

Licensing Committee – 30 November 2021

Summary Review – Queens Hotel

Cllrs – Connolly, Evans and Hewitson

Applicant – GMP – PC Alan Isherwood in attendance

PLH – Janice Flint represented by her partner Stephen Dale

Decision:

Withdraw the suspension of the premises licence with immediate effect pending full Review to be heard on the 21 December 2021

Reasons:

The Committee considered the representations made on behalf of GMP and the Premises Licence Holder (PLH) and have taken both the written and oral representations into account.

In reaching its decision the Committee have also considered the Council's statement of Licensing Policy, the Licensing Act 2003, the Guidance issued by the Secretary of state under Section 182 of the Act and the licensing objectives.

The Committee considered CCTV which was not available to it at its meeting on the 26th November when the Premises Licence was suspended with immediate effect.

The Committee was concerned by the evidence from GMP of the large quantity of suspected class A drugs prepared for individual deals. GMP also stated that a knife was found under a table nearby the seats where the drugs had been discarded. A number of people had run away from inside the premises as the police approached the venue. A walkie talkie was also found at the entrance to the premises. GMP stated alcohol was also found hidden in the toilets and near a container outside.

However, when the CCTV was viewed by the Committee it was apparent that youths had entered the premises with no other person present in the bar area and their actions clearly indicated that they were disposing of items under the seats of the bar area and in the toilet area. Such items were later identified to be drug wraps, a knife, walkie talkie and a small consignment of alcohol in the toilet, all items identified by GMP.

The Committee heard from the PLHs representative that the DPS was not on site at the time however they had been informed that lads that had been hanging around on the waste land next to the pub had run in when police arrived to try to escape out a back door which was locked so they discarded the drugs and ran away. The PLH confirmed the alcohol, found was not theirs and that one of the lads had been carrying a box with it in which he discarded before running off. It was stated that a substantial amount of alcohol was abandoned near to storage containers outside the premises on waste land owned by the Council.

The PLH was asked why he had failed to provide the CCTV footage at the hearing on the 26th November 2021 to which he replied that he had genuinely experienced difficulties in downloading the footage when requested by GMP. Committee was advised that they have taken the CCTV equipment back to the supplier and obtained a new system.

Whilst expressing concern that the PLH had been unable to download the CCTV footage Committee felt that this was a genuine lack of understanding as to how the system operated. It felt that the premises could benefit from training on this issue.

However, it noted that it is also a condition on the licence and the Committee expect the PLH to be able to provide CCTV on request.

The Committee considered that the PLH had occupied the premises for nearly 40 years without any previous incidents being reported. During such time it felt that the premises had been well managed and had been an establishment that worked with and embraced the community.

In arriving at its decision, the Committee noted the willingness of the PLH to work closely with the Responsible Authorities and specifically GMP to ensure that the Premises was upholding the licensing objectives.

The Committee therefore found on reviewing the representations made and in particular the CCTV footage it did not consider that the interim steps imposed at the hearing on the 26th November was necessary and appropriate and decided to withdraw the suspension with immediate effect pending the full review on the 21st December 2021 .

For the purpose of Section 53B (8) of the Licensing Act 2003 immediate notice of this decision was given orally to GMP and the PLH at the hearing.