

LICENSING PANEL (LICENSING ACT 2003 FUNCTIONS) ADDENDUM 2

10.00AM, WEDNESDAY, 8 JANUARY 2020

ROOM 149, HOVE TOWN HALL

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ADDENDUM

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Dear Brighton & Hove Council,

We would like to submit further comments and proposals to our new premises license application for your consideration ref. 902579.

Our comments are aimed at dealing with issues concerning the CIZ, and demonstrating exceptional circumstances to warrant the granting of a new premises licence in contravention of council policy.

DEMOGRAPHIC / PRODUCT RELATIONSHIP

Having spent a few weekend nights in Brighton city centre, we have become very familiar with the issues that the Police are currently facing. We saw a group of women 'downing' a bottle of wine in the queue to get into a bar at 6pm, we saw a group of young lads shouting and kicking car doors, we saw the ambulances dealing with people who were in a very sorry state, the fights, the screaming hen parties – we understand fully why these licensing policies are in place.

However, we all also understand that there is an alternative customer - couples, local professionals, and often London 9-5ers that will visit Brighton for a long weekend and will stay at the likes of the Hotel Du Vin or The Grand and will look for some alternative nightlife (we understand 'Soho House' is looking to open nearby also). It is visibly evident that it is not these people causing the problems for the police in the CIZ – it's the customers leaving the student bars, the clubs who operate with promoters, organised pub crawls, stag parties etc. This is where we believe that the nuance is missing from the licensing policy which treats all new licence applications (and their different demographic of customer) in the same way.

We have also had some dialogue with Mark at the Police, and the requested conditions include using shatter-proof cups from 9pm (should we be granted a licence). This strikes us a catch 22 for the future of Brighton's night time economy – as a business, we want to offer a unique and high end product in order to attract 'our customer' (the type aforementioned earlier and not those we saw causing issues in the CIZ), yet the proposed conditions would be such that we would be required to serve our carefully crafted cocktails in plastic cups. This drags down our product to the level of the lowest common denominator, and the entire narrative and relationship circle between product -> perception -> pricing & customer demographic breaks down.

For example, Gordon Ramsey restaurants serve high-quality dishes that cost more largely because the overall product is costly to execute, therefore the customers (on the whole) tend to be reasonably wealthy - they are effectively different sides of the same coin. To then serve these Gordon Ramsey meals on paper plates would destroy this relationship - the prices charged for these dishes would have to be reduced to reflect the new perception of the product, and the demography of the clientele would change as a result of the new perception and the pricing.

CATCH 22

It is here where we believe the catch 22 lies – having seen the carnage in Brighton city centre, we understand why there is a restriction of new licences, and why strict glassware conditions are required for existing licences. However, if Brighton wants to raise the quality and public perception of the night-time economy as well as reduce the strain on the emergency services in the medium to long term, we believe it needs to do some reshaping of the demographic it attracts as a whole – and this is only achieved by introducing more night-time economy businesses that appeal to a more discerning clientele, and reducing the number of promoter led student bars & clubs that cater to pub crawls / stag do's and similar.

DOOR POLICY

Our proposal is to specify an entrance policy as conditions of our licence on nights where we are open after midnight. This legally enshrines our commitment to attract a specific demographic, and to reject entry to those commonly associated with the bulk of the issues the police face in the CIZ as below.

- **No under 21's on the premises**
- **No Hen parties**
- **No Stag parties**
- **No fancy dress *except Halloween / Pride***
- **No entry to those seen street drinking**
- **No promoters**
- **No flyers**
- **No organised pub crawls**
- **Mixed groups only (4 or more)**
- **Bag search on entry**
- **ID scanner upon entry**
- **facewatch facial recognition software upon entry / outside facing street.**

We also propose we reduce our service hours to 02:00 on Friday / Saturday

But we will still allow guests drinking up time until 03:30

This allows 90 minutes for guests to drink up and leave at their own pace thus ensuring they are not 'downing their drinks' (which speeds up the intoxication process), and ensures a slow drip feed of guests out of the premises instead of mass ejection into the CIZ in a 10 minute burst.

We will also join forces with a local taxi firm to ensure there are plenty of taxis available outside at closing time, and the slow drip feed of guests leaving the premises are much more likely to be able to actually get a cab, and therefore not need to go into the CIZ to find their way home.

In addition, we will have a dedicated cab officer inside liaising with the customers and organising the wait list so that guests can finish their drinks and be called forward when their taxi is ready during the 90 minutes drinking up period. Again, the idea is to avoid large volumes of people heading out into the city centre once the bar has stopped serving.

To our knowledge, no other bars in Brighton have these strict admission policies, or conditions of their licence, so we believe this is grounds for exceptional circumstances to grant a new licence, as well as a possible blue-print for reshaping the night time economy into a higher quality, less problematic offering.

