

**Manchester City Council**  
**Report for Resolution**

**Report to:** Licensing Subcommittee Hearing Panel – 16 May 2022

**Subject:** Birch Community Centre, Brighton Grove, Manchester, M14 5JT -  
App ref: Premises Licence variation 272860

**Report of:** Director of Planning, Building Control & Licensing

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**Summary**

Application for the variation of a premises licence which has attracted objections.

**Recommendations**

That the Committee determine the application.

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**Wards Affected:** Rusholme

<b>Manchester Strategy Outcomes</b>	<b>Summary of the contribution to the strategy</b>
A thriving and sustainable City: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	Licensed premises provide a key role as an employer, in regeneration, and in attracting people to the city. The efficient processing of applications as well as effective decision making in respect of them, plays an essential role in enabling businesses to thrive and maximise contribution to the economy of the region and sub-region.
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	An effective Licensing Policy and implementation will enable growth in our City by supporting businesses who promote the Licensing Objectives.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	The Licensing process provides for local residents and other interested parties to make representations in relation to licensing applications. Representations have to be directly related to the licensing objectives.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit and work.	An effective licensing system supports and enables growth and employment in our City with neighbourhoods that provide amenities suitable to the surrounding communities.

A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	
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**Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for:**

Equal Opportunities Policy  
Risk Management  
Legal Considerations

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**Financial Consequences – Revenue**

None

**Financial Consequences – Capital**

None

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**Background documents (available for public inspection):**

- Manchester City Council Statement of Licensing Policy 2016 - 2021
- Guidance issued under section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003, April 2017
- Any further documentary submissions by any party to the hearing

## 1. **Introduction**

- 1.1 On 31/03/2022, an application for the variation of an existing Premises Licence under s34 of the Licensing Act 2003 was made in respect of Birch Community Centre, Brighton Grove, Manchester, M14 5JT in the Rusholme ward of Manchester. A location map of the premises is attached at **Appendix 1**.
- 1.2 A 28-day public consultation exercise was undertaken in accordance with Licensing Act 2003 regulations; requiring the application to be advertised by the displaying of a blue notice at or on the premises, a notice published in a newspaper or similar circulating in the local area, and details of the application published on the Council's website.
- 1.3 Representations may be made for or against an application during the consultation period. To be 'relevant' and, therefore, able to be taken into account in determining the application, they must be about the likely effect of the grant of the premises licence on the promotion of the licensing objectives. Where representations are made by persons who are not a responsible authority, they must not be frivolous or vexatious.
- 1.4 Relevant representations have been received in respect of this application and so it must be determined by a Licensing Hearing Panel in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

## 2. **Current Licence**

- 2.1 The premises licence holder is Birch Community Association and a copy of the current licence is attached at **Appendix 2**.
3. The Premises licence holder has also applied to Disapply the Designated Premises Supervisor Mandatory Condition on the licence. This application is in consultation to Midnight 11 May 2022.

## 4. **The Application**

- 4.1 A copy of the application is attached at **Appendix 3**.

A summary of the application is attached at **Appendix 4**

The variation is to:

Extend the existing licensable activities of the premises licence to 7 days per week. The applicant has also applied to provide the following additional licensable activities and removal of conditions:

- Performance of plays
- Films
- Anything of a similar description to live music, recorded music or performance of dance

Removal of condition 7 Annex 3: The children's play area is to be closed at 2200.

- 4.1.1 In accordance with the Live Music Act 2012 and Deregulation Act 2015, performances of Live Music and Recorded Music between the hours of 0800 and 2300 hours have been deregulated and so should not be regarded as licensable activities for the purposes of this application.
- 4.1.2 Any further details provided relating to any of the individual licensable activities are specified on the application form at **Appendix 3**.
- 4.2 **Activities unsuitable for children**
- 4.2.1 The applicant has not highlighted any adult entertainment or services, activities, other entertainment or matters ancillary to the use of the premises that may give rise to concern in respect of children.
- 4.3 **Steps to promote the licensing objectives**
- 4.3.1 The applicant proposes to promote the licensing objectives by taking the steps identified in the operating schedule.
- 4.3.2 These steps must be translated into conditions by the licensing authority to be included in any granted premises licence, unless the conditions are modified by the Panel following consideration of relevant representations. These conditions are set out in the Schedule of Conditions at **Appendix 5**.
- 4.3.3 The applicant has not submitted any documents in support of their application,

5. **Relevant Representations**

- 5.1 A total of 24 relevant representations were received in respect of the application (**Appendix 6**). The personal details of all members of the public have been redacted. Original copies of these representation will be available to the Committee at the hearing.

Responsible Authorities:

- MCC Licensing and Out of Hours Compliance Team.

Other Persons:

- Residents (x23), 4 opposing the application and 19 in support of the application

- 5.2 Summary of the representations:

Party	Grounds of representation	Recommends
<b>Licensing and Out of Hours Compliance (LOOH)</b>	LOOH objected to the application based on the grounds that the premises is located in a very concentrated residential area. LOOH state that they have received multiple	Grant with conditions

	<p>complaints due to public nuisance. LOOH further state that due to the proximity of residential properties, regulated entertainment would not be suitable for this location.</p> <p>LOOH are also concerned that there will be an increased risk of children having access to alcohol via direct purchase or via proxy sales. LOOH have proposed conditions which would reduce their concerns</p>	
<b>Residents</b>	<p><b>In Opposition</b></p> <p>Residents have objected to the application based on the grounds that the premises located in a highly residential area. Residents are concerned the granting of the application will lead to an increase in noise and traffic.</p> <p><b>In support</b></p> <p>Residents have submitted representations in support of the application on the grounds that the premises is an important local facility and provides many community events. Residents state that the events at the premises help to improve mental and physical wellbeing of the local community and service users and that the granting of the application will not have an adverse impact on the community and local residents.</p>	Grant /Refusal

5.3 Any conditions proposed by objectors are set out in the Schedule of Conditions at **Appendix 5**.

5.4 At the time of compiling the committee papers, agreements on conditions have not been reached with any party

## 6. **Key Policies and Considerations**

### 6.1 **Legal Considerations**

- 6.1.1 Hearings under the Licensing Act 2003 operate under the Licensing Act 2003 (Hearings) Regulations 2005.

## 6.2 **New Information**

- 6.2.1 In accordance with Regulation 18 of the Licensing Act 2003 (Hearings) Regulations 2005, the authority may take into account documentary or other information produced by a party in support of their application, representations or notice either before the hearing or, with the consent of all parties, at the hearing.

## 6.3 **Hearsay Evidence**

- 6.3.1 The Panel may accept hearsay evidence and it will be a matter for the Panel to attach what weight to it that they consider appropriate. Hearsay evidence is evidence of something that a witness neither saw nor heard, but has heard or read about.

## 6.4 **The Secretary of State's Guidance to the Licensing Act 2003**

- 6.4.1 The Secretary of State's Guidance to the Licensing Act 2003 is provided for all parties involved in licensing. It is a key medium for promoting best practice, ensuring consistent application of licensing powers across England and Wales and for promoting fairness, equal treatment and proportionality.
- 6.4.2 Section 4 of the 2003 Act provides that, in carrying out its functions, a licensing authority must 'have regard to' guidance issued by the Secretary of State under section 182. The Guidance is therefore binding on all licensing authorities to that extent. However, the Guidance cannot anticipate every possible scenario or set of circumstances that may arise and, as long as licensing authorities have properly understood this Guidance, they may depart from it if they have good reason to do so and can provide full reasons.
- 6.4.3 Departure from the Guidance could give rise to an appeal or judicial review, and the reasons given will then be a key consideration for the courts when considering the lawfulness and merits of any decision taken.

## 6.5 **Manchester Statement of Licensing Policy**

- 6.5.1 Section 4 of the 2003 Act provides that, in carrying out its functions, a licensing authority must 'have regard to' its statement of licensing policy.
- 6.5.2 The Licensing Policy sets out the vision the licensing authority has for the regulation of licensed premises throughout Manchester and outlines the standards expected in order to ensure the promotion of the licensing objectives in the city. The Panel may depart from the policies should it consider doing so would benefit the promotion of the licensing objectives. Reasons are to be given for any such departure from the Policy.
- 6.5.3 Section 4 of the Policy (Operation of the Policy) sets out how the Licensing Policy is intended to be used in practice for licence applications and licensed premises.

- 6.5.4 Relevant to this application and the grounds of the representations made, the Panel are recommended to have regard to the following sections of the Policy:

***Section 6: What we aim to encourage***

This section identifies certain types of venues and initiatives the licensing authority aims to encourage in order to promote an inclusive evening and night-time economy not simply focused on the consumption of alcohol. We aim to encourage:

- Premises that will extend the diversity of entertainment and attract a wider range of participants
- Live music, especially original material, which will provide a range of live performances and styles of music, provided that such entertainment does not undermine the licensing objectives
- National cultural institutions, global sports events and cultural festivals
- Non-drink-led premises, including restaurants, cafes, theatres and cinemas
- Communication and integration with local residents and businesses through licensees consulting with those in the local area prior to an application
- Participation in Pubwatches, off licence forums and other crime-reduction partnerships
- Engagement with the NITENET radio scheme and DISC secure information sharing platform by city centre venues through the Cityco Manchester Business Crime Reduction Partnership
- Designing out crime in the layout of the premises

***Section 7: Local factors***

This section sets out key issues that applicants are expected to take into account relevant to the individual characteristics of the premises when preparing their operating schedule and address any local factors relevant to their premises.

Having regard to the grounds of the representations made, the Panel are recommended to have regard to the following Factors:

- Identified risk factors specific to the licensed premises
- Evidence of pre-existing problems in the area
- Consistency with relevant Council strategies
- The proximity of the premises to local residents and other local businesses, particularly in relation to the potential for nuisance
- Ability to clean and maintain the street scene

***Section 8: Manchester's standards to promote the licensing objectives***

This section identifies the standards that the licensing authority expects of licensed premises in Manchester. It is recognised that not all standards will be appropriate to apply in every situation to every premises, and applicants are not obliged to include all standards in their operating schedule. The degree to which standards would be appropriate is expected to be proportionate to the risk posed against the promotion of the licensing objectives having regard to the individual circumstances of the premises. The standards are not exhaustive and

the licensing authority will have regard to any relevant issues raised in any representation that may fall outside them.

- MS2 Effective general management of the premises
- MS3 Responsible promotion and sale of alcohol
- MS5 Prevent on-street consumption of alcohol
- MS8 Prevent noise nuisance from the premises
- MS9 Effectively manage exterior spaces (e.g. beer gardens, smoking areas, table and chair areas on the highway)

## 7. **Conclusion**

- 7.1 A licensing authority must carry out its functions under this Act (“licensing functions”) with a view to promoting the licensing objectives:
- the prevention of crime and disorder
  - public safety;
  - the prevention of public nuisance; and
  - the protection of children from harm.
- 7.2 In considering the matter, the Panel should take into account any representations or objections that have been received from responsible authorities or other persons, and representations made by the applicant or premises user as the case may be. In reaching the decision, regard must also be had to relevant provisions of the national guidance and the Council’s licensing policy statement.
- 7.3 The Panel must take such of the steps set out below that it considers appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives:
- a) To grant the licence subject to the conditions consistent with the operating schedule accompanying the application, which the Panel may modify to such extent as they consider appropriate;
  - b) To reject the whole or part of the application
- 7.4 The conditions consistent with the operating schedule may be modified to alter or omit any of them or to add any new condition, including restricting the times at which licensable activities authorised by the licence can take place.
- 7.5 However, conditions should not be imposed on a licence which are unrelated to the variation sought.
- 7.6 All licensing determinations should be considered on the individual merits of the application.
- 7.7 The Panel’s determination should be evidence-based, justified as being appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives and proportionate to what it is intended to achieve. Findings on any issues of fact should be on the balance of probability.
- 7.8 It is important that a licensing authority should give comprehensive reasons for its decisions in anticipation of any appeals. Failure to give adequate reasons could itself give rise to grounds for an appeal.

7.9      **The Panel is asked to determine the application.**