

Variation of Premises Licence – Supplementary Information in Support of Representation

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Chic Bar & Club, 3-5 Maiden Street, Weymouth

This report is to be considered alongside the formal representation submitted in respect of a Variation Application for a Premises Licence submitted to the Licensing Authority. It is the intention of Dorset Police to avoid any repeat of information previously submitted and to provide both the applicant (or their representative) and members of the Licensing Sub-Committee with additional information, context and evidence in support of the representation. This report is being completed and submitted as soon as practicable for the benefit of all parties. Whilst all details are correct at the time of completion, Dorset Police reserve the right to amend / introduce additional information and evidence in advance of the hearing.

Background

Chic Bar & Club is a premises which enjoys relatively extended operating hours in Weymouth Town Centre. Chic is located on one of the main thoroughfare routes through the Town within the Night Time Economy and is also located within the Cumulative Impact Zone (CIZ) for Weymouth Town Centre.

This premises has been a late night venue for several years under different names and management. Prior to being known as Chic, it was known as Actors and was also owned and run by Mr Panjalizadeh-Marseh during that time. Whilst it was Actors, an Application for Review of a Premises Licence was submitted by Dorset Police in December 2021 and the Licensing sub-committee concluded that the Premises Licence should be Revoked. This decision was appealed by Mr Panjalizadeh-Marseh and the Licence was reinstated in January 2022 with a significant number of new conditions attached. After extensive refurbishment and changes to the operating procedures, the premises reopened in July 2022.

Since the reopening and these new conditions being attached to the Premises Licence, incidents of crime and disorder have reduced significantly. We believe that this is attributed to the conditions agreed between Dorset Council and the Premises Licence Holder during the Appeal proceedings.

Concerns

When the Premises Licence was reinstated, nearly 60 conditions were attached. These were agreed to by Mr Panjalizadeh-Marseh's solicitors acting on his behalf. They cover all four Licensing Objectives but the most pertinent conditions concern search policies, door staff numbers and restrictions around entry/re-entry.

Prior to these conditions being added to the Licence and when it was still operating as Actors, Dorset Police received numerous calls to the premises and response officers could spend entire shifts dealing with the patrons of the establishment. Intelligence around drug use and supply amongst both customers and staff was quantifiable and was ultimately the reason the review was held in the first place.

Since reopening as Chic, it is clear that Mr Panjalizadeh-Marseh has taken note of the severity of incidents at the premises previously and has worked to change the reputation and standards of operating practices within the premises. By complying with the conditions as they were set out, it is no longer the hot spot for crime and disorder it once was. He has changed the staff, management and door staff supplier. The 100% search condition in place seems to be deterring those who once frequented



the premises to take and deal drugs on the scale previously experienced. By scanning the ID of everyone who enters, a record is kept of everyone's attendance which also works to discourage those who perhaps would have got in previously to commit crime.

If these conditions around 100% searching and ID checking were to be reduced, we believe there would be an increase in people causing issues within the premises. Although the other conditions applied to the Licence will have undoubtedly contributed to its recent successes in preventing crime and disorder, it is of the opinion of Dorset Police that the 100% criteria for searches and ID scans have been the biggest deterrent. It is worth noting that prior to these conditions being attached to the Premises Licence, there were written policies around drugs, searches and ID checking but none of them were conditions to be enforced and appeared to be ignored for the most part. It is only since they have been made conditions of the Premises Licence that they can be held accountable for that there has been positive action.

Available Outcomes

To assist the members of the Sub-Committee, Dorset Police make the following submissions in relation to the available outcome options in respect of this Variation Application of a Premises Licence -

Attach Conditions to the Licence

Dorset Police are not in objection to all of the requested variations of conditions. Through consultation with Mr Panjalizadeh-Marseh prior to the submission of the variation, the below decisions were made on Dorset Police's stance to each proposed variation:

3:30am venue closing time	Agreed in principle – This will ensure that Chic can enjoy slightly enhanced operating hours, however, will safeguard against the premises being the latest venue open to customers in that area. Dorset Police are mindful of the Cumulative Impact Policy for Weymouth Town Centre and are of the view that this extension achieves a compromise between the existing hours of operation and the desired hours proposed during the early mediation.
Licensing activities to stop at 3am	Agreed in principle – Once again, the cessation of licensable activities 30 minutes prior to the closing time of the premises will ensure that there is a gradual dispersal from the premises at a time that is most likely to sensitive to neighbouring properties.
80% of patrons to be ID scanned and searched	This cannot be agreed by Dorset Police. It will be challenging to determine how to monitor 'which' 80% of the customer base is searched, it will introduce the opportunity for staff/management to allocate the '20%' of people not to be searched as they see fit and will be practically unenforceable. This condition is not appropriate to a Premises Licence and has not implemented elsewhere in Dorset.
Two SIA registered security during Sunday – Thursday, three SIA registered security Friday – Saturday when one floor is open, another SIA registered when both floors open	Agreed in principle provided a risk assessment is carried out for additional door supervisors for special events (mentioned below)
2:30am last entry for patrons	Agreed in principle – Once again, ensuring that Chic is not a premises of 'last resort' is crucial to

	ensuring that standards are maintained at this premises.
Omit female security to be present at all time	Agreed in principle – Dorset Police have agreed that this should instead be replaced with a condition requiring that a suitably competent female member of staff be available at all times to support SIA staff where no female member of SIA staff is available to conduct the searching of female customers.
Security risk assessment to be provided when special events are operated	Agreed in principle in conjunction with above SIA proposal.

Those that we are happy to agree with in principle are agreed provided all other conditions remain the same, **including the 100% searching and ID checking**. For ease, should the committee decide these agreed conditions were to be granted, we would be happy with the amendments to current conditions/addition of new conditions as below:

1.1	There shall be no entry or re-entry to the premises after 0130hrs.	There shall be no entry or re-entry to the premises after 0230hrs.
1.2	Appropriate signage shall be clearly displayed at each exit from the premises advising patrons that re-entry to the premises after 0130hrs is prohibited and that this prohibition also applies to people wishing to leave the premises to smoke.	Appropriate signage shall be clearly displayed at each exit from the premises advising patrons that re-entry to the premises after 0230hrs is prohibited and that this prohibition also applies to people wishing to leave the premises to smoke.
2.1	From 2200hrs until one hour after the end of licensable activities there shall be a minimum of two SIA registered door supervisors at the front door. There shall be in addition a minimum of one further SIA registered door supervisor when the ground floor is in operation; and two further SIA registered door supervisors when the first floor is in operation.	From 2200hrs until one hour after the end of licensable activities; from Sunday – Thursday there shall be a minimum of two SIA registered door supervisors at the front door; on Fridays and Saturdays there shall be a minimum of three SIA registered door supervisors at the front door. There shall be in addition a minimum of one further SIA registered door supervisor per additional floor open.
New		The holder of the licence shall undertake a risk assessment with regard to the deployment of additional SIA registered door supervisors for any special events and then implement the outcome of the risk assessment. A copy of the risk assessment should be made available to an authorised officer of the Licensing Authority or Dorset Police upon request and for a period of up to 12 months.
2.6	When door supervisors are required to undertake body searches, at least one female door supervisor is available to undertake the searches of female customers.	When door supervisors are required to undertake body searches of female customers and a female door supervisor is not available, a competent female member of staff will be available at the point of entry to undertake the searches of female customers.
3.2	All persons to be searched from 2200hrs.	TO REMAIN THE SAME
5	The premises shall install and maintain a computer-based identification entry system. The details of all persons, including staff, are to be passed through the system prior to being permitted entry to the premises. The provision and maintenance of such equipment shall be to the reasonable	TO REMAIN THE SAME

	satisfaction of Dorset Police. The details of persons recorded by the system to be made available to Police upon reasonable request for the provision of preventing and detecting crime. The operation of the ID system is to start at 2000hrs.	
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Should the Sub-Committee decide to include all of the applied for varied conditions, Dorset Police would request that attention is paid as to how a calculation of 80% of patrons would be recorded and how this could be verified.

Rule Out Any of the Licensable Activities Applied For

Within this application, no additional Licensable Activities have been applied for. Therefore, there are no new Licensable Activities to exclude at this time.

Refuse to Specify the Person Nominated as Premises Supervisor

Mr Panjalizadeh-Marseh has not proposed a new Designated Premises Supervisor within this application to replace himself. Although the Premises has had issues in the past, Dorset Police are continuing to work with Mr Panjalizadeh-Marseh and he has been cooperative throughout our interactions.

Reject the Application

It is for the Sub-Committee to determine whether the application should be granted or rejected, wholly or fully. Dorset Police have hopefully produced a balanced summary of our concerns above and will support the decision of the Sub-Committee members.

Conclusion

Dorset Police do not intend to elaborate a great deal on the above during the Sub-Committee hearing, however, we will ensure our availability to answer and queries and provide any further clarification/support/advice to the Sub-Committee as required.