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Jamaican Independence day

Dear Licensing Team Lewisham

Police acknowledge receipt of an application for a temporary events notice for the following:

Jamaican independence day festival 10th August 2025 at Market Square, Douglas Way SE8 3PR. Capacity 300 and alcohol on and off and regulated entertainment. The time of the event is stated as 0950 to 2200 hours.

Police object to this TEN on the following grounds:

- Prevent crime and disorder
- Public safety
- Prevent public nuisance
- Protect children from harm.

The applicant Mr Owen Baker states In his application that he holds this event every year. In 2023 the event did not go ahead as the police raised an objection to the event and Mr Baker withdrew the TEN application.

In 2024 the event did go ahead after asking Mr Baker to provide further information on how the event would be managed and to arrange SIA . He provided more information and guarantee of SIA and police removed their objection.

However, after the event last year police received several complaints about the event and the organiser. There was also a robbery at the event where a male was stabbed. Mr Baker denies this occurred as he stated there were no problems at the event. There were apparently no SIA security at the event. Mr Baker states he had street volunteers and that SIA are expensive..

Police received a complaint the applicant Mr Baker had gone into a convenience store and demanded money from the staff to pay for the porta-loos. Mr Baker denied he asked for money but in a meeting police and local authority held with Mr Baker on

10th February 2025 he stated he asked them if they were willing to contribute to the event as people had been buying drinks at the convenience store during the day.

Police also received complaints the event went on after the agreed hours but we were not able to establish if this was true as the CCTV cameras for Douglas Square were facing away from the location.

Complaints were received that local businesses had to close early as they were intimidated by the crowds outside their venues.

Mr Baker stated he had contacted several businesses before the event who are in close proximity to Douglas Square and asked if they would like to come to a meeting in the Library to discuss the event and ask them to contribute and no one attended.

Mr Baker states he funds the festival from his own money. He also stated he is well respected by the local community so does not encounter any issues.

Police object to this TEN application on the grounds mentioned above. The event is not ticketed and therefore any number of people could attend. No SIA were in place last year and Mr Baker has stated that SIA are expensive He funds the event himself. Last year a male was stabbed at the event.

Alcohol is to be sold at the event both off and on sales. Meaning people could be wandering the streets drinking alcohol bought at the event and not contained in the area of the event. Who will be monitoring If children are drinking at the event?. Mr Baker stated children were drinking at last year's event but stated they were buying drinks from local venues and not at the festival. The local venues have strict licences and CCTV conditions which they have to adhere to.

On 10th February 2025 Mr Baker was asked to provide a comprehensive event plan for this event for police and the local authority to see. Police also requested information on the SIA company Mr Owen would use and how many SIA he would have at the event.

No event plan has been put forward other than what limited information is written on the TEN application.

Police have concerns for public safety should this event go ahead .

Yours sincerely,

PC Gillian Pearce
Police Licensing Officer
Lewisham