

The Licensing Officer  
Guildford Borough Council  
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Our Ref: Oktoburfest/NEW  
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Friday 19 March 2021

Dear Sir,

**Licensing Act 2003 - Application for a Premises Licence  
Oktoburfest, 2 - 3, The Quadrant, Bridge Street, Guildford, Surrey, GU1 4SG**

Guildford Borough Council, the Licensing Authority, acting as its capacity as a Responsible Authority under the Licensing Act 2003 are making representation in connection to the application made by Dream Oyster Ltd for a premises licence for Oktoburfest under reasons of crime and disorder, nuisance, public safety and child protection.

By way of background, the premises is a part of the larger 'Casino' and 'Players' nightclub complex, a popular night-time venue amongst a collection of other late-night venues in the Bridge Street area.

The location of Bridge Street a strategic location for the night-time economy. Historically the premises is very popular with customers enjoying night out in Guildford and as such the safety of venues in this area of Guildford is not just an important priority for the Police, but also wider partners including the Council as it seeks to reduce incidents of crime and disorder through a number of mechanisms, including the Purple Flag award, Safer Guildford Partnership and naturally the licensing process.

The Licensing Authority recognises the impact of the current coronavirus pandemic on the licensed trade, particularly late-night venues which have been required to close for a considerable time. The Licensing Authority has offered advice and assistance to licence holders during the pandemic as it wishes to work constructively with the trade to re-open and bring customers back to Guildford.

Through its licensing policy, the Council sets out at paragraphs 6.4 and 6.5 that it is important that applications properly address the four licensing objectives by providing as much detail as possible on the application form, and that the application must be supported by a comprehensive operating schedule. This schedule must specify the steps which the applicant proposes to take in order to promote each of the licensing objectives. The Policy reinforces the importance of the operating schedule at paragraphs 12.3 to 12.5 which states:

- “12.3 The operating schedule forms the basis of any conditions placed on a licence other than those which are mandatory. It provides valuable information to interested parties and responsible authorities assisting their assessment of the impact of the licensed activity on the licensing objectives and provides information about how the applicant will address these issues. It is likely to form the basis of any decision to submit a representation against the application.*
- 12.4 Providing as much information as possible in the operating schedule demonstrates that the applicant has seriously considered the issues, is aware of their duty to promote the licensing objectives at all times and is aware of how this may be best achieved.*



12.5 *The Licensing Authority considers the effective and responsible management of the premises, including instruction, training and supervision of staff and the adoption of best practice to be amongst the most essential control measures for the achievement of the licensing objectives. For this reason, these measures should be specifically considered, detailed and addressed within an applicant's operating schedule."*

The Council's Licensing Policy also sets out at paragraph 4.1 that any individual has the right to make an application to undertake activities, and have their application considered on its merits.

However in making this application, Dream Oyster Ltd has not included any detail in the operating schedule about how they intend to manage activities under the licence and promote the licensing objectives. Such measures would include (but not limited to) the use of CCTV, staff training, door supervision, age verification, noise control, crowd management and dispersal.

Late night venues are traditionally well known flash points for incidents and there is always potential for disorder or safety concerns if premises has not considered the risks arising from their operation, or are not managed properly. It is clear the through not providing any information in the operating schedule that Dream Oyster has not considered these risks which will potentially cause disorder, nuisance and impact on safety if not managed properly. This is evidenced through many of the existing premises licensed being well run through having comprehensive conditions attached to their premises licences around security, CCTV, staff training, age verification etc in order to manage the potential issues arising from customers accessing their premises for a night out. This is surprising as Dream Oyster Ltd is an experienced operator who holds a number of licences already with the Council, including other licences for this site which display a number of conditions.

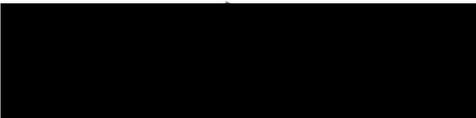
As such, the Licensing Service, in its capacity as a responsible authority, wishes to make a representation to this application. This is so that appropriate conditions requiring the applicant to have regard and undertake measures which promote the licensing objectives can be imposed upon the premises licence so that the risks arising from the operation can be mitigated and the premises can contribute to a safe night out for the residents of Guildford.

In order to assist the applicant and Sub-committee in its determinations, there are a number of premises licences covering this location which have similar conditions which the Licensing Authority would be satisfied would address the concerns raised in this representation should these be included on the new licence sought.

The Licensing Authority understands following a representation made by Surrey Police that the applicant wishes this application to 'mirror' the licence issued on the 17th March 2021, GUPLA0535, for the very same premises. Should this be the case, the Licensing Authority is content that this would be an agreed position and a sub-committee hearing would not be necessary.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

  
Mike Smith  
Licensing Team Leader  
Guildford Borough Council