

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

MINUTES of the meeting of the LICENSING COMMITTEE, which was open to the press and public held on 26 FEBRUARY 2025 at 7pm and held remotely via Microsoft Teams.

Present

Councillor Anifowose (Chair) Councillors Kestner, and Walker.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Harding and Jackson.

Councillor Atkinson was in attendance for item 4 only.

Councillor Kestner did not take part in item 4.

Also Present

Andrew Atkinson - Legal advisor

Kennedy Obazee - Safer Communities Safety Officer – Licensing Strand

Clare Weaser – Committee Officer

Deptford Storehouse New King Street – off Grove Street, London SE8 3AA.

Applicant

Paddy Whur (representing the applicant)

Simon Tracey - Broadwick Venues Ltd

Nilam Smith – Broadwick Venues Ltd

Sam Spencer – Broadwick Venues Ltd

Objectors

Michael Feeney representing the Police

Four objectors attended the hearing.

Reels Casino Slots, 3 Catford Broadway, Lewisham, SE6 4SP

Applicant

Andrew Wood – Representing the Reels Casino Slots

Alan Kallas – Director of Reels Casino Slots

Objector – None present.

1. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Licensing Committee held on 28 January 2025 be confirmed and signed.

2. Declarations of Interests

None.

3. Deptford Storehouse New King Street – off Grove Street, London SE8 3AA.

- 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 the Safer Communities Safety Officer to introduce the application.

Introduction

- 3.2 The Safer Communities Safety Officer said this hearing was being held to determine a premises licence application made by Spaces and Stories Ltd for Deptford Storehouse New King Street. He then read out the details of the application.

- 3.3 The application was received and served on all parties on 23 December 2024. The last day for receipt of objections was 20 January 2025. However, this was extended to 30 January 2025 because the details advertised were initially incorrect.

- 3.4 During the consultation period, nine relevant objections were received by the licensing authority from members of the public and two supporting the application. The licensing authority and the Police submitted an objection, but the licensing authority subsequently withdrew their objection due to the applicant agreeing to extra conditions being added to the licence. Representations were not received from any other relevant authorities.

- 3.5 Representations received within the consultation period and were not considered frivolous or vexatious.

- 3.6 The Safer Communities Senior Officer then outlined the options open to members when making their decision.

Applicant

- 3.7 Mr Whur addressed the committee on behalf of the applicant. He said that having received the representations from the Police and residents, his client had modified the application so that there would not be a capacity over 500 at the premises, there would be no music events at the premises and no amplified music outside the premises. Everything other than the sale of alcohol was not regulated.

- 3.8 Mr Whur referred to the case outline, circulated to all parties, that a theatrical recorded event would run at these premises from May to October. Each session would have approximately 144 people.
- 3.9 Mr Whur said that his colleague, Mr Spencer, had met with a local councillor and some of the residents at the premises.
- 3.10 Mr Whur referred members to the detailed conditions set out in the agenda. It included an events safety management plan for any of the events held at the premises. The objective of the protection of children from harm was addressed in the conditions and the supervision and management of the premises would be taken very seriously when children were on the premises.
- 3.11 It was a positive that there was no representation from the Environmental Health Officer. There were detailed plans in relation to ensuring that people arrived and left in a manner that would not cause concern for local residents. Engagement with local residents was also key to this application.
- 3.12 Mr Whur referred to page 50 of the agenda. In a letter from P.C Rodway it stated that Police would not necessarily be opposed to the venue being used in a filming/studio or theatre use with a capacity of 500 people. This was now the case since the applicant had amended the application in response to representations.
- 3.13 Residents had expressed concern at the size of some of the venues that his client traded from, but they had also been involved in cultural and creative work with smaller venues in London and around the country.
- 3.14 Mr Whur said that his client was a successful benchmark operator. Local engagement would be key to this project going forward, the application had been amended so that only alcohol was being applied for and with all the conditions he commended the application.
- 3.15 Councillor Kestner asked about the sale of alcohol in the morning. Mr Whur said that his clients had been successful in managing corporate events where breakfast had been offered which included alcohol. A licence from 8am had been applied for to provide flexibility. However, main theatrical bookings would not start as early as 8am. Patrons would be coming to the venue to attend an event not primarily to drink alcohol.
- 3.16 Councillor Walker asked why an alcohol licence was being sought and how it would be served bearing in mind that the premises was no more than a shed at the moment. He also referred to the residential nature of the area and asked what the justification was for having a licence in this area. Mr Smith explained that his client wanted to cater for patrons who wanted an alcoholic drink at the theatre. They were industry leaders in converting sheds into environments that were culturally important, creative and safe. The premises would be managed properly with a modest sale of alcohol.

3.17 In response to a question about ticketed events, Mr Broadwick explained that it was hoped that their events would be a sellout but there would be some free tickets for the community. It was expected that only 144 people would be attending these events. He said that there was not a desire for glass to be used for dispensing drinks and open vessels would not be taken outside. He clarified that each event would be ticketed or a corporate event.

Representations

- 3.18 Michael Feeney, representing the Police, addressed the Committee. He informed those present that the Police had objected to the application on the grounds of public safety, prevention of crime and disorder and prevention of public nuisance. The objection was based on the location of the premises which was in a residential area. He drew attention to Sgt Collins's statement in the agenda which stated that the premises has limited accessibility. It was situated in residential blocks and there were terraced maisonettes to the south. In addition, there was only one way in and one way out; unsuitable for large scale events.
- 3.19 The applicant had accepted a condition restricting capacity to 500 patrons and there would not be any music events. However, this was a large number of people dispersing into a residential area late at night through a single entrance and exit.
- 3.20 Although the applicant stated that capacity in the short term would be 144, if a licence for 500 was granted that would be the number of people allowed to attend future events. The premises was essentially a shed without sound insulation and there was no evidence to prove that there would not be noise nuisance. Although Environmental health had not objected to the application residents, the Police, residents and the safer neighbourhood team had provided evidence against the approval of the application.
- 3.21 The premises was situated in a high crime area. Attracting this number of people into the area would exacerbate this problem.
- 3.22 Mr Feeney concluded by saying that the Police wanted this application to be refused because it would undermine the licensing objectives. However, if the Committee was minded to approve the application contrary to his submissions, the Police would like the following 4 conditions added to the conditions that had already been agreed. Namely:
- Provision of licensable activities should be ancillary to the use of the venue to hold theatre and film workshops
 - CCTV should not just be risk assessed it should be permanently in place
 - A dispersal plan for people leaving on foot should be available on inspection and staff should be trained.
 - There should be an incident log

3.23 Mr Feeney recommended that the application be refused, or if granted, the 4 recommended conditions should be approved.

3.24 In response to a question from Cllr Walker about what affect this application would have on crime in the area, APS Collins advised that he had concerns about the location and the egress of the premises. Transport was also limited at that location. Mr Feeney referred members to page 55 of the agenda which outlined crime statistics in the area.

3.25 In response to a question from Councillor Kestner about what concerns Police had about the times of the events, Mr Feeney said that Police had more concerns about events being held at night. Residents' sleep could be disturbed and crime and disorder was more likely to occur at night rather than during the day. Sale of alcohol was more likely to take place in the evening, and after several drinks people were more likely to be noisy.

3.26 Objector 1 made the following points

- Residents were invited for a site visit by the applicant. There was no secure biking, and she recommended that the applicant should consider cycling infrastructure as part of the Deptford Storehouse offer to mitigate some of residents' concerns regarding access.
- During her visit, residents' concerns were discussed. Space and Stories were keen to address these concerns particularly those regarding noise disturbance and had solutions to mitigate these concerns. She encouraged them to share these solutions with residents.
- She had received earlier, an email from Space and Stories about how they intended to work on a more meaningful engagement with local residents to ensure that the Deptford Storehouse had a positive effect on the community. Whilst this was a welcome sentiment, it was not a process for meaningful dialogue. If the application was granted, she wanted to have discussions with Space and Stories.
- This site had a rich history and should inform the programme that was developed and she encouraged Space and Stories to talk to residents about programming and how we can give something back to the community so that they can understand the heritage of this site.

3.27 Objector 2 made the following points.

- The area was difficult to police and the area was unsuitable for crowds of up to 500 people. Crime and disorder would increase, and residents would be adversely affected if the application was granted.
- Lighting in the area was poor. Two local parks did not have any lighting at all. The area between public and private areas was not clear and it was possible for residents to have people standing outside their bedroom windows.
- Pavements were not raised and could encourage the new crime of phone snatching by people on electric scooters and motorbikes.

- Pavements in the area were broken, narrow and not suitable for wheelchair users or buggies. An increase in footfall would undermine residents' safety. There were no dedicated crossings.
- There were no public facilities in the area so there could be problems with public urination.
- The nearest transport link was 20/25 minutes away and buses were struggling to cope with the current numbers of passengers at certain times of the day.
- Litter would increase and the service charges paid by residents would also increase.
- Resident would be adversely affected by any noise.
- The Council had a duty of care for local residents. The premises was in a poor area and residents would be adversely affected if the application was granted.

3.28 Objector 3 made the following points:

- She believed that work had already started to transform the premises into a cultural venue. Toilets had been installed outside residents' windows.
- This was an historic site and there were concerns about the damage that the shipping containers had caused.
- The site was a huge industrial site, but a huge number of flats and homes had been built around it.
- She questioned how an 8am start for corporate events related to encouraging creative communities.
- If the application was granted, she said that it should be time limited. Licences could be amended.
- The premises was situated in a very quiet area. In the Summer residents would not be able open their windows without enduring noise nuisance.
- Engagement from the applicant had been disappointing

3.29 Objector 4 made the following points:

- The developer had been difficult to work with over a long period of time. They wanted to bring people from outside over the heads of local people where local residents do not have a say in the process.
- Serving alcohol at 8am did not serve local people and it did not encourage local people to be involved with their events. Children and young people had not been considered in any of their ideas.
- The seven days of events at the premises was considered too long and events catered for people outside the area.
- There was potential for anti-social behaviour.
- The heritage and multi-cultural nature of the area should be celebrated. The events proposed by the applicant did not reflect these ideas and resident did not want the application to be granted.

Summary

- 3.30 Before summing up, Mr Whur drew members' attention to condition 18 which included a management plan. He said that concern had been expressed about possible noise nuisance. Environmental Health officers had approved the plan and were comfortable that the applicant would work within the remit of the building. In addition, Police had requested conditions if the licence was granted, and the applicant agreed with all of them. They wanted a slight amendment to the first condition that alcohol should be ancillary to theatre, film and any corporate bookings.
- 3.31 For the sale of alcohol, Mr Whur said that there would be two sittings on a Tuesday to Friday and potentially four on a Saturday and Sunday. Alcohol would only be available at the end of the sittings and not the prime reason for attending an event.
- 3.32 The application was only for the sale of alcohol, and it was believed that the conditions were clear and would promote the four licensing objectives. Community engagement was also being offered by Mr Spencer of Broadwick Venues Ltd and measures would be put in place to ensure that there was a community space. If the application was granted, there would be conditions in place. Mr Whur assured residents that 500 patrons would not be attending events every day. It was expected that on average, 144 people would attend. There was evidence from the track record of the applicant and the raft of conditions to be attached to the licence that the licensing objectives would be promoted.
- 3.33 Mr Feeney, summarising on behalf of the Police, reminded members of the four conditions requested by the Police. The applicant had indicated that they agreed to these conditions. However, the Police still preferred the application to be rejected because it was believed that the licensing objectives would be undermined. Residents had attended the hearing to express their concerns about potential impact this application could have on them and the licensing objectives for noise, nuisance and public safety.
- 3.34 The applicant had made concessions but the initial application for 2000 people had been unreasonable. It was then claimed that they had been reasonable because the number was reduced. This was not the correct approach. A capacity of 500 people was still too large. Although there could be noise nuisance, there could also be difficulties with the dispersal of so many people in a residential area late at night who had been drinking alcohol. The conditions from Mr Whur were welcomed but the Police believed that the application should be refused.
- 3.35 In summary objectors made the following points:
- If the application was granted there would be a number of problems particularly with regard to community engagement. Residents needed more information about how the community would be involved with the project and needed to know that the applicant was genuinely concerned about how the space would work for the community. Residents wanted to bring heritage and culture to the site.

- Alcohol would enhance the problems of crime and disorder, public safety and nuisance. Sleep was important for adults and children's brain development and residents' sleep would be affected by the noise from people who had been drinking up until 11.30pm. Residents who worked on shifts would not be able to work effectively if people attending these events created a noise nuisance.
- Children from the local primary schools could potentially be exposed to drunken disorderly behaviour adversely affecting brain development. The hours for the sale of alcohol and the operation of the premises were excessive.
- There was no venue like this in the area; it was unprecedented and inappropriate.
- If the application was granted, it could put more pressure on the Police.
- Residents had the capacity to provide community engagement themselves and did not need an external company providing events that the residents did not want.

3.36 The Chair said that a decision notice would be sent out within 5 working days. She thanked all parties for their attendance, and they left the meeting.

Councillor Atkinson joined the meeting.

4. **Reels Casino Slots, 3 Catford Broadway, SE6 4SP**

4.1 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 the Safer Communities Safety Officer to introduce the application.

Introduction

4.2 The Safer Communities Safety Officer said this hearing was being held to determine a premises licence application made by Reels Casino Slots Ltd for the premises at 3 Catford Broadway. The application was for an adult gaming centre and was advertised in accordance with regulations. One objection was received from a councillor, and one from the licensing authority. The objection from the licensing authority was withdrawn following acceptance of conditions by the applicant.

4.3 The Safer Communities Safety Officer then outlined the options open to members when making their decision.

Applicant

4.4 Mr Woods addressed the Committee on behalf of Mr Kallas. A summary of the application had been sent to all parties.

4.5 Mr Woods advised that the premises had a licence under the Gambling Act previously, operated by Bet Fred. Mr Kallas had obtained the site and proposed to replace what was the betting licence with the adult gaming licence.

- 4.6 Mr Woods had tried to contact the councillor and offered to meet her to and invite her to the site to discuss their policies and procedures and explain how the licensing objectives would be promoted but had not received a response. It was noted that the councillor had been unwell. The Police had not made and objection.
- 4.7 Mr Woods outlined Mr Kallas's experience in the betting industry and he drew members attention to how the premises would be managed.
- 4.8 Mr Kallas was approved by the gambling commission and the procedures he had in place promoted the licensing objectives. Although it was not expected that these premises would attract anti-social behaviour, it had been agreed with the licensing authority that staff would report any issues witnessed outside the premises. CCTV was inside the premises and Mr Kallas was willing to install CCTV outside as well.
- 4.9 Mr Woods explained that staff were trained and outlined how they operated within the premises.
- 4.10 Councillor Walker asked what evidence the applicant had to prove that young people were not attracted to gaming premises. In response, Mr Woods explained that Mr Kallas had vast experience working at many different gaming centres around the country, and in his experience, they did not attract young people. There was nothing to entice them into the premises; no music, bright lights etc. Staff would not allow young people to enter the premises. Mr Kallas advised that across the five premises that he managed, ten young people had attempted to gain access to premises over the last 12 months.
- 4.11 Councillor Walker said that the premises was in a high anti-social behaviour to the point that it had a Public Spaces Protection Order. Mr Woods said that he had liaised with the licensing authority about this. The applicant would be installing CCTV outside the premises and staff would be reporting what was seen outside. Anyone involved in antisocial behaviour outside the premises would not be allowed inside. Mr Kallas would work with the local authority and Police.
- 4.12 In response to a question from Councillor Walker about how the machines operate, Mr Kallas explained that machines paid out in tickets, not coins and it was illegal to use credit/debit cards on these machines. 20% of machines had £500 jackpots, prizes from the other machines were £5 and £100.

Representations

- 4.13 Councillor Krupski was unwell and could not attend the hearing.

Conclusion

- 4.14 Mr Woods said that Mr Kallas would offer to meet Councillor Krupski if she so required. He assured members that Mr Kallas had noted all the points she had raised and those by Councillor Walker and all policies and procedures

were in place. Mr Kallas was committed to protecting vulnerable people and to reporting any crime witnessed outside the premises. He would ensure that the premises were well run should the licence be granted.

- 4.15 The Chair said that she was satisfied that members of this Committee had read and heard all the information required to make a decision. All members confirmed their attendance throughout the meeting.
- 4.16 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. **Deptford Storehouse New King Street – off Grove Street, London SE8 3AA.**
4. **Reels Casino Slots, 3 Catford Broadway, Lewisham, SE6 4SP**

The following is a summary of the items considered in the closed part of the meeting.

Deptford Storehouse New King Street – off Grove Street, London SE8 3AA.

The Committee agreed to grant the application with further conditions added to the licence.

Reels Casino Slots, 3 Catford Broadway, Lewisham, SE6 4SP

The Committee agreed to grant the application in the terms submitted.

The meeting ended at 8.57pm

Chair