

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

MINUTES of the meeting of the LICENSING COMMITTEE, which was open to the press and public held on TUESDAY 9 AUGUST 2022 and held remotely at 7pm.

Present

Councillor Wise (Chair) Councillor Anifowose (Vice Chair) Councillors, Howard, Kestner, and Warner.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Brown, Huynh and Jackson, Shrivastava.

Also Present

Richard Lockett – Safer Communities Service
Matt Lewin – Legal Representative

Millwall Café 1-3 Zampa Road SE16 3LF

Applicant

Ms Grimes

Responsible Authorities

P.C Pearce and P.C Moore

1. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings of the Licensing Committee held on 21 June and 13 July 2022 be confirmed and signed.

2. Declarations of Interests

None.

3 Millwall Café 1-3 Zampa Road Bermondsey SE16 3LF

- 3.1 The Chair welcomed all parties to the Licensing Committee. She introduced those present, and outlined the procedure to be followed for the meeting. She then invited Mr Lockett to introduce the application.

Senior Licensing Officer

- 3.2 Mr Lockett said that this hearing was in relation to representations to an application for a Temporary Event Notice for Millwall Café 1-3 Zampa Road. The proposed event site was outside the existing unlicensed café, adjacent to but outside, Millwall Football club. The application was for the sale of alcohol for consumption on and off the premises on 13 August 2022 between 11am and 3pm. Alcohol

would be sold from a van parked on the forecourt with drinks dispensed into plastic containers and the event would be limited to 499 people. The Metropolitan Police had objected to the TEN on the grounds of public safety and the prevention of crime and disorder. Mr Lockett outlined the steps available to members when making their decision.

Applicant

- 3.3 Ms Grimes said that a number of events had been held and there had not been any trouble. She proposed to sell alcohol on 13 August 2022 in plastic cups. She worked in the café, knew a lot of the Millwall supporters and had experienced nothing but respect from them. Food would be available and there was a seating area where patrons could relax before the game. In addition, she had managed pubs with her business partner and was able to manage challenging behaviour and large crowds.
- 3.4 The Chair said that match day was very busy with a lot of people in the area. She asked the applicant how she would manage her customers safely and responsibly. Ms Grimes said that the away fans went into a different entrance and there should not be any of these supporters in the vicinity of her café. There would be Police presence so it was very unlikely that trouble would start in Zampa Road
- 3.5 Councillor Warner noticed that there was not a risk assessment, which was a requirement of the Council. He asked Ms Grimes what risks there could be and whether there would only be home fans in the area. He also asked how many employees worked in the café and how she would make sure there were no more than 500 people in the area if the application was granted. Ms Grimes said that it would not be easy to count the number of patrons in the licensable area. The staff in the café were separate to the bar. She was not sure how many staff would be in the café but there would be three or four in the bar. If there was any trouble, she would close and stop serving customers and would never sell alcohol to people who were drunk.
- 3.6 Councillor Warner asked whether any security staff or bouncers would be employed for the event. Ms Grimes said that there was always a strong Police presence when there was a match and she knew approximately half of the fans. She said that if security staff were required, this was something that she could organise.
- 3.7 Councillor Hayes asked Ms Grimes whether she had ever managed a TEN in this area before. Ms Grimes said that they had held a number of events. A bar had been provided for universities. Sometimes they had a licence, on other occasions she had to apply to the local authority for a licence and she did not experience any trouble.

Representation

- 3.8 P.C Pearce addressed the Committee on behalf of the Police. She raised the following issues:

- Millwall was a large stadium with a maximum capacity of 20,000 people. On 13 August 2022 not as many were expected but there would still be a several thousand people and there would be a large police presence. Policing of home matches was planned weeks in advance.
- The venue was within the Millwall foot print. If the application was granted it would cause significant problems to the free flow of fans and traffic to and from the stadium. Fans lingering at the premises would also cause problems for the Police because they would not be able to move around the area.
- Entry and exit routes to and from the stadium were carefully monitored as were established local drinking venues, which had strict licence conditions in place meaning they could be managed via the licensing process. The police stated that allowing the proposed event to go ahead would cause significant problems to the policing operation, primarily in terms of obstructing the free flow of fans and traffic to and from the stadium.
- Granting the application would allow people to drink while the match was in progress. The football ground had its own licence and were used to dealing with large capacity crowds. Another drinking establishment outside the ground was not necessary.
- P.C Pearce had been liaising with Police officers from the central football unit. She was advised that match days were busy and densely populated and managing coaches as they left the grounds was already challenging.
- On 30 July 2022 there was a large gathering around and outside of the café, it took a large number of Police resources, including the mounted branch, to manage the crowds and enable the safe passage of those travelling coaches. What was usually seen as some inter-rivalry 'banter' when the coaches came across the stadium and into Bolina Road, generally saw some banging on windows and anti-social behaviour. This behaviour could be managed by Police, but if the patrons had been drinking alcohol at the venue, poor behaviour could be exaggerated and the safety of the public could be at risk.
- Licensing Policy 2020-25 stated that vertical drinking could exacerbate violent behaviour. The applicant had not explained how this risk of crime and disorder would be managed and appeared to be relying on the Police to manage any issues that could arise from drinking at the venue.
- The applicant stated in her presentation, that if there was violence at the premises she would close the venue and the Police would be forced to manage any issues. If more people were at the venue because alcohol was being sold, police would have to be drafted in from other areas across the borough to manage the extra numbers of patrons. This would have an impact on the wider public safety.
- Alcohol would be dispensed in plastic cups. It was unclear as to who would be responsible for their disposal.
- If Millwall fans were allowed to drink before the match, they could be intoxicated before entering the football ground, the club would then be forced to manage any bad behaviour. The pubs frequented by supporters were managed by the Police. Each had their own SIA staff and police identified any trouble makers. If the application was granted, police monitoring these establishments would be moved to the venue. It would

cause the police and Millwall football club a lot of problems because the applicant did not know how many people would be turning up to the event.

- The application had not been thought through correctly and would cause a lot of problems for Millwall football club, the police and the wider public.

- 3.9 Councillor Kestner said that there had been discussion regarding having a plan for the event and staff to help manage the event in other venues. She asked the Police if she had thought of anything that would help mitigate any problems so that alcohol could be sold at the venue with minimum disruption to the police. P.C Pearce said that she believed that the venue was in the wrong area and would be impossible for the police to manage potential crowds if the application was granted.
- 3.10 Councillor Anifowose asked what arrangements the police had with other drinking establishments in the area. P.C Pearce said that the football ground had been there for a number of years and the supporters chose where they wanted to drink. Police line up in corridors where supporters travel. In addition, specific officers were trained to enter these drinking establishments and identify any supporters who were causing trouble. Recently, these premises had been swabbed for cocaine use. This was because violence at football matches was being linked to a mixture of cocaine use and alcohol. Establishments with an alcohol licence had SIA staff so they had their own security.
- 3.11 Councillor Warner asked about arrangements in place for away fans and where the parking was. P.C Sam Moore said that he was the Millwall dedicated football officer. He said that Zampa Road was not specifically for home fans. Some away fans who did not travel by coach or train, did access the football ground down this road. Like Bolina Road, away fans may walk down these roads. Away coaches come from Ilderton Road, right into Stockholm Road across the front of the stadium before Zampa Road and turn into the stadium at gate 5. The Millwall café was an iconic site, it was densely populated, people eat and congregate in this area. It was particularly busy 1 ½ hours before kick-off. Police experienced difficulties getting the coaches through this area of Zampa Road into the away compound. Currently it takes at least 18 police officers to clear this road. Many more officers would be required if there were an extra 500 people in this area.
- 3.12 P.C Moore said that in the past, away coaches had come into the area and became caught up in Zampa Road. People were banging on the windows, throwing missiles; they then got off the coaches and there was mass disorder in the middle of the street. Although the system that the police operated at the moment worked well, it could be in jeopardy if the application was granted.

Conclusion

- 3.13 Ms Grimes said that she would be able to provide security if she was granted a licence for the TEN. Most of the away supporters were directed away from Zampa Road when they arrived at the train station and coaches entered the stadium via another road. She said that if she was granted a licence, supporters would be at her venue, not drinking cans on the street.

- 3.14 P.C Pearce said that the Police objection related to crime and disorder and public safety and she did not believe that the applicant had addressed these potential risks. She had grave concerns that there would be more crime and disorder if the application was granted and it would have an impact on the staff who police the whole of the borough. The applicant had not thought through her application correctly.
- 3.15 Members confirmed that they had been present throughout the meeting and had not lost connection.
- 3.16 The Chair said that a decision letter would be sent out within 5 working days. She thanked all parties for their attendance, and they left the meeting.

Exclusion of the Press and Public

RESOLVED that under Section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) of the Act, as amended by the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (Amendments) (England) Regulations 2006 and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information:

3. Millwall Café 1-3 Zampa Road SE16 3LF

The following is a summary of the decisions made during the closed part of the meeting.

3. Millwall Café 1-3 Zampa Road SE16 3LF

A counter notice was issued.

The meeting ended at 7.35pm

Chair