

**Manchester City Council  
Report for Resolution**

**Report to:** Licensing Subcommittee Hearing Panel – 09 May 2023

**Subject:** La Buka African Cuisine Ltd, 286-288 Moston Lane, M40 9WB  
- App ref: Premises Licence (new) 285871

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

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**Summary**

Application for the grant of a premises licence made under the Licensing Act 2003, which has attracted objections.

**Recommendations**

That the Panel determine the application.

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**Wards Affected:** Moston

<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 regime 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	

**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.
- Guidance issued under section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003.
- Licensing Act 2003 (Hearings) Regulations 2005.
- Any further documentary submissions by any party to the hearing.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 On 20/03/2023, an application for the grant of a Premises Licence under s17 of the Licensing Act 2003 was made in respect of La Buka African Cuisine Ltd, 286-288 Moston Lane, Manchester, M40 9WB in the Moston ward of Manchester. A location map and photograph 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. The Application

- 2.1 A copy of the application is attached at **Appendix 2**.
- 2.2 The applicant is Fatai Babajide Ajose.
- 2.3 The description of the premises given by the applicant is

“Downstairs is a restaurant with bar area. We have two rooms upstairs available for whoever wants to have club, society or group meetings on weekends within our opening hours. The other room is meant for an office and storage.

The premises is bordered on the right by a hair salon and on the left by an office. We have two entrances for customer use, and also an extra door which is a fire exit.

No licensable activities will take place in the upstairs rooms – customers will buy drinks downstairs, and any music will be background music only.”

- 2.4 The proposed designated premises supervisor is Mr Folorunso Samuel Oni.

### 2.5 **The licensable activities applied for:**

- Provision of regulated entertainment (anything of a similar description to live music, recorded music or performances of dance) – indoors only:  
Mon to Sun 2pm to 11pm

- The supply of alcohol for consumption both on and off the premises:  
Mon to Sun 2pm to 11pm
- Opening hours:  
Mon to Sun 2pm to 11pm

2.5.1 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.

2.5.2 Any further details provided relating to any of the individual licensable activities are specified on the application form at **Appendix 2**.

## 2.6 **Activities unsuitable for children**

2.6.1 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.

## 2.7 **Steps to promote the licensing objectives**

2.7.1 The applicant proposes to promote the licensing objectives by taking the steps identified in the operating schedule.

2.7.2 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 4**.

## 2.8 **Further documentation accompanying the application**

2.8.1 The applicant has submitted the following document in support of their application, which are included with the application form at **Appendix 2**:

- Document of conditions and other information: in addition to proposing conditions, this document gives additional information about the application, and the procedures and practices to be followed. The full document was circulated with the consultation emails sent out by this office.

## 3. **Relevant Representations**

3.1 A total of 6 relevant representations were received in respect of the application (**Appendix 3**). The personal details of all members of the public have been redacted. Original copies of these representations will be available to the Panel at the hearing.

### Responsible Authorities:

- Greater Manchester Police;
- MCC Licensing and Out of Hours Compliance Team;
- MCC Trading Standards
- Manchester City Council Neighbourhood Delivery Team

Other Persons:

- Ward Councillor x 2

3.2 Summary of the representations:

<b>Party</b>	<b>Grounds of representation</b>	<b>Recommends</b>
<b>GMP</b>	<p>GMP are concerned that the applicant has very limited understanding of the 4 licensing objectives and that little thought has gone into the application, as the conditions proposed appear to have been directly copied from those on another licence.</p> <p>GMP are also concerned that the applicant has seen fit to propose conditions regarding the performance of nudity and striptease when the application states that there will be no relevant entertainment and is described as a restaurant.</p>	Refuse
<b>Licensing and Out of Hours Compliance (LOOH)</b>	<p>LOOH comment on the nature of the area and the proximity to residential accommodation. Grant of this application could lead to issues of public nuisance.</p> <p>This detailed representation raises many questions over the application, and comments that “it lacks consistency, does not make clear the intended use of the premises”, and does not state how it will promote the licensing objectives.</p> <p>The representation submits that there are a large number of discrepancies in the application: for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Why would a restaurant choose to play “exit music” at reduced volume, with lights turned up and dispersal measures in place? Why would there be a need for a “designated queuing area”, enclosed with barriers?</li><li>• Conditions offered suggest that large numbers of people will arrive at the same time, necessitating SIA management, including searches for drugs and weapons. This further undermines confidence that the premises intends to operate predominantly as a restaurant.</li></ul> <p>Further concerns are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• That “nudity and striptease” and it’s advertising are mentioned in the application with no measures offered, except not being seen from</li></ul>	Refuse

	<p>outside.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The application requests off-sales of alcohol but has not addressed how this will not undermine the licensing objectives in an area which already a high level of litter and some street drinking.</li> <li>• Reference to the use of a garden/ outside seating area which does not appear on the premises plan.</li> </ul> <p>The representation concludes that the “operating schedule provides no confidence that the licensing objectives will be upheld”. It is likely to have “a negative impact on the local community”</p>	
<p><b>Neighbourhood Delivery Team (NDT)</b></p>	<p>This representation describes the surrounding area as one with a mix of residential, commercial and community properties. Grant of this licence could lead to issues of public nuisance.</p> <p>The representation comments that, despite the detail in the operating schedule, “a number of the conditions offered are contradicted by other conditions, some contravene other legislation, and some are missing some key details and not enforceable.” One example is the reference made to smoking “generally” not being allowed on the premises.</p> <p>Another point of confusion is that the operating schedule makes reference to a side entrance to the premises. Given the premises’ location in the middle of a block of properties, it is not clear how the premises could have a side entrance. If the reference refers to the rear entrance, this “would cause an influx of noise related complaints through its day-to-day operation.”</p> <p>The application makes mention of nudity and striptease, but does not mention any control measures, or the number of such events to take place, as would be expected. Such entertainment is considered “wholly inappropriate” in this residential setting. The Councils Sex Establishment Policy Document is referred at this part of the representation.</p> <p>The mention of rooms available for hire raises concerns about the number of people who could be on the premises, potentially leading to</p>	<p>Refuse</p>

	<p>disorder.</p> <p>The NDT conclude that they “have no confidence in the management to operate under the proposed application” and request refusal.</p>	
<b>Trading Standards</b>	<p>This representation considers that the proposals in the application will not uphold the licensing objectives, specifically the protection of children from harm. Three conditions are proposed which relate to:</p> <p>operation of the Challenge 25 Scheme;</p> <p>Signage to be displayed regarding Challenge 25 and selling alcohol to children by proxy; and</p> <p>checks required to be made, both inside and outside, for underage persons encouraging adults to buy alcohol for them.</p>	Not stated
<b>Ward Councillors</b>	<p>The two representations received from ward councillors both forward on the representation received from the North NDT and state their total support for the points made in it.</p>	

3.3 The conditions proposed by Trading Standards are included in full in the Schedule of Conditions at **Appendix 4**.

3.4 No agreements on these conditions have been reached at the time of publication of these papers.

#### 4. **Key Policies and Considerations**

##### 4.1 **Legal Considerations**

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

##### 4.2 **New Information**

4.2.1 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.

##### 4.3 **Hearsay Evidence**

4.3.1 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.

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

- 4.4.1 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.
- 4.4.2 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.
- 4.4.3 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.

#### 4.5 **Manchester Statement of Licensing Policy**

- 4.5.1 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.
- 4.5.2 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.
- 4.5.3 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.
- 4.5.4 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.

- MS1 Implement effective security measures at the premises
- MS2 Effective general management of the premises
- MS3 Responsible promotion and sale of alcohol
- MS5 Prevent on-street consumption of alcohol
- MS7 Maintain a safe capacity
- 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)
- MS10 Operate effective cleansing arrangements, including ensuring the premises and surrounding area are kept clean and free of litter, and adequate arrangements for the secure and responsible storage of refuse
- MS11 Ensure the wellbeing of children on the premises
- MS12 Prevent underage sales of alcohol, including proxy sales

**Section 10: Adult entertainment (including striptease, nudity and other entertainment of a sexual nature)**

This section sets out specific considerations in respect of applications to provide adult entertainment, including entertainment of a sexual nature e.g. nudity, striptease and lap dancing.

**5. Conclusion**

5.1 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.

5.2 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.

5.3 Having regard to the representations, 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:
  - i. the conditions consistent with the operating schedule accompanying the application, which the Panel may modify to such extent as they consider appropriate, and
  - ii. any mandatory conditions that must be included in the licence;
- b) To exclude from the scope of the licence any of the licensable activities to which the application relates;
- c) To refuse to specify the person proposed in the application as the designated premises supervisor;
- d) To reject the application.

5.4 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.

5.5 All licensing determinations should be considered on the individual merits of the application.

5.6 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.

5.7 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.

5.8 **The Panel is asked to determine the application**