

**LICENSING COMMITTEE
SEXUAL ENTERTAINMENT VENUES WORKING GROUP**

26th NOVEMBER 2010

PRESENT Councillors Armitage and Wilson

IN ATTENDANCE S Holden – Principal Project Officer
A Strudwick - LCC Domestic Violence Team
N Raper – Section Head, Entertainment Licensing
S Kennedy – Principal Liaison & Enforcement Officer
R Des Forges - Solicitor
H Gray - Clerk

APOLOGIES Councillors R D Feldman and Grayshon
P Carville – Principal Licensing Officer

18 WELCOMES AND INTRODUCTIONS

Councillor Armitage welcomed all present and brief introductions were made

19 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED – The minutes of the last SEV WG held 15th October 2010 were agreed as a correct record

20 GUEST SPEAKER – Ms A Strudwick, Health and Domestic Violence co-ordinator, LCC Domestic Violence Team

Miss Strudwick gave a brief presentation to the WG to emphasise risk management as a key issue for the WG to consider in drafting the Statement of Licensing Policy for the Licensing of Sex Establishments. Miss Strudwick welcomed the measures ensuring the safety of dancers within the draft Policy and suggested the WG consider broadening this element to encompass the safety of women in the city centre in general. She also emphasised:

- the gender issues within the lap dancing business highlighting that dancers were predominantly female and customers mainly male
- The Genesis Group which works with prostitutes had evidence of lap dancing venues being a new route into prostitution
- Statistics from a 2003 survey showed an increase in the number of sexual assault and sex crimes occurring near to lap dancing venues
- LCC had produced a Violence Against Women Strategy and this could be referenced within the SE Policy under Section 7

The WG welcomed the offer of assistance from Miss Strudwick in the creation of the proposed Dancers Welfare Pack and thanked her for her presentation. The WG then discussed dancers' isolation in terms of employment protection and the low uptake of union membership, such as Equity. The WG felt it was important make dancers aware of the benefits of union membership

RESOLVED –

- a) To thank Ms Strudwick for her input into the drafting of the Policy and the Dancers Welfare Packs

- b) To consider the inclusion of information on union membership within the Dancers Welfare Packs

21 PROJECT PLAN

The WG noted that adoption of the Policy was to be delayed until September 2011 as discussions were ongoing regarding the approval process and whether it was a matter for full Council or the Licensing Committee. Importantly, Council had already agreed to use the Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1982 to create the Policy. This delay would also afford LCC more time to undertake a second, targeted, public consultation on any amendments drawn up after consultation with the trade.

The WG also discussed

- the lap dancing venues in Leeds did not appear to be suffering the same downturn in business as other nightclubs during the current economic climate
- the value of Leeds Light Night organised to highlight issues affecting women in the city centre at night
- concerns that young, drunken women in the city centre appear vulnerable
- the Street Angels scheme being launched in Headingley to provide “friends” to men and women who look vulnerable who can assist with finding transport home etc

RESOLVED – To note the revised project timetable as:

September to December 2010 – policy development including pool of conditions

January & February 2011 – Pre-consultation

January 2011 – possible site visit

March – May 2011 – Public consultation

September 2011 – Approval process

22 DRAFT POLICY

The WG noted receipt of comments from Councillor R D Feldman and discussed the following

Statement of Licensing Policy

Section 5 – a reference will be made to the LCC Violence Against Women Strategy

Section 6 – now referenced culturally sensitive areas

Section 7 – a reference to the Equality Act to be included

Section 8 – Application process

- 8:13 – 8:21 Hearings – The WG noted the query raised by Councillor R D Feldman on inclusion of site visit information but determined this was not necessary as it was included within the general hearings procedure for Licensing Sub Committees
- 8:36 – 8:41 “Waiver” – The WG determined all this information was required as it provided guidance to applicants and the Sub Committees. It was noted there was no provision to issue an “occasional licence”, such instances would require a waiver application. The WG determined that waiver applications should be determined by a Sub Committee. Further investigation was needed to determine an appropriate fee.

Appendix 1 – Standard Conditions

External Appearance – the following was determined:

- discussed signage and preferred “adult entertainment” to “gentleman’s club” as appropriate wording for signage within the lobby area of each club.
- There shall be no indication that a venue offers adult entertainment when the venue is closed. Venues shall be discreet in the street scene during the day
- There shall be no external neon signage or illumination

Advertising

- Condition 27 - Further consideration required of what constitutes littering/distribution of flyers in conjunction with LCC Highways who issue the relevant consents and penalty fines

The WG noted that 8 lap dancing clubs already existed in Leeds city centre and that it may not be possible to visit each of those in one evening prior to the final draft of the Policy. Members noted the operators would be offered the opportunity to accept a visit from the WG and their response would be taken into account. The WG also considered the merits of visiting one of each small/large type of venue.

Appendix 2 – Application form

- Q7 – The noted the inclusion of the request for information on beneficiaries
- The WG noted the application form sought information from the applicants on polices and operating procedures and that some of this information would be duplicated as some venues would submit these documents for applications for a Premises Licence under the LA2003. However, as this form would be completed by cinemas and shops, it was determined to leave the request in the application form at present and review the consultation responses on its inclusion.
- Q41 “Is the proposal for full nudity” was also discussed, having regard to Q 42 on the “nature of entertainment”. The WG recalled previous discussions on the entertainment offered at the venues, and determined to leave those 2 questions within the form pending the results of consultation

The WG noted it would also be appropriate to meet with representatives of the sex shop businesses within Leeds and requested officers make arrangements with the trade to do so. It was reported that the Authority would be required to consult with both the SS and SEV trades on fees in due course

RESOLVED – to note the contents of the discussions and the comments made on the draft Policy

23 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

SEV WG 13th January 2010 at 1.00 pm

Meeting with the trade 13th January 2010 at 2.00 pm

Both meetings to be held in the Civic Hall, Leeds