



Mr Michael Long
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BY EMAIL

Date: 05/10/2021
Our ref: NEON Letter

Dear Mr Long,

I am the Dorset Police Drug & Alcohol Harm Reduction Team Sergeant and I have responsibility for working with licensees to tackle issues of crime and disorder that are associated with licensed premises, namely public houses, bars, nightclubs and other premises involved in the provision of alcohol.

I know that we met during a recent Licensing Sub-Committee hearing as a result of a representation made by me on behalf of Dorset Police to a Temporary Event Notice that was served by you for an event taking place at NEON between 27-30th August.

I want to put some context behind that objection and to propose an alternative approach in respect of similar Temporary Event Notices that I anticipate you will submit on behalf of NEON in the future.

The fundamental basis for the objection was detailed and explained to the Licensing Sub-Committee; that being the serious assault which could be attributed to your premises. In addition, we have also received concerns from the Town Council via our Neighbourhood Policing Teams regarding frequent extensions in operating hours at NEON, which they consider causes anti-social behaviour and nuisance in the community. You will be aware that only the Police and Environmental Health are permitted to object to a Temporary Event Notice.

Temporary Event Notices were originally conceived to reduce the bureaucracy of applying for a Premises Licence for operators of events and premises wishing to conduct licensable activities. There is of course nothing contained within the Licensing Act 2003 which prevents licensed premises from making use of Temporary Event Notices to extend their operating hours, and indeed responsible use of Temporary Events Notices is encouraged, however, I believe that the frequency and impact of the events that have been held most recently at NEON have caused a disproportionately negative impact on the area.

I am aware of the correspondence recently sent by Environmental Health to you following the extension to your operating hours over the August Bank Holiday

weekend. It is regrettable that this disruption was caused and the reports serve only to support my view that there should be a more sustainable solution which enables there to be consultation, scrutiny and therefore appropriate conditions to ensure that these periods of extension are properly managed and delivered by your team.

Regardless of your decision whether to take the following action, I can assure you that any future Temporary Event Notices received by Dorset Police will be treated on their own merit and an evidence-based approach will be taken when deciding whether to make a representation against the Notice. This is the same approach taken with all Temporary Notices received.

To overcome the challenges that we and the local community encounter with licensed premises that operate extended hours at short notice (considered less than 90 days by Dorset Police due to constraints around resourcing) I propose that you apply for a Variation to the existing licence to enable extensions to the licence during certain weekends each year or for a specific number of occasions per year, whichever suits your operating model.

It is my view that if we can have predictable periods of extension we can collectively ensure that the provision is delivered more responsibly and with the support of the Community and authorities, including Dorset Police, whose Neighbourhood Policing Team will be able to better determine the level of support that may be required to manage demand that may be caused as a result of the temporary increased provision.

The key advantage of this proposal, in addition to reducing the time and financial burden caused through the Temporary Event Notice application process, is that there is the opportunity for you to consult with key stakeholders in Bridport, including local residents and authorities such as the Town Council, to ensure that you can continue to operate with their support and in appreciation of the impact that these extensions of hours can cause, on occasion, in the Bridport community.

I am confident that with an appropriate set of conditions that could be offered/agreed that you will be successful in applying for a variation which will give you the confidence to plan your events in the knowledge that you are doing so having consulted with the wider community and other key stakeholders.

The Dorset Police Drug & Alcohol Harm Reduction Team, via myself and your Licensing Officer, John Bean, will be pleased to discuss this further with you and will assist with preparing a set of conditions to compliment this variation should you see it fit to submit one to the Licensing Authority.

Regards,

Gareth Gosling 2551

Sergeant

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