



Licensing Sub-Committee

Notice of a Meeting to be held in Committee Room 3, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford, Kent TN23 1PL on Monday 6th June 2011 at 10.00 am

The Proposed Members of this Committee are:-

Cllrs. Mrs Bell, Feacey, Goddard
Reserve Cllr Mrs Martin

Agenda

Page
Nos.

1. **Election of Chairman**
2. **Apologies/Substitutes** – To receive Notification of Substitutes in accordance with Procedure Rule 1.2(iii) and Appendix 4
3. **Declarations of Interest** - Declarations of Interest under the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council on the 24th May 2007 relating to items on this agenda should be made here. The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must also be declared
4. **Minutes** – To approve the Minutes of the Meeting of this Committee held on the 29th March 2011

Matters for Decision

5. Beech Court Gardens, Beech Court, Canterbury Road, Challock, Ashford, Kent, TN25 4DJ – Application for a premises licence. 1 – 36
 - (a) Clarification and Determination of Equal Maximum Time to be allocated to each party
 - (b) To note withdrawal of any representations
 - (c) The Hearing of the case.

KL/26th May 2011

Ashford
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Please refer to the Guidance Notes on the procedure to be followed at this meeting as attached to this Agenda

If you know the appellant(s) and have a possible conflict of interest or have any queries concerning the Agenda please contact Kirsty Liddell on 01233 330499



Licensing Sub-Committee

Minutes of a Meeting of the Licensing Sub-Committee held in the Committee Room 1 (Fougères Room), Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford on the **29th March 2011**.

Present:

Cllr. Feacey (Chairman);

Cllrs. Holland, Woodford.

Apologies:

Cllr. Hodgkinson.

Mrs Butler – Environmental Control.

Also Present:

Licensing Support Officer, Legal Advisor, Member Services & Scrutiny Support Officer.

Cllr. Wells – Interested Party.

Mr Mitchener – Applicant's Representative.

434 Election of Chairman

Resolved:

That Councillor Feacey be elected as Chairman for this Meeting of the Licensing Sub-Committee.

435 Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of this Sub-Committee held on the 22nd March 2011 be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

436 Murco Costcutter, Brookfield Road Service Station, Brookfield Road, Ashford, Kent, TN23 4ES – Application from an existing licence holder to vary the premises licence.

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed all those present. Members confirmed that they had read the papers relating to the application. The Chairman explained the procedure to be followed at the meeting.

The Licensing Support Officer then gave a brief summary of her report. The application had been made by an existing licence holder to vary the premises licence. The application to vary the Premises Licence was contained in Appendix A of the agenda papers. The application had been made in the proper manner. Representations had been received hence the determination coming before Members.

The current licence permitted the off sales of alcohol Sunday 10:00 – 22:30 and Monday to Saturday 08:00 – 23:00, with restrictions on Christmas Day and Good Friday as a result of the conversion of embedded conditions. The variation application requested the addition of late night refreshment from 23:00 – 05:00, seven days a week and an increase in the hours for the sale of alcohol to 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The applicant stated within Section P of the application form the additional steps they intended to take in order to promote the four licensing objectives if the proposed variation was granted. The conditions put forward by the Licensing Manager as taken from Section P of the application form were as given within Appendix E. It was the responsibility of the Licensing Authority to prepare conditions that were “consistent” with the operating schedule (s.18).

A representation was received from the Environmental Control Officer. The Environmental Control Officer was concerned about the applicant being able to successfully promote the prevention of public nuisance objective. This was in respect of the amount of noise likely to be generated by car doors slamming, vehicle movement and revving of engines. The representation also detailed the fact that planning permission was refused for the premises to operate after 23:00. Members were advised that whether planning permission had been granted was not relevant to decisions made under the Licensing Act 2003. The decision could only be made solely on the four licensing objectives.

A representation was received from one of the Ward Members. The representation concerned the prevention of public nuisance in relation to the residential nature of the area and disturbances from licensed premises in the area. The email also raised concern regarding the protection of children from harm in relation to the ease of access to alcohol. Under section 35(5) of the Licensing Act 2003, representations were relevant if they were about the likely effect of the grant of the licence on the promotion of the licensing objectives and (subsection 6) were made by an interested party or responsible authority within the prescribed period, were not withdrawn or, in the opinion of the licensing authority, frivolous or vexatious.

Mr Mitchener, the applicant's representative, addressed the Sub-Committee. He advised all those present that he was the licensing agent for the applicant and had acted for them for a number of years, he had authorisation to agree to conditions to the licence. The application was for a variation of the current licence to permit the sale of alcohol twenty four hours a day, seven days a week, the provision of late night refreshments and the removal of embedded conditions. There had been no complaints or incidents since the premises had held a licence.

The site had been trading twenty four hours a day since July 2010 following on from a trial opening twenty four hours a day on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays since

April 2010. There had been no objections or complaints received in relation to the premises operating twenty four hours a day.

He wanted to address the representations made by the Ward Member and the Environmental Control Officer. The Ward Member had suggested that the area was mainly residential and that permitting the application would contribute to issues currently experienced in the area. The premises were located next to a 'shopping area' which consisted of a parade of shops, including a Co-op, pharmacy, hairdressers and newsagent.

He refuted the claim that permitting the licence would increase access to alcohol for young people. There had been no issues relating to underage selling and he drew attention to the leaflet that had been distributed prior to the meeting entitled 'Dealing with Confrontation – Saying NO to Underage Drinkers'. All employees had to undertake a specialised training regime. Employees would not serve alcohol to anyone under the age of 21 without valid identification. The tills were set up to assist with confirmation of age, they would alert staff that valid identification was required and provide the date after which an individual would be able to purchase alcohol legally. The training regime was BII and Trading Standards approved. Each employee would be required to undertake training and pass a written test prior to being permitted to sell alcohol with compulsory refresher training every six months. Discussions had taken place with the Police Licensing Officer who had raised no objection to the application.

The reference to planning permission having been refused for the application was not relevant to the determination of the application or the four licensing objectives. When the premises were first constructed there was not a restriction on hours of operation placed on the site. However the site was then redeveloped with a limitation on the hours of operation placed upon it, this was under dispute and the site was operating twenty four hours a day, seven days a week.

He concluded by saying that guidance was clear that an application could not be refused on the basis of the fear of what could happen in the future. The applicant was aware of their social responsibility and held a refusals log on site and the premises were monitored by CCTV.

In response to questions from the Sub-Committee, Mr Mitchener advised that the site was operating twenty four hours a day, seven days a week and had been since July 2010. Advice had been taken by the Applicant in relation to the issue surrounding planning permission and had been advised that they could continue to operate whilst the issue was in dispute. It would be difficult to enforce the restriction placed upon the premises by the planning permission. This was, however, a separate issue to the licensing application and should not influence the Sub-Committee's decision.

A new employee would be unable to work at the premises until they had completed the training programme and passed a written test. Two members of staff were on site until 12.30am, after this time one member of staff was present. There were a number of safety measures in place including a shunt lock to enable staff to lock the premises from the till area to prevent someone from entering the shop.

Councillor Wells, one of the Ward Members, addressed the Sub-Committee. He advised that he had raised objection to the application on behalf of a number of residents. The site was located within a predominantly residential area and noise from car doors caused a disturbance at night. The residents had put up with a lot of disturbance and noise in recent years and felt that their quality of life had diminished. A particular resident who lived in sheltered housing opposite the site regularly had her sleep disturbed by late night noise and was concerned about this application and the potential increase in noise that could result.

When the premises had originally opened there had only been a workshop that sold spare parts. It was only in recent years that a shop had been attached to the site. When the Co-op had applied for a licence the Crusader Public House had challenged the application, he was surprised that this had not happened in respect of this application. The Planning Department had gone to considerable lengths to restrict the hours of the Kebab House and the Co-op and he wondered if permitting this application would open the flood gates for these premises to request to open all night.

There were issues with underage drinking in the area; the Police and Neighbourhood Watch were both aware of this. There had been instances whereby adults were purchasing alcohol for those who were underage. This was noticeable in two areas where there were cans littering alleyways, it had been noted that the cans were ones that had only been on sale at the Murco Costcutter at the time.

Mr Mitchener responded by stating that the road that the premises was on was a busy main road. Twenty years ago there had been 25,000 forecourts in England, now there were only 9,000. The profit margin on fuel was three pence which was down from five pence five years ago. The majority of forecourts that had shops were licensed; if the site did not have a shop then it would not exist. Petrol stations were closing regularly and 35 to 40% of fuel was being sold by hypermarkets. If an individual was found to be supplying minors with alcohol then they would be banned from the premises. In his opinion there was nothing to support outright refusal of the application, if there were difficulties in the future they could be dealt with by a Review.

In response to questions Mr Mitchener advised that there had never been any suggestion that underage sales had taken place at the premises. The applicant was not informed if test purchases had taken place, the only time they would be alerted would be when the premises had failed such a check. There was no evidence to suggest a link between the sale of fuel and alcohol at forecourts.

The Licensing Support Officer then summed up the nature of the application and the issues for the Sub-Committee to consider. She reminded the Sub-Committee that they may grant the licence with no modifications, modify the conditions of the licence or reject whole or part of the application.

The Sub-Committee then retired to make their decision.

Upon return there was considerable discussion regarding the imposition of a condition to restrict the location of alcohol other than spirits to be within sight of the cashier.

The Sub-Committee then retired to make their decision.

On return the Legal Advisor read out the decision.

Resolved:

That the variation to the premises licence be granted and the sale of alcohol be permitted from:

Monday to Sunday: 00:00 to 00:00

Late Night Refreshment:

Monday to Sunday: 23:00 to 05:00

Subject to the conditions consistent with the operating schedule set out in Appendix E of the Licensing Manager's report, and the following additional conditions:

- (i) The Licence Holder shall display prominent, clear notices at the exit, requesting customers to respect the needs of local residents and leave the premises and the area quietly.**
- (ii) The License Holder shall receive and respond to complaints.**
- (iii) The Licence Holder will liaise with the Police and other relevant authorities in connection with the operation of the licence and the prevention of crime & disorder licensing objective.**
- (iv) The Licence Holder will ensure that all spirits are located behind the counter; all other alcohol will be covered by CCTV equipment at all times.**

The Licensing Manager be given delegated authority to amend the wording of the conditions as appropriate.

The Legal Advisor informed those present of their right of appeal to the Magistrates' Court and the Right to Review a Premises Licence.

Agenda Item No: 5
Licence Reference WK/201102697
Report To: LICENSING SUB COMMITTEE
Date: 06 JUNE 2011



Report Title: **Licensing Act 2003 - Application for a premises licence – Beech Court Gardens, Beech Court, Canterbury Road, Challock, Ashford, Kent, TN25 4DJ**

Report Author: Licensing Manager

Summary:	<p>The report advises Members of a licence application under the provisions of the Licensing Act 2003.</p> <p>Application type: Application for a premises licence</p> <p>Applicant: Mr Vyvyan Harmsworth</p> <p>Premises: Beech Court Gardens, Beech Court, Canterbury Road, Challock, Ashford, Kent, TN25 4DJ</p> <p>Members are asked to determine whether to grant the premises licence.</p>
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Key Decision: NO

Affected Wards: Charing

Recommendations: **The Committee is asked to determine the application and decide whether to grant the premises licence.**

Policy Overview: The decision is to be made with regard to the Licensing Act 2003, the Secretary of State's Guidance issued under Section 182 of the Act and the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy. Where the decision departs from the Policy or Guidance the departure must be directed solely at the attainment of the licensing objectives, and such departure must be supported by clear and cogent reasons.

Financial Implications: The costs associated with processing the application are taken from licensing fee income.

Other Material Implications: **HUMAN RIGHTS:** In considering this application the Sub Committee will balance the competing Human Rights of the various parties including the right to respect for private and family life, the protection of property and the right to a fair hearing.

LEGAL: Under the Licensing Act 2003 the Council has a duty

to exercise licensing control of relevant premises.

Exemption Clauses: Not applicable

**Background
Papers:** None

jane.woodford@ashford.gov.uk – Tel: 01233 330578

Contacts:

Report Title: **Licensing Act 2003 - Application for a premises licence
Beech Court Gardens, Beech Court, Canterbury Road,
Challock, Ashford, Kent, TN25 4DJ**

Purpose of the Report

1. The report advises Members of a licence application under the provisions of the Licensing Act 2003.
Application type: **Application for a premises licence**
Applicant: **Mr Vyvyan Harmsworth**
Premises: **Beech Court Gardens, Beech Court, Canterbury Road, Challock, Ashford, Kent, TN25 4DJ**

Issue to be Decided

2. Members are asked to determine whether to grant the premises licence.

Background

The Licensing Objectives

3. The licensing authority must carry out its functions under the Licensing Act 2003 with a view to promoting the licensing objectives namely, the prevention of crime and disorder, public safety, the prevention of public nuisance and the protection of children from harm (LA 2003, s4 (1)).

Application details

4. The application is for a premises licence. See Appendix A for the application for a premises licence, along with a plan of the internal layout of the tea room and a plan of the gardens.
5. Representations have been received hence the determination coming before Members.
6. There were no additional steps given by the applicant within section P of the application form.

Representations from Responsible Authorities

7. The Senior Environmental Health Officer requested that two conditions, detailed below, be added under the Public Safety objective and this was agreed by the applicant.
 - The Licence Holder will ensure that a risk assessment is undertaken in respect to all events that have the potential to attract more than 500 people.

- The Licence Holder will in the case of such events notify the Licensing Authority 6 weeks in advance and ensure that the safety requirements of the Licensing Authority and other relevant authorities are implemented.

Representations from Interested Parties

8. 2 parties have made representations. Copies of the letters are contained in Appendix B.
9. All of the representations are parties living in the area.
10. The representations have a number of common themes in terms of the licensing objectives and they can be summarised as follows:
 - The potential for noise from the premises (i.e. music) as a result of more events being held.
 - The associated noise from an increased amount of people attending events at the premises.
 - Concerns about how the premises will be used in the future, if the licence is granted, allowing licensable activities 7 days a week.
11. Under section 35(5) of the Licensing Act 2003, representations are relevant if they are about the likely effect of the grant of the licence on the promotion of the licensing objectives and (subsection 6) are made by an interested party or responsible authority within the prescribed period, are not withdrawn or, in the opinion of the licensing authority, frivolous or vexatious.
12. The prescribed period for the receipt of such representations in this case is, by Regulation 22(b) of the Licensing Act 2003 (Premises licences and club premises certificates) Regulations 2005 "during a period of 28 consecutive days starting on the day after the day on which the application to which it relates was given to the authority by the applicant". In this case the application was given to the authority 28th March 2011 with the last date for receipt of relevant representations was 26th April 2011.

Relevant premises history

13. The premises is a large garden within a tea room situated in the grounds. The tea room serves refreshments and light lunches and both the garden and the tea room are currently open to the general public Saturday to Thursday from March to October. A location plan is in Appendix C.
14. The application proposes to permit:
 - Sale of alcohol 11:30 – 23:00
 - Performance of plays 14:00 – 23:00
 - Live music, dancing, facilities for making music & dancing 12:00 – 23:00
 - Recorded music 10:30 – 23:00

15. All of the above have been applied for 7 days a week with the premises being open from 10:30 – 23:00 each day. There is no premises licence granted for this premises at the present time.
16. The premises has used Temporary Event Notices in previous years (2 in 2010, 1 in 2009, 4 in 2008, 5 in 2007 & 2 in 2006) for regulated entertainments to cover various events involving music which have been held at the premises. No noise complaints have been received in connection with the premises.

Options

General

17. Members attention is drawn to the following matters:
 - All applications are to be considered on their merits as well as against the relevant policy and statutory framework.
 - Due regard should be given to the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998, Race Relations Act 1976 as amended by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and, so far as possible, reflect local crime prevention strategies.
 - The operating schedule forms part of the completed application form for a premises licence. The operating schedule should include information, which is necessary to enable any responsible authority or interested party to assess whether the steps to be taken to promote licensing objectives are satisfactory.
 - The licensing authority may not impose any conditions unless its discretion has been engaged following the making of relevant representations and it has been satisfied at a hearing of the necessity to impose conditions due to the representations raised. It may then only impose such conditions as are necessary to promote the licensing objectives arising out of the consideration of the representations. However, in order to minimise problems and the necessity for hearings, it would be sensible for applicants to consult with responsible authorities when schedules are being prepared. This would allow for proper liaison before representations prove necessary.
 - Where problems have occurred, the application for the new licence or certificate will afford an opportunity for responsible authorities and interested parties to raise the issue through representations and for conditions addressing any nuisance previously caused to be attached following a hearing where necessary. The views of local residents will be important in establishing the extent of any history of problems.
 - The conditions put forward within this report are suggested on the basis of:
 - information contained within the application form;
 - interested parties representations and
 - on those measures currently in existence.

- The 2003 Act requires licensing authorities following receipt of relevant representations to make judgements about what constitutes public nuisance and what is necessary, in terms of conditions attached to specific premises licences to prevent it. It is therefore important that in considering the promotion of this licensing objective, licensing authorities focus on impacts of the licensable activities at the specific premises on persons living and working (including doing business) in the vicinity that are disproportionate and unreasonable. The issues will mainly concern noise nuisance, light pollution, noxious smells and litter.
- Public nuisance is not narrowly defined in the 2003 Act and retains its broad common law meaning for the Act's purposes. The prevention of public nuisance could therefore include low-level nuisance perhaps affecting a few people living locally as well as major disturbance affecting the whole community. It may also include in appropriate circumstances the reduction of the living and working amenity and environment of interested parties (as defined in the 2003 Act) in the vicinity of licensed premises.
- Where applications have given rise to representations, any necessary and appropriate conditions should normally focus on the most sensitive periods. For example, music noise from premises usually occurs from mid-evening until either late evening or early morning when residents in adjacent properties may be attempting to go to sleep or are sleeping. In certain circumstances, conditions relating to noise may also prove necessary to address any disturbance anticipated as customers enter and leave the premises and therefore, in the immediate vicinity of the premises.
- In the context of preventing public nuisance, it is essential that conditions are focused on measures within the direct control of the licence holder. Conditions relating to public nuisance caused by the anti-social behaviour of customers once they are beyond the control of the licence holder, or premises management cannot be justified and will not serve to promote the licensing objectives in relation to the licensing activities carried on at the premises. 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 his own right. However, it would be perfectly reasonable for a licensing authority to impose a condition it considered necessary following relevant representations from an interested party that requires the licence holder to place signs at the exits from the building encouraging patrons to be quiet until they leave the area and to respect the rights of people living near-by to a peaceful night. After a licence has been granted or varied, a complaint relating to a general (crime and disorder) situation in a town centre should generally not be regarded as a relevant representation unless it can be positively tied or linked by a causal connection to particular premises, which would allow for a proper review of the licence or certificate.
- The Guidance states "the conditions that are necessary for the promotion of the licensing objectives should emerge initially from a prospective licensee's risk assessment which should be undertaken by applicants or clubs before making their application for a premises licence or club premises certificate. This would be translated into the steps recorded in

the operating schedule or club operating schedule that it is proposed to take to promote the licensing objectives.”

- It is perfectly possible that in certain cases, because the test is one of necessity, where there are other legislative provisions, which are relevant and must be observed by the applicant, no additional conditions at all are needed to promote the licensing objectives.

Decision options

18. Members may grant the licence with no modifications to the conditions to the licence, modify the conditions of the licence or reject the whole or part of the application.

Consultation

19. All relevant parties have followed the consultation procedures required under the Licensing Act 2003.

Implications Assessment

20. The decision should be made with regard to the Secretary of State's Guidance and the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy under the Licensing Act 2003. Where the decision departs from either the Guidance or the policy clear and cogent reasons must be given. Members should be aware that if such a departure is made the risk of appeal / challenge is increased.

Human Rights

21. While all Convention Rights must be considered, those which are of particular relevance to the application are:
 - Article 8 - Right to respect for private and family life
 - Article 1 of the First Protocol - Protection of Property
 - Article 10 – Freedom of Expression

The full text of each Article is given in the attached Appendix G.

Handling

22. The timings for handling the application are set out in the Licensing Act 2003 and related regulations.

Conclusion

23. Members must ensure that the application is considered on its merits, as well as against the relevant guidance, policy and statutory framework.

Contact: Email:	Licensing Support Officer jane.woodford@ashford.gov.uk
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APPENDIX D - HUMAN RIGHTS

Article 8

1. Everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence.
2. There shall be no interference by a public authority with the exercise of this right except such as is in accordance with the law and is necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security, public safety or the economic well-being of the country, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

Article 1 of the First Protocol

Every natural or legal person is entitled to the peaceful enjoyment of his possessions. No one shall be deprived of his possessions except in the public interest and subject to the conditions provided for by law and by the general principles of international law. The preceding provisions shall not, however, in any way impair the right of a State to enforce such laws, as it deems necessary to control the use of property in accordance with the general interest or to secure the payment of taxes or other contributions or penalties.

Article 10

3. Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers. This Article shall not prevent States from requiring the licensing of broadcasting, television or cinema enterprises.
4. The exercise of these freedoms, since it carries with it duties and responsibilities, may be subject to such formalities, conditions, restrictions or penalties as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society, in the interests of national security, territorial integrity or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, for the protection of the reputation or rights of others, for preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence, or for maintaining the authority and impartiality of the judiciary.