

Minutes of the Licensing Sub-Committee

31 July 2023

Members Present:-

Councillor Richard Barnes
Councillor Ernest Ambe Esq
Councillor Andrew Bilbow OBE

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

RESOLVED that Councillor Richard Barnes be appointed Chair for this Licensing Sub-Committee meeting.

2. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS (IF ANY)

None.

3. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND OTHER INTERESTS (IF ANY)

None.

4. LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE HEARING PROCEDURE

The Chair explained the procedure that would be followed at the meeting.

5. ADULT GAMING CENTRE APPLICATION: LITTLE VEGAS 214 STATION ROAD EDGWARE HA8 7AR

The Sub-Committee considered an application for a New Adult Gaming Centre Licence under section 159 of the Gambling Act 2005 Little Vegas 214 Station Road Edgware HA8 7AR.

6. MOTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED that the parties be excluded from the meeting, together with the press and public, in accordance with the Regulation 14(2) of the Licensing Act 2003 (Hearings and Regulations 2005).

Prior to exclusion, parties were notified that the decision of the Sub-Committee would be announced within 5 working days.

7. DELIBERATION BY THE SUB-COMMITTEE IN PRIVATE SESSION

The Sub-Committee deliberated in private session, accompanied by the Officer from HB Public Law and the Governance Officer.

8. RE-ADMISSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC: ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE DECISION OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE

Decision

Re: Application for an adult gaming centre by Chongie Entertainment Limited Premises: Little Vegas, 214 Station Road, Edgware HA8 7AR

1. This is an application for an adult gaming centre by Chongie Entertainment Limited (the “**Applicant**”) for the premises known Little Vegas, 214 Station Road, Edgware HA8 7AR (the “**Premises**”). There was one objector to the application, which was Councillor Gordon, who is one of the Councillors for the Ward where the Premises are located.
2. The Applicant was represented by their Solicitor along with three employees of the Applicant, and Councillor Gordon was also in attendance.
3. The Sub-Committee reviewed and considered the written and oral representations by the parties, which included a supplemental bundle of documents submitted by the Applicant prior to the date of the hearing.
4. The application and the Applicant’s additional bundle included their Local Area Risk Assessments, which identifies the local risks in and around the location of the Premises and the measures proposed by the Applicant on how it would seek to address those risks in accordance with the Gambling Commission’s code of practice, the Gambling Commission’s guidance, the licensing objectives and Barnet’s Statement of Principles in relation to the Gambling Act 2005.
5. With regard to the licensing objectives, the application, along with the Applicant’s local area risk assessment and supplemental documents set out various measures the Applicant intends to take to address concerns regarding crime and disorder and the protection of children and vulnerable persons from being exploited. These include the installation and use of CCTV, a Challenge 25 scheme, use of a magnetic locking device on the main entrance / exit at times of concern, a staff alert button. There will be signs highlighting that under-18s are not permitted to enter the Premises and staff will be positioned near the main entrance to prevent entry by under-18s. The Applicant briefly explained some of the self-help measures available to customers if they feel they are gambling more than they should, and

also explained the soft contact measures staff undertake in interacting with customers to assess how their mood and demeanour.

6. The Applicant explained that they assess staffing levels depending on customer use of a premises, and that in the event only one member of staff is on duty they will be able to monitor the Premises and access to the same via CCTV and the maglock system on the main door.
7. Councillor Gordon reiterated his concerns as set out in his representation, including a study by a Professor Griffiths showing a correlation between the number of gambling premises in an area and crime and disorder. He also expanded on the number of other gambling premises, including betting shops, in the close vicinity of the Premises, along with his concern over schools and other vulnerable people being near to the Premises and the effect another gambling premises may have on them. He also stated that Edgware was a suburban place and that it was not a suitable place for this gambling premises.
8. With respect to the issue of crime and disorder, the Police are one of the Responsible Authorities who are consulted as part of any application under the Gambling Act 2005 and in this case the Police did not make a representation, although it is noted that they had responded to say, “.... *The LARA [Local Area Risk Assessment] appears to cover all main points of note.*”
9. Furthermore, the Applicant highlighted the fact that the report by Professor Gordon referred to by Cllr Gordon in his representation refers to a study looking at betting shops and crime and disorder, and the Premises here will be an adult gaming centre, which they argued is a different type of gambling premises, with a different clientele and different way of supervising the same, such as staff patrolling the entire Premises and interacting with customers, rather than being behind a screen as in a betting shop.
10. In so far as the objector comments about the number of gambling premises in an area, the Guidance makes it clear that issues of demand and competition are not to be considered by the Sub-Committee.

11. With regard to issues of crime and disorder and the protection of children and vulnerable people from harm and exploitation, there are no formal representation from any of the responsible authorities on these points, and the Police have indicated they consider the Applicant's local area risk assessment to be sufficient. The local area risk assessment also appears to address the Sub-Committee's concerns regarding these points, along with the concerns raised by the objector.
12. Therefore, having considered all of the representations and issues, the Sub-Committee has decided that the application is consistent with the matters set out in s.153 of the Gambling Act 2005 and is approved.

Right to Appeal

13. If the Applicant, or a person who made representations in relation to this application, is aggrieved with the decision of the Licensing Panel, they may appeal to the Magistrates' Court within 21 days beginning with the day on which they receive notification of this decision.

9. ANY OTHER ITEM(S) THE CHAIR DECIDES ARE URGENT

None.

The meeting finished at 11.45am