

Licensing Sub-Committee

Tuesday, 16th May, 2017

PRESENT: Councillor B Selby in the Chair

Councillors M Coulson and S McKenna

1 Election of the Chair

RESOLVED – That Councillor B Selby be elected as Chair for the hearing.

2 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Sub-Committee was advised that there were appendices to the report that contained information that was considered to be exempt under Access to Information Procedure Rules 10.4 (1,2) and that should the information in these appendices be discussed then a resolution should be passed to exclude members of the press and public from the hearing during that period.

3 Late Items

There were no late items as such. A supplementary information pack had been published and distributed which contained the following:

- Letter from the applicant's representative dated 9 May 2017.
- Revised Appendix E

4 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations.

5 Review of the Premises Licence for Centenary Pavilion, Lowfields Road South, Beeston, Leeds, LS12 6BS

The report of the Head of Elections, Licensing and Registration presented an application made by West Yorkshire Police for a review of the Premises Licence for Centenary Pavilion, Lowfields Road South, Beeston, Leeds, LS12 6BS.

A review of the Licence, held by Leeds United Centenary Pavilion Ltd, had been sought under Section 51 of the Licensing Act due to incidents involving large scale fights and violent crime.

The following were in attendance:

Centenary Pavilion

Mr P Whurr, Woods Whur

Mr P Bell, Executive Director, Leeds United

Mr V Merryman, Designated Premises Supervisor

Mr M Mitchell, Conference & Events Manager

West Yorkshire Police

Ms C Sanderson, Licensing Officer

Sgt D Shaw

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It was reported that the Sub-Committee had viewed video footage of incidents that had occurred at the Centenary Pavilion. West Yorkshire Police informed the Sub-Committee that they would not wish to refer to the footage and the Centenary Pavilion representative stated that they did not have any concern regarding the video footage in relation to the hearing.

Ms C Sanderson presented the case for West Yorkshire Police. The review of the license had been applied for due to the severity of incidents that had occurred during White Collar Boxing events held at the premises. Reference was made to incidents that had occurred in December 2014, April 2016 and February 2017. As part of the review it was requested that boxing and wrestling be removed from the license.

The Sub-Committee was informed of large scale disorder that had taken place during White Collar Boxing events held at the venue and action plan meetings that had taken place between West Yorkshire Police and the applicant. The following concerns had been identified:

- Problems with open ticket sales – there had also been an agreement not to sell tickets on the door but according to posts on social media there had been tickets made available this way.
- The wider of impact due to the number of police officers that had to attend the disturbances at the venue.
- The organisers had not been able to control the situations that had occurred at the venue.
- Children had been present during the disturbances.
- Concern regarding some of the fighters and their supporters.
- Discussions with the British Board of Boxing had raised concern with White Collar Boxing and the lack of regulation for these events.

In summary, the review of the license had been sought because of the following:

- The continued failure to successfully manage boxing events following previous incidents and action plan meetings with West Yorkshire Police.
- It was felt the capacity of the venue was too large for such events.
- A failure to meet the objective of protecting children from harm.
- A failure to meet a previous agreement in respect of ticket sales and tickets not being available on the door.
- It was felt there had been a breakdown in trust between West Yorkshire Police and the applicant.

In response to comments and question from the Sub-Committee, the following was discussed:

- During the incident in February all spare police officers across the City had to be called to attend.
- Video footage showed that at least four children were in attendance during the disturbance in February.

- Although it was acknowledged that there was more regulation with Amateur and Professional boxing due to the migration of boxers from White Collar Boxing it was felt these events also had the potential for disturbance.
- It was not felt that additional conditions to the license would be satisfactory due to previous consultation and continued failure to control events at the premises.

Mr P Whurr addressed the Sub-Committee on behalf of the applicant. Issues highlighted included the following:

- There had been 563 events at the premises over the past 18 months with tens of thousands of customers passing through safely.
- It was acknowledged that there had been problems with White Collar Boxing but it was felt that professional boxing should still be allowed at the venue as there had not been any history or evidence of incidents at these events.
- The children who had been present at the event in February had been family members of one of the boxers.
- Following the incident at the event in February a further boxing event due to be held on 3 March 2017 had been voluntarily cancelled by the applicant at a potential loss of £20,000.
- There were four professional boxing events planned before the end of the year. It was anticipated that these would generate income of £90,000 which was much needed revenue for the club.
- The applicant acknowledged the breakdown in trust and had worked hard in order to offer suitable conditions to the license which could satisfy the concerns of the police.
- The applicant offered a condition to no longer have White Collar Boxing and Amateur boxing events at the premises.

In response to comments and questions from the Sub-Committee, the following was discussed:

- Ticketing arrangements – details of who purchased tickets could be printed on tickets and this had been done for other events.
- Children would not be admitted to boxing events and should not have been present at the event in February.
- There had been a sufficient number of security staff present at the event held in February although it was acknowledged that this had not prevented the disorder.
- There had been requests from the applicant to remove boxers from the proposed bouts where that had been concerns. Details of boxers had been submitted to West Yorkshire Police beforehand.
- There was only one professional boxing promoter that would be used and there had not been any incidents at any of their previous events. They would also provide additional security staff.
- In response to concerns that there was no senior staff present at the event in February 2017, it was reported that for future events there would always be senior staff present and also the Designated Premises Supervisor where possible.

In response to the applicant's representations, West Yorkshire Police reiterated concerns that agreements from previous action plan meetings had not been carried out. It was not felt that financial concerns of the applicant were of relevance and that the main concern was of public safety. There had been disturbances at three boxing events at the premises out of a total of eleven and the Sub-Committee was asked to regard the West Yorkshire Police for the licence to be reviewed as proportionate.

The Licensing Sub-Committee carefully considered the report of the Head of Elections, Licensing and Registration, the Statement of Licensing Policy and the request from West Yorkshire Police to review the licence. It also considered the representations made at the hearing on behalf of West Yorkshire Police and the representations of the applicant both in writing and at the hearing.

RESOLVED – That the following three conditions as offered by the applicant be attached to the licence:

1. The premises licence holder shall not hold any white collar or amateur boxing events. The only boxing/wrestling events which will be held at the premises will be professionally promoted events. The premises licence holder will 28 days notice to West Yorkshire Police (WYP) of these events ensuring that the full list of professional boxers fighting at the event are provided.
2. That a minimum of 28 days notice to be provided, by way of electronic correspondence, to WYP where the following events are planned:
 - Music orientated events involving genres recognised as 'dance, grime, bassline or R&B'
 - Where alcohol is sold; and
 - Where the anticipated number of attendees exceeds 500 (all three elements must apply for notification to be mandatory)
3. For any event to which paragraph 2 applies, an electronic risk assessment must be submitted to WYP at least 7 days prior to the day on which the event takes place.

Also the following conditions to be included:

- No persons under the age of 18 to be present at boxing events.
- No ticket sales on the door at boxing events.
- Tickets should have purchaser details printed on.
- Senior staff to be present at all boxing events.