

I refer to the above premises licence application and would confirm that under Section 18 (6) (a) of the Licensing Act 2003, relevant representations are made to the application.

Within the application, the main consideration made by the organisers is to provide an Event Management Plan (EMP) no later than 12 weeks before the start of the event.

Currently, there is only mention of, as examples, and of great significance from a police perspective:-

1. Event overview
2. Event management
3. Crowd management
4. Site management
5. Sale of alcohol
6. Temporary structures
7. Public health and welfare
8. Steward and marshall management
9. Welfare of children
10. Incident management
11. Emergency plans
12. Traffic management

Having visited the location, there are concerns that at this stage there is insufficient detail to ensure the licensing objectives of the prevention of crime and disorder, public safety and the protection of children from harm can be upheld.

I list below a number of examples, where clarity of action is unavailable and would confirm that these are seen as examples with other areas requiring similar scrutiny.

From a public safety perspective, there appears to be only one route from the gate on the main road that then runs through the site and no detail of how patrons will be managed and just as importantly, no indication of a 'blue light run' for the emergency services.

Also, the sale of alcohol from 12.00hrs until 02.00hrs on Friday and Saturday is noted but apart from generic details, there is no information on the experience of those running the bar nor allocation of any SIA door staff to this area and given the family/ecological nature of the event, the 02.00am licence should be questioned.

As a further example, turning to the protection of children from harm licensing objective, the application states there will be a lost child policy detailed in Section 13 of the EMP. If that is available, it should have been included in detail at the time of application.

It is also noted going forward, that there is no mention or reference to the implications of Martyn's Law which is due on the statute books in 2025.

As one of the Responsible Authorities, the Police must ensure that when the licence is issued, it is clear, concise, appropriate and proportionate to meet the needs of the applicants and also uphold all the licensing objectives to ensure the event is both safe for all and well managed with all considerations and eventualities taken in to account.

Regards

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Application for Premises Licence Supplementary Information in Support of Representation

Sounds Beautiful Ltd., Gaunts House

This report is to be considered alongside the formal representation submitted in respect of an 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

This is a new event taking place at a site within the Gaunts Estate near to Wimborne, Dorset. The site has hosted several events previously; however, this will be the first time that the Sounds Beautiful festival is proposed to be held at this site.

Dorset Police are keen to support new events throughout Dorset, however, care and attention must be given to ensuring that there is a high level of trust and confidence at the planning stage of the event to ensure that those attending the site will be safe and that compliance with the requirements and expectations of Dorset Police are consistently achieved throughout the event.

Concerns

You will hear from the applicant that they intend to offer a community-focused event with a variety of activities being hosted to benefit guests of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds. Dorset Police welcome this approach and acknowledge that most activities taking place at this site will likely take place without any adverse impact on the community or public services, including the Police.

The service demand experienced by Dorset Police and our partners is usually associated with the provision of alcohol and regulated entertainment during the late evenings and into the night. Issues of concern are generally associated with late-evening and nighttime music; alcohol consumption and other related disruption and Dorset Police are keen to address and support the applicants to mitigate these common issues.

The applicant has sought to pledge a detailed Event Management Plan (EMP) as an addendum to the Application for a Premises Licence. Dorset Police invite the members of the Licensing Sub-Committee to assess whether the contents of the Application for a Premises Licence, on its own, adequately promote the Licensing Objectives, as required by the Licensing Act 2003 and the associated Section 182 Guidance issued by the Home Office.

The EMP should not be used as an alternative to conditions of a Premises Licence which are volunteered / imposed to provide confidence that the licensing objectives will be promoted when delivering licensable activities in accordance with that licence. Details within the EMP are unenforceable under the Licensing Act 2003 whilst conditions listed within the Premises Licence can lead to enforcement if non-compliance is identified.

The use of an EMP is commonplace for events when considering, amongst other things, matters such as infrastructure, contractors, and emergency procures. Many of these key components of an event will be varied from year-to-year, however, few of the matters addressed within an EMP will directly relate to the licensing objectives.



It is the responsibility of Dorset Police and other Responsible Authorities to provide support and assistance to Licence Holders and Designated Premises Supervisors to meet the conditions of their licence and to ensure that they consistently promote the licensing objectives.

We achieve this through mediating conditions for new licences and for variation applications submitted by existing licence holders. Additionally, Dorset Police are key members of the Safety Advisory Group (SAG) for this area, advising the event organisers as to ways in which they might be able to improve or alter their operating schedule, often contained within their EMP, to ensure that they have the very best opportunity to offer a safe and compliant event. Whilst reference may be made to the presence of a Premises Licence or other permission, such as a TEN, within the EMP, these are rarely discussed as they have been agreed and granted previously.

Dorset Police are keen that the Premises Licence can be relied upon, without the support of any other document such as an EMP, to provide the responsible authorities and the Licensing Sub-Committee with the confidence that the event will consistently be safely and compliantly delivered.

It is not the responsibility of Dorset Police or any other authority to 'coach' or to comment in any depth as to what conditions are appropriate for any new licence application other than to refer the applicant to the Purple Guide and/or to draw upon their own knowledge of the event and their own experience of operating in this sector, where applicable. Applicants are encouraged to obtain the support of qualified contractors or consultants where additional specialist support is necessary to ensure that the event is compliant with all legislation and requirements, including the Licensing Act 2003.

Examples of Areas of Interest

Dorset Police are keen for the following, by way of example (and not exhaustive), to be considered by the applicant in any new application in support of the licensing objective to Prevent Crime & Disorder and maintain Public Safety –

- Provision of SIA Door Supervisors

Dorset Police are keen for operators of licensed premises to be proactive and preventative in their approach to maintaining public safety and preventing crime & disorder. The provision of qualified and accredited Door Supervisors for certain events is proven to ensure that premises can deliver licensable activities safely and responsibly.

Whilst not all events will require Door Supervisors, Risk Assessments should be conducted in advance of any function or event to ensure that the correct level of SIA Door Supervision is deployed to mitigate any foreseeable concerns. This is particularly important to ensure that customers safely and quickly vacate the premises without disturbing nearby residents and assisting staff to ensure that intoxicated customers are managed appropriately and that children are safeguarded from accessing alcohol through regular ID checks. They are also trained to defuse conflict before it escalates, reducing the risk of serious injury through violence.

Dorset Police invite the Sub-Committee to consider whether a condition requiring the applicant to conduct a Risk Assessment for each event is sufficient, or whether consideration should be given to drawing on the applicant's experience and knowledge of the event to ensure that a minimum requirement is included within the premises.

It may be more appropriate to specify a minimum number of staff and/or a ratio of staff according to the number of guests and staff, the size of the site or the likely impact from the surrounding area on the event.

- First Aid /Welfare provision

First Aid and Welfare provision should be considered for certain events and Dorset Police invite the members of the Sub-Committee to impose a condition which requires a specified level of medical support in such detail that would satisfy the Sub-Committee that any foreseeable immediate medical need arising through this event would receive an appropriate medical response.

- Accredited Staff Training
- Requirement for a Personal Licence Holder to be present at all times that licensable activities are taking place

Dorset Police are encouraged by most new applicants that understand the value and reassurance that results from ensuring that there is a member of staff that has a Personal Licence on the premises when licensable activities are taking place.

Employing at least one member of staff that has benefitted from this short, inexpensive qualification to be at the premises always when licensable activities are taking place ensures that there is someone that has awareness and understanding of the importance of adhering to the conditions of the licence and consistently promoting the licensing objectives.

The DPS or Licence Holder will not always be available, however, the nearby residents will always experience the impact of irresponsible provision of licensable activities and this safeguarding measure will reduce the likelihood of any adverse impacts on them.

- Dispersal Policy

An appropriate dispersal policy will likely mitigate many of the concerns that local residents may have as a result of this open space event which is intended to operate under 2am.

Available Outcomes to the Sub-Committee

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 Application for a Premises Licence –

Grant the Premises Licence as applied for

Dorset Police are of the view that to grant the application as proposed would likely result in an increased demand for Police and other public services' support.

The applicant is relying on the submission of an EMP to provide the following information within 12 weeks of the commencement of the event.-

1. *Event Overview*
2. *Event Management*
3. *Crowd Management*
4. *Advertising*
5. *Site Management*
6. *Traders*
7. *Sale of Alcohol*
8. *Temporary structures*
9. *Fire Safety*
10. *Noise Management*
11. *Public Health and Welfare*
12. *Steward and Marshall Management*
13. *Welfare of Children*
14. *Incident Management*
15. *Emergency Plans*
16. *Wet Weather*
17. *Traffic Management Plan*

A period of 12 weeks is considered a reasonable period for changes to be made to the operating schedule and for responsible authorities, including Dorset Police, to adequately plan and prepare a response to an event. This initial event is due to take place between Friday 28th – Sunday 30th June 2024, a Public Holiday weekend of increased demand across Dorset.

The Sub-Committee hearing for this application is due to take place on the 5th June 2024, less than 4 weeks prior to the event. The EMP was received by Dorset Police in October 2023, however, no known additional updates have since been produced.

The risk of over-reliance of the Event Management Plan within the Premises Licence through deferring certain safety-specific functions to future 'plans', such as those detailed above, can result in key areas of concern being overlooked.

As a good example of this, Dorset Police draw the attention of the members of the Sub-Committee to point 12 relating to *Steward and Marshall Management*. The opening paragraph, prior to the listing of the vast array of responsibilities of Stewards and SIA states the following -

"The number of security staff and stewards will be relative to the site design and the number of persons on site, and will be subject to legislative guidance, the experience of the security contractor and the audience demographic."

This generic and unenforceable statement offers no certainty as to the level of SIA/Steward support being provided by the event organiser for this event. No other clarity is offered as to the level of safety provision throughout the event, which should be expected of any event where licensable activities are being offered. Dorset Police invite members of the Sub-Committee to consider whether this approach would be appropriate for a premises licence within a permanent structure.

In summary, Dorset Police consider that to grant the licence with the conditions being offered would be inappropriate and risk the licensing objectives being undermined.

Modification of the Conditions of the Premises Licence it considers appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives

Dorset Police have comprehensively detailed above the concerns that remain in respect of this application for the attention and consideration of the Sub-Committee members.

If the Sub-Committee are inclined to grant a Premises Licence, Dorset Police consider that it is necessary for the applicant to formulate conditions that are appropriate to demonstrate, within the Application for a Premises Licence, that the licensing objectives will be consistently promoted.

The EMP should be retained by the Event Organiser as a method of recording the 'variable' aspects of the event and where the conditions are being exceeded eg Premises Licence conditions stipulate minimum number of SIA Door Supervisors, however, the EMP states that this has been exceeded beyond that amount due to variable factors.

Exclusion of a licensable activity from the scope of the Premises Licence

Dorset Police do not consider that this is an appropriate option for the Sub-Committee members.

Refuse to specify a person in the licence as the Designated Premises Supervisor

There are no concerns regarding the DPS proposed to justify any objection on these grounds.

Refuse the Application for a Premises Licence

Dorset Police continue to support the view that this option should always be a last resort for the Sub-Committee. Whilst fiscal issues are outside of the considerations of the Sub-Committee, Dorset Police consistently adopt a proportionate approach, wherever possible, to remain sensitive to commercial viability of businesses and draw on our expertise to encourage applicants to adopt proportionate measures to ensure that the licensing objectives can consistently be promoted.

Whilst Dorset Police are keen to support responsible and appropriate licensable activities, we remain of the view that this application, given its location and current conditions being offered should be granted cautiously and only where the Sub-Committee can be satisfied that the Premises Licence Holder can uphold the Licensing Objectives with the appropriate restrictions and conditions.

Conclusion

The Sub-Committee are reminded that Paragraph 2.1 of the Licensing Act 2003 Section 182 Guidance produced by the Home Office states that, "*Licensing authorities should look to the police as the main source of advice on crime and disorder*". We believe that we have provided an evidence-based summary of our concerns above, as required by Paragraph 9.43 of the Section 182 Guidance.

Dorset Police do not intend to repeat the above concerns to the members of the Sub-Committee during the Sub-Committee hearing, however, as the Licensing Authority's main source of advice on matters relating to crime and disorder, we will be happy to answer any further questions that you may have during the forthcoming hearing.