

Licensing and Appeals Sub Committee Hearing Panel

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 11 December 2023

Present: Councillor T Judge – in the Chair

Councillors: Hilal and Riasat

LACHP/23/128. Sex Establishment Licence Renewal - Long Legs, Basement, 46-46a George Street, Manchester, M1 4HF

The Hearing Panel considered a report from the Head of Planning, Building Control and Licensing.

The Licensing Officer addressed the Hearing Panel, noting that two objections had been received to the renewal application. A summary of the objections was provided. Any decision to refuse the application should only be done within the grounds of the legislation. No mandatory conditions for refusal had been met, and it was noted as down to the Hearing Panel to decide if any discretionary conditions for refusal had been met.

The applicant's representative addressed the Hearing Panel, noting that this was a longstanding Sex Establishment Licence, situated in a well-established night-time economy area of Manchester. The objections did not provide a true reflection of Long Legs. They noted that 25% of their customers are female. The interaction between customers and performers was heavily regulated, with the safety and welfare of performers of paramount concern to the Premises. The Premises has extensive CCTV with experienced door staff employed. The applicant's representative noted that there had been no representations received from the Responsible Authorities. Whilst it was noted that the issues raised by objectors were important, they had no relevance to the renewal application. The applicant's representative felt that the objectors had not shown an understanding of how Long Legs operated. They noted that there were no mandatory grounds for refusal, also stating their belief that there were no discretionary grounds either. The Licence had been held since 2011, being renewed each year. The Premises was well run by experienced operators, according to the applicant's representative.

The Licensing Unit Officer summed up by stating that the Hearing Panel must have regard to the Council's policy for Sex Establishments, information submitted as part of the application, any observations submitted to it by the Chief Officer of Police and any objections received from anyone else within 28 days of the application. An application should only be refused where the Hearing Panel are satisfied it is necessary and proportionate, with any decision made on non-discriminatory grounds. The Hearing Panel could impose conditions, alongside those agreed as standard conditions for a Sex Establishment.

In their deliberations, the Hearing Panel considered the Council policy relating to Sex Establishment venues. They acknowledged that there had been objections received, but they were based on moral reasons, something the panel could not consider. They

also acknowledged that no mandatory conditions for refusal had been met and were satisfied that no discretionary conditions had been met either.

Decision

To grant the renewal application as applied for.