

LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE



Report subject	FYEO, 134 - 136 Old Christchurch Road, Bournemouth, BH1 1NL
Meeting date	3 October 2024
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>Hampshire Restaurants Ltd have applied for the renewal of the Sexual Entertainment Venue Licence to permit relevant entertainment for a further twelve-month period.</p> <p>The Licensing Authority has received one objection.</p>
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <p>Members are asked to decide whether to:-</p> <p>a) Grant the application for renewal as made; or</p> <p>b) Refuse the application for renewal.</p> <p>Members of the Licensing Sub-Committee are asked to make a decision at the end of the hearing after all relevant parties have been given the opportunity to speak. Members must give full reasons for their decision</p>
Reason for recommendations	<p>The Council has adopted the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 (The 1982 Act), as amended; therefore, subject to limited exceptions and exemptions, or in the absence of a waiver, premises offering relevant entertainment require a Sexual Entertainment Venue Licence to operate in the BCP Council area.</p> <p>There is a presumption in the legislation that applications for a licence will be granted unless there is a statutory ground for refusal. Some refusal grounds require the Council to refuse an application (mandatory grounds for refusal) and some grounds enable the Council to refuse an application but do not require the Council to refuse (discretionary grounds for refusal).</p> <p>Any decision to refuse the renewal of the licence must be relevant to one or more of the following grounds:-</p> <p><u>Mandatory Grounds of Refusal</u></p> <p>A licence shall not be granted:</p>

- a) to a person under the age of 18;
- b) to a person who is disqualified by reason of prior revocation of a licence;
- c) to a person, other than a body corporate, who is not resident in an EEA state or was not so resident throughout the period of six months immediately preceding the 4 July 2011;
- d) to a body corporate which is not incorporated in an EEA state; or
- e) to a person who had, within a period of 12 months immediately preceding the date when the application was made, been refused the grant or renewal of a licence for the premises, vehicle, vessel or stall in respect of which the application is made, unless the refusal has been reversed on appeal.

Having considered the information provided through the application process, the licensing officer advises that none of the mandatory grounds for refusal appear to apply in this case.

Members should focus their considerations on whether one or more of the four discretionary grounds for refusal set out in paragraph 12(2)(a) arise in respect of this application.

Discretionary Grounds for Refusal

Grounds (a) and (b)

- a) that the applicant is unsuitable to hold the licence by reason of having been convicted of an offence or for any other reason;
- b) that if the licence were to be granted, renewed or transferred the business to which it relates would be managed by or carried on for the benefit of a person, other than the applicant, who would be refused the grant, renewal or transfer of such a licence if he made the application himself.

The application process requires applicants to provide comprehensive information about any convictions and a range of other information that may be relevant to consideration of grounds (a) and (b).

Regarding this applicant there is no evidence of convictions deemed to be unspent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, cautions, discrimination cases or pending allegations at the date the application was made that would cast any doubt on the suitability of the applicant to hold the licence by reason of having been convicted of an offence or for any other reason.

Ground (c)

- (c) that the number of sex establishments, or of sex establishments of a particular kind, in the relevant locality at the time the application is determined is equal to or exceeds the number which the authority consider is appropriate for that locality; BCP Council do not currently have a Policy which sets or limits the number of sex establishments thought appropriate in the BCP area.

	<p><u>Ground (d)</u></p> <p>(d) that the grant or renewal of the licence would be inappropriate, having regard—</p> <p>(i) to the character of the relevant locality; or</p> <p>(ii) to the use to which any premises in the vicinity are put; or</p> <p>(iii) to the layout, character or condition of the premises, vehicle, vessel or stall in respect of which the application is made.</p> <p>BCP Council do not currently have a policy which sets out locations or vicinities which would be considered appropriate or inappropriate for sex establishments. This premises has been operating as a lap dancing club in this town centre location since 2006.</p> <p>Where objections have been received and the concerns have not been resolved through mediation between all parties, the Scheme of Delegation set out in the Council's Constitution states that these applications should be dealt with by the Licensing Sub-Committee.</p>
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Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Kieron Wilson – Portfolio Holder for Housing and Regulatory Services
Corporate Director	Jillian Kay – Corporate Director for Wellbeing
Report Authors	Sarah Rogers – Principal Licensing Officer
Wards	Bournemouth Central
Classification	For Decision

Background

1. An application for the renewal of the Sexual Entertainment Venue (SEV) Licence was made on 15 August 2024 to permit the premises to continue providing relevant entertainment for a further twelve-month period.
2. A copy of the application is attached at Appendix 1.
3. A map showing the location of the premises is attached at Appendix 2.
4. The premises have operated as a lap dancing club for over 20 years. The current licence holders have been operating the premises since 2015. A copy of the current SEV Licence is attached at Appendix 3.
5. During the last twelve-month period of the SEV Licence no complaints have been received about the conduct of dancers and management of the venue. Environmental Health had cause to investigate a complaint of trailing cables and accumulation of waste to the rear of the premises.
6. A renewal application is required to enable the premises to continue to provide what is referred to as “relevant entertainment” in the legislation.
7. Relevant entertainment is defined as “any live performances or live display of nudity which is of such a nature that, ignoring financial gain, it must reasonably be assumed to be provided solely or principally for the purpose of sexual stimulating any member of an audience (whether by verbal or other means).”
8. In the case of a woman “display of nudity” means the display of their nipples, pubic area, genitals or anus and, in the case of a man, it means exposure of their pubic area, genitals or anus.
9. Alterations are proposed to the layout of the basement, ground and lower ground floors. A schedule of the proposed alterations is attached at Appendix 4.
10. An application for minor variation under the Licensing Act 2003, in respect of the proposed alterations, was applied for and subsequently approved. A copy of the current Premises Licence and approved plans are attached at Appendix 5.

Consultation

11. Applicants must give notice of the application by publishing an advertisement in the local newspaper together with notice displayed on the premises for a period of 21 days. In considering the application the Council must have regard to any

observations submitted to them by and any objections of which notice has been sent to them under Schedule 3, paragraph 10(15) of the 1982 Act, which provides that any objections must be made in writing within 28 days of the application. Objections must be relevant and should not be based on moral grounds or values.

12. As a result of the consultation one objection has been received against the renewal of the SEV. A copy of the objection is attached at Appendix 6.
13. The applicant has responded to the objection, a copy of the response is attached at Appendix 7. A copy of a letter from the Landlord is attached at Appendix 7a supporting the contention made by Mr Nicie of the adjoining premises remaining vacant.
14. The application was also consulted with Dorset Police, Environmental Health, Planning, Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Trading Standards. No objections were received from any of these consultees.
15. As the renewal application had been submitted before the current licence expired the premises were permitted to continue to operate under the current terms and conditions until determination of this renewal application.

Options Appraisal

16. Before making a decision, Members are asked to consider the following matters:
 - The submissions made by or on behalf of the applicant.
 - The objection received.
 - Section 27 of the Policing and Crime Act 2009.
 - Schedule 3 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982

Summary of financial implications

17. No financial implications have been identified.

Summary of legal implications

18. If the application for renewal is refused the applicant may appeal the decision to the Magistrates' Court, unless the application was refused under grounds (c) or (d) above at "Reasons for Recommendation", in which case the applicant can only challenge the refusal by way of judicial review.
19. It should be noted that BCP Council's Sex Establishment Policy was quashed by way of a Judicial Review in February 2022. Essentially the Court were of the view that some consultation responses had been considered by the Council as based purely on moral views and not equality. No decision has yet been taken whether a new policy is to be developed by the new Licensing Committee.
20. Local Authorities are not bound to have a Sex Establishment Policy and the non-existence of a policy does not prevent an application being considered on its merits and in accordance with the legislation.

Summary of human resources implications

21. There are no human resource implications.

Summary of sustainability impact

22. There are no sustainability impact implications.

Summary of public health implications

23. There are no public health implications.

Summary of equality implications

24. The Council is under a duty in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to the matters set out in relation to equalities when exercising the function of determining this renewal application (Public Sector Equalities Duty). Accordingly, Members must promote equality for persons with the following “protected characteristics”: age, disability, gender assignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
25. Each Member must therefore have regard to:
- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited in relevant equalities legislation.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
 - Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant characteristic and persons who do not share it.
23. Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to –
- a) Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
 - b) Take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of people who do not share it;
 - c) Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low

Summary of risk assessment

24. There are no risk assessment implications.

Background papers

Home Office Guidance

<https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20100413151441/http://www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/crimereduction057a.pdf>

Section 27 Policing and Crime Act 2009

[Policing and Crime Act 2009 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2009/27/section_27)

Schedule 3 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982

Appendices

- 1 – Copy Application
- 2 – Location Plan
- 3 – Current Sexual Entertainment Venue Licence
- 4 – Schedule of Alterations to Layout
- 5 – Premises Licence Summary and Layout Plans
- 6 – Copy Objection
- 7 – Applicant Response to Objection
- 7a – Copy Letter from Landlord