

LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at 10.00 am on 25 March 2024

Present:

Councillor Nicholas Bennett J.P. (Chairman)

Councillors Robert Evans and Simon Jeal

1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN FOR THE MEETING

Cllr Nicholas Bennett was appointed Chairman.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3 APPLICATION FOR A PREMISES LICENCE FOR SOULTOWN FESTIVAL 2024 CROYDON ROAD RECREATION GROUND BR3 3PR

The Application

The application was for a 2-day licence from 12.00hrs to 22.00 hrs on Saturday 31st August 2024 and 12.00hrs to 21.00hrs on Sunday 1st September 2024. Permission was sought for live music, recorded music, performance of dance and the supply of alcohol. The event would comprise of a main open stage at the one end of the site and an enclosed tented structure for live regulated entertainment provided by a DJ at the opposite end. The applied for capacity was for 9999 people. The event was described as a two-day Soultown Festival.

The event would be aimed at adults aged over 21 years on the Saturday, but on the Sunday, children and families would be welcome on the basis that an adult would be allowed to accompany no more than two children. The event would be in a fenced area with gates managed by security staff and stewards. There were amendments to the site plan approved for 2023, in that the main stage would be tilted slightly more away from residential properties and the DJ tent would be relocated with the objective of directing audio away from residential properties.

The Case for the Applicant:

The applicant, Ms L Bateman, attended the Sub-Committee meeting with Mr Joe Courtney who advised that the event would be similar to the preceding

two years, but with improvements to reduce any possible disturbance to residents. A complaint hot line would be maintained and residents would be notified of the number by advance publicity. The organisers would accept the conditions imposed on the previous licence last year, including the 4 additional conditions imposed by the Sub-Committee and with the conditions agreed with the police which were additional to that. The headline act on Saturday would end about 21.30 hours with music being provided by the resident DJ until 22.00 hours to encourage an orderly dispersal of patrons. The bars would be closed in rotation from about 21.30 hours until 21.45 hours for the same reasons.

The Case for the Objectors:

Written and oral submissions were made by neighbours. Concerns were raised that the park was too small for the event, that the music was excessively loud and the proposed two days with music over 10 and 9 hours respectively was too long. It was mentioned that preparations for the event started some 5 days before and finished 4 days after the event, which also caused disturbance. A representation was made that some residents felt they had no option but to leave their home during the event and that there should be the possibility, in extenuating circumstances, of financial compensation being paid to such persons.

Reasons for Decision

Members considered the amended application, the written and oral representations, the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy and statutory guidance. Members concluded that the event would not result in a level of nuisance that would justify refusal of the application, particularly given that it would be a two-day event only. The numbers attending the event would be controlled by the Licence and although there had been initial objections from the Health and Safety and Public Nuisance Teams, these had been resolved prior to the meeting. The event had now been run for a number of years with fewer complaints being recorded as the organisers gained experience and for last year, there had been no complaints recorded against the festival. The police had indicated their satisfaction with how the event in 2023 had been run. Although a resident had asked for compensation, this was not something the Sub-Committee could require.

Decision

That the application for a premises licence for Soul Town Festival 2024, Croydon Road Recreation Ground, BR3 3PR from 12.00hrs to 22.00 hrs on Saturday 31st August 2024 and 12.00hrs to 21hrs on Sunday 1st September 2024 be permitted, subject to the conditions imposed on the previous licence dated 8th February 2023 with the changes to those conditions recommended by the police in Appendix 4 to the Committee Agenda, namely:

- (i) an additional condition:

The cloakroom / property area will be staffed at all times that the event is taking place and until all property has been collected at the end of the event.

(ii) amendments to conditions 10 and 11

10. The event management plans for each event shall include the following information as a minimum; site plans, stewarding/security plans to include regular weapon sweeps before, during and post egress, crowd management plans, medical plan, fire plan, specific safety policies, risk assessments, traffic management plans, possible noise nuisance plans, and ingress/egress plan and an alcohol management plan.

11. Any queue to enter the premises that forms outside the premises shall be kept orderly and supervised by SIA door supervisors to ensure that there is no nuisance or obstruction to the public highway and footpaths. All persons managing the queue will have a radio or contact details to be able to communicate with each other and the event organisers.

Chairman