

Report of: Chief Officer, Elections and Regulatory

Report to: Licensing Sub Committee

Date: Tuesday 1st November 2022

Subject: Certification of a Film – Leeds International Film 2022

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|---|---|--|
| Are specific electoral Wards affected? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): Little London & Woodhouse and Weetwood | | |
| Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |
| Is the decision eligible for Call-In? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |
| Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |
| If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: | | |
| Appendix number: | | |

Executive Summary

To advise the Licensing Sub Committee Members of an application for the certification of a number of films to be shown as part of Leeds International Film Festival 2022. The screenings are scheduled to take place between 3rd and 17th November 2022 at Vue Cinema in the Light Cinema, Everyman Cinema, Howard Assembly Room, Cottage Road Cinema, School of Arts Cinema at Leeds Beckett University and one special event at Jumbo Records.

Of the films requiring certification the applicant has supplied links to view 5 films only, requesting classifications ranging from 12A to 15. Following legal advice, Members are recommended to certify the films they cannot view as category 18 ratings and further information on this matter is detailed at 3.2 of this report.

1.0 Purpose of this Report

1.1 This report informs Members with the background, history and issues of an application made under the Licensing Act 2003 (“the Act”) for the certification of a film that does not currently have a BBFC (British Board of Film Classification) certification. Finally, this report informs Members of the options available to them when considering an application for the certification of films.

2.0 Background Information

2.1 The Licensing Act 2003 applies to premises which provide film exhibitions. At present there are a total of 8 cinemas licensed in the Leeds district.

2.4 A copy of the current BBFC Classification Guidelines can be viewed [here](#).

3.0 Main Issues

3.1 An application has been received from Leeds Film to certify a number of films to be shown as part of Leeds International Film Festival 2022. The screenings are scheduled to take place between 3rd and 17th November 2022 at Vue Cinema in the Light Cinema, Everyman Cinema, Howard Assembly Room, Cottage Road Cinema, School of Arts Cinema at Leeds Beckett University and one special event at Jumbo Records.

3.2 The Act defines the exhibition of film as ‘the exhibition of moving pictures’, including feature films, advertisements and trailers.

3.3 In response to a briefing by the BBFC and advice sought from the council’s Legal Department, it is essential the Licensing Sub-Committee can view each film in order to rate it appropriately. In instances where films are unavailable, Members are advised to certify them 18 rating, subject to a written declaration from the applicant conforming that each film does not contain any content which would more likely than not, render the film liable to be classified as R18 if considered in accordance with the BBFC Classification Guidelines.

3.4 A document listing the films without the availability to view them can be viewed at **Appendix A** of the agenda. In accordance with the statement above, all films contained within the list request an 18 rating.

3.5 In summary, the 5 films where advance screeners have been made available and requesting certifications between 12A and 15, are as follows:

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|---------------------------|--|
| <i>Title</i> | <i>Above Water</i> |
| <i>Synopsis</i> | <i>A documentary following a 12 years-old girl and her community living in a village in Niger, one of the sub-Saharan countries hardest hit by global warming. Every day Houlaye and her friends walk several kilometres to fetch water. As the village rallies together to obtain the construction of a well, there is promise of a new life. No contentious material. The film will be followed by an educational panel on climate change.</i> |
| <i>Recommended Rating</i> | <i>12A</i> |

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| <i>Title</i> | <i>Fig Tree</i> |
| <i>Synopsis</i> | <i>A coming of age drama following a 16 year old Jewish girl in Ethiopia during the civil war. We only see the aftermath of fighting as several characters have lost their limbs, and an officer is saved after trying to attempt suicide. It contains one scene of domestic abuse. There are references to sex but it's not seen on screen.</i> |
| <i>Recommended Rating</i> | <i>15</i> |

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| <i>Title</i> | <i>Rookies</i> |
| <i>Synopsis</i> | <i>Documentary about youth and dance in Paris. A group of teens from disadvantaged backgrounds attend a prestigious dance school and struggle to balance their ambitions and complicated lives. Strong themes of teenage aggression and challenging existences.</i> |
| <i>Recommended Rating</i> | 15 |

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| <i>Title</i> | <i>The Star Wars Kid</i> |
| <i>Synopsis</i> | <i>Documentary about the long-term impact of a viral video, from the perspective of its subject who had a video of him when he was a teenager seen by tens of millions around the world although he never gave his consent for it to be uploaded online. Themes of consent, digital identities and the right to be forgotten.</i> |
| <i>Recommended Rating</i> | 12A |

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| <i>Title</i> | <i>Youth</i> |
| <i>Synopsis</i> | <i>The first feature film ever made in Djibouti follows three teenage girls as they navigate the beginnings of adulthood. Contains mild violence (a slap), there is a miscarriage that is unseen apart from some blood on her trousers and on the lid of the toilet. There is moderate bad language. There are marital affairs as the teenagers are having relationships with much older men, but it isn't glamorised and they leave the men in the end. No sex is seen on screen. For this screening we are working with Cinema Africa! and Leeds African Communities Trust to reach out to local community and youth groups.</i> |
| <i>Recommended Rating</i> | 12A |

3.6 Links to view to the 5 films above have been provided to the Licensing Sub Committee in advance of the hearing and a representative of Leeds Film is due to attend the hearing to provide additional details.

3.7 To assist members with their deliberation officers of the Licensing Authority will view each available film and provided comments in accordance with BBFC guidelines as a supplementary item.

4.0 Implications for Council Policy and Governance

4.1 There are no implications for Council policy and governance in respect of determining this application.

5.0 Legal and Resource Implications

5.1 There is no right of appeal to the Magistrates Court against this decision of the Committee.

6.0 Recommendations

6.1 Members are requested to consider this request for the certification of the films as attached hereto.

6.2 Members are recommended to view films prior to the issue of a Certificate.

7.0 Options Available to Members

7.1 The Licensing Authority has the authority to categories a film which is absent of a Certificate from the BBFC.