

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Licensing and Regulatory Sub-Committee (Hearing)
held at 10.00 am on Tuesday, 16 July 2024

Present:

Members: Councillor K Maton (Chair)
 Councillor B Christopher
 Councillor J Lepoidevin

Employees (by Service
Area):

Law and Governance U Patel, T Robinson, A Wright

Streetscene and
Regulatory Services R Masih, C Simms

In Attendance:
(Interested Parties) Applicants

Public Business

12. Appointment of Chair

RESOLVED that Councillor K Maton be appointed as Chair for the hearing.

13. Apologies

There were no apologies for absence.

14. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

15. Application for a Premises Licence under the Licensing Act 2003

The Sub-Committee considered an application for a Premises Licence in respect of Coventry Reggae Fever Festival, War Memorial Park, Coventry CV3 6PT. The Application requested an annual three-day festival, with Supply of Alcohol and Regulated Entertainment, including amplified music. The Applicant sought to apply for a consecutive Friday, Saturday and Sunday in either June, July, August or September, with the date to be determined by Coventry City Council. The hours requested are 1100hrs to 2200hrs on each of the days of the festival.

One representation had been received objecting to the grant of the application on the basis that to do so would undermine the Licensing Objective of Prevention of Public Nuisance.

None of the Responsible Authorities had objected.

The Sub-Committee's statutory duty was to consider the application and any representations and to take such steps as contained in the Licensing Act 2003 as it considered appropriate for the promotion of the Licensing Objectives.

The Licensing Officer gave a brief summary of the application and confirmed that all licensing formalities had been complied with.

The Applicant was given the opportunity to present his case. It was explained to the Sub Committee that a Caribbean festival had historically taken place in War Memorial Park but there had not been one for a number of years. Feedback from the community demonstrated a desire for it to be re-established in order to celebrate Caribbean culture and the contribution that many Caribbeans have made to the city of Coventry.

The Applicant had applied for a Premises Licence with a three-day variable window of delivery each year, running from Friday to Sunday. This being the first year, the Applicant stated that licensable activities would only take place on Saturday 20th July 2024 to give residents an idea of the CIC's intentions going forward, with a view to the event growing naturally. This year, should the Premises Licence be granted, the Applicant stated that the event would run from 1100hrs to 2000hrs only.

The Applicant advised the Sub Committee that they have worked closely with the Police to ensure the event will tie in with the night-time economy and local policing teams. The Police have assisted to devising a security plan, and the Applicant has also received confirmation from the Local Authority that CCTV coverage across the city centre and within the park will be provided to ensure the safety of attendees.

The Applicant stated that a reputable security company will provide security until 2300hrs, ensuring attendees are able to return to the city centre, particularly to the train station and car parks, safely.

In terms of concerns surrounding the potential for noise nuisance, the Applicant advised that sound engineers would be actively monitoring the stages with noise equipment, and a company called SPL Acoustics would conduct noise monitoring around the park, including at the nearest residential development. The event will use the same resident complaints telephone number as the Godiva Festival so that residents are familiar with it.

The Applicant explained that they have worked closely with the Council's events team and used their self-imposed noise limits which matched those used for the Godiva Festival and are below industry standards.

In terms of any Public Health concerns, the Applicant stated that an on-site, doctor-led medical team would provide cover for members of the public as well as site crews and artists, throughout the event and for at least one hour after show down.

The Applicant advised that a welfare team and safe-guarding lead would be on-site to ensure the safety of children attending the event. This would include a child safe scheme whereby all children have a parent or carer's telephone number on

their wristbands to ensure children are reunited quickly with adults in the event that they become separated.

The Applicant confirmed that the event would be scrutinised by Coventry Safety Advisory Group (SAG) and would comply with all recommendations in exchange for hiring the park for the event.

Finally, the Applicant confirmed that the festival would be promoted as a family friendly event.

The Sub Committee were given the opportunity to ask questions of the Applicant. The Sub Committee asked whether young people were required to enter with an adult and whether the Applicant felt confident in the security arrangements.

The Applicant confirmed that customers would be restricted at the point of purchase to buy up to three child tickets with one adult ticket. Child tickets would be for those under the age of 18. Wrist banding staff have been briefed not to allow entry to a young person without an adult present, and every ticket purchased will have a named adult individual that must be present during ticket redemption, with ID checks taking place. The Applicant stated that they are trialling a strict regime while they anticipate a lower audience.

In terms of security, the Applicant confirmed that wand searches would be conducted for all attendees as well as artists and crew, in addition to a loose item and bag search. This would be escalated to a physical search only if an issue was raised during the wand/bag search. The Applicant advised that they are working alongside a well-respected security firm who have done similar events within Coventry and would be a clear point of contact within the park should anyone need to raise a security issue. The Police would also be providing a small team of three officers and one sergeant, including two taser officers who would accompany the procession through the city.

The Sub Committee asked what measures had been put in place with regard to accessibility. The Applicant stated that an email address had been set up for people requiring additional access needs so that they could make direct contact with the events team to create a tailored plan which would ensure that they have the best experience possible. In addition, a team would be placed at the main entrance to meet anyone with additional access requirements to show them around the site if requested, including the welfare tent and accessible bar counters and toilets. Support would also be offered throughout the day to assist with accessing food vendors who do not have adequate accessibility options in place.

In the absence of the Objector, the Sub Committee confirmed that their written representation had been considered. The Applicant provided the Sub Committee with a comprehensive Noise Management Plan detailing how any concerns regarding noise nuisance would be controlled.

In summing up, the Applicant advised the Sub Committee that they come with a good track record for running events, such as the Leicester Carnival which has always been safe and well organised. The Applicant encouraged the Sub Committee to contact Leicester Council should they require any reference.

In reaching its decision, the Sub Committee considered the application on its own merits, having regard to both national guidance and the Council's own policy.

In accordance with the High Court's decision in *R (on application of Daniel Thwaites plc) v Wirral Magistrates' Court and Others (2008) EWHC 838 (Admin)*, the Sub Committee attached the appropriate weight to the fact that none of the Responsible Authorities, who are to be considered experts in their individual fields, had objected to the application, in particular Environmental Health in respect of the Objector's concerns surrounding the Licensing Objective of Prevention of Public Nuisance.

The Sub Committee considered that the Applicant had demonstrated a willingness to take steps to prevent, so far as was possible, problems arising at or during the annual event that may undermine the Licensing Objectives.

The Sub Committee was impressed with the levels that the Applicant had gone to in order to promote the Licensing Objectives and ensure the safe running of the event. The Sub Committee was particularly pleased to see that the Applicant had liaised closely with the Local Authority and Responsible Authorities during the application process and endeavoured to build a positive relationship going forward with the local community. This, they believed, was the sign of a responsible Applicant who is dedicated to prioritising the promotion of the Licensing Objectives.

The Sub Committee considered the submission provided by the Objector. However, the Sub Committee believed the Applicant to be professional and knowledgeable, with a genuine desire to provide a safe event whilst upholding the Licensing Objectives.

Having heard the representations from the Applicant, the Sub Committee was satisfied that the Applicant took its responsibilities in respect of the Licensing Objectives seriously, and that the concerns of residents had been taken into account and this would continue to be the case.

RESOLVED that the application for a Premises Licence in respect of Coventry Reggae Fever Festival, War Memorial Park, Coventry CV3 6PT be granted.

16. **Any Other Business**

There were no other items of business.

(Meeting closed at 11.35 am)