropriate.
- 8.10 That said, if behaviour beyond the premises can be clearly linked to a premises and it is causing a public nuisance, it is wrong to say that the Licensing Act 2003 cannot address this. Whilst conditions may well be inappropriate, if the evidence deems it necessary, times and/or activities under the licence could be restricted or, indeed, the application could be refused, suspended or revoked.
- 8.11 The magistrates court case of *Kouttis v London Borough of Enfield*, 9th September 2011 considered this issue.
- 8.12 In a summary of the case provided by the Institute of Licensing it is reported that District Judge Daber considered an appeal against a decision of the local authority to restrict the hours of musical entertainment of a public house to mitigate the noise from patrons as they left the premises in response to representations from local residents. The appellant relied on the sections of the Guidance that state that "beyond the vicinity of the premises, these are matters for personal responsibility of individuals under the law. An individual

who engages in anti-social behaviour is accountable in their own right" (para 2.24). It was also suggested that, given that certain residents were not disturbed, this did not amount to public nuisance within the meaning of para 2.19 of the Guidance as approved by Burton J in the Hope and Glory case.

- 8.13 The District Judge held that there was ample evidence of public nuisance relating to the specific premises, and that section 4 of the Act gave the licensing authority a positive duty to deal with it proportionately. In this case, no less interventionist way of dealing with the nuisance had been suggested. He held that not only was the authority not wrong, but that it was in fact right to reduce the hours as it had. The appeal was therefore dismissed.

#### **Evidence not to consider**

- 8.14 Some representations have made reference to the premises being a not-for-profit organisation and the importance of being able to create revenue to continue operating. Financial viability is not a relevant consideration under the Act.
- 8.15 Some representations made reference to a number of other venues within the vicinity and that there is no demand for another premises of a similar nature. This is not a relevant consideration as every application is considered on its own individual circumstances in relation to the licensing objectives; demand is not a relevant consideration under the Act.
- 8.16 Some representations have made reference to a new housing development in the immediate vicinity of the premises. The Act allows any person likely to be affected by the granting of a premises licence to make a comment. The houses in this development are either not built yet or unoccupied and therefore there are no persons to comment. Should a licence be granted, the option of a review in the future is available should issues arise.
- 8.17 There are comments made in some representations regarding the nature of the premises being a 'sports club' or 'sports pavilion'. The intended usage of the premises is not a consideration under the licensing objectives and it is a matter that could have been considered under the planning process.
- 8.18 Some representations have made reference to the premises being a 'community asset'. This is not a relevant consideration under the licensing objectives and could have been considered under the planning process.
- 8.19 There are number of other comments made in representations that have been marked as not relevant. These comments are not relevant considerations under the Licensing Act 2003 as they are considered under separate legislation. The Guidance confirms that licensing committees "*should not duplicate other statutory requirements or other duties or responsibilities placed on the employer by other legislation*".

#### **New evidence**

- 8.20 Other persons must restrict their oral submissions to the relevant issues raised within their representations, although they can expand on the representations by way of examples, further information, etc.. They cannot raise new issues not mentioned within the written representation, for example if they have only raised issues of crime and disorder, they cannot introduce issues of public safety orally at the hearing.

- 8.22 Any new documentation not circulated in advance to all parties within the hearing paperwork cannot be introduced at the hearing or presented to the sub-committee without all party consent.

**9. Appendices**

- 9.1 Appendix A Previous Club Premises Certificates
- 9.2 Appendix B Application for a Premises Licence
- 9.3 Appendix C Conditions agreed with Hertfordshire Constabulary
- 9.4 Appendix D Conditions agreed with NHDC Environmental Protection
- 9.5 Appendix E Revised Application
- 9.6 Appendix F Representation from other persons objecting the application
- 9.7 Appendix G Representation from other persons supporting the application

**10. CONTACT OFFICERS**

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