

**Objection to a renewal of a Sexual Entertainment Venue licence for Pussycat Club**  
**Prepared by: Kristopher McGrath, Director, Saltire Investments Limited**  
**Hearing: 17 February 2025**

**Executive Summary**

Saltire Investments Limited has run and managed The Pussycat Club since 1998 in Brighton & Hove, briefly in two premises, and now trading solely on Grand Parade. Each year we renew our Sexual Entertainment Venue Licence (SEV) and over our long trading we have only even had minimal objections. Almost 20 objections were received in the summer, which is probably more than the total received in all prior years, and we respond to the key themes below.

1. *This breaches council policy on numerous counts:*
  - *Section 2 of policy – Unfit Owner : Owned by convicted sex offender*
  - *(who the Council deemed did not breach conditions when later photographed naked with lap dancers at the club)*
  - *Section 2 – Unfit Applicant: Club run by sex offender's son.*
  - *Section 4 – In a totally 'unfit' location (practically on university campus, near schools and churches, in a main shopping and residential area, by places of historical interest and in an area of high crime).*

I, Kristopher McGrath, have been the sole shareholder of Saltire Investments Limited, the SEV applicant, since 1 November 2016 and I do not breach the Council Policy. We are long established on Grand Parade with a limited street presence given we trade on the first and second floor of a commercial building. We open no earlier than 10pm and currently only open at weekends so do not impact those nearby, such as universities, schools, churches or shopping centres, none of which have submitted any objection to this SEV application.

2. *Concerns about vulnerable young girls and women and equality.*

All of the dancers that operate at the premises do so by choice, any many choose to do so for many years at the premises because they feel safe and appreciated in a location that is close to the centre of town but not over populated. Statements from the dancers are attached to this written representation showing their support for the premises and its SEV application.

3. *Located in a built-up area and the area is unsuitable, being close to schools, places of worship, etc*

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4. *There is a strong documented correlation between strip joints and sexual harassment/violence against workers, sex trafficking, organised crime, and sexual harassment of female residents in the surrounding area.*

These objections are not specific to The Pussycat Club and are unsubstantiated comments on the industry as a whole. We would highlight that we have regular contact with Sussex Police and Brighton Council to ensure that we comply with all regulations. Our most recent visit from

both of these parties was 31 January 2025, following which we received positive feedback from Sussex Police on the actions we are taking to support the prevention of drugs being used.

## **Supporting information**

### **General Information**

The Pussycat Club was the first lapdancing club established in Brighton & Hove within premises in Church Street, Hove, in 1998 by Saltire Investments Ltd and transferred its activities to the current premises on Grand Parade, Brighton, in 2008. This Pussycat Club is fundamentally different from the other two Brighton premises with SEV licenses in that it was established in 1998 as a private members club with strict admission requirements, and has chosen to remain so, whereas the two newer clubs may permit access to the general public, at their discretion. In addition, we choose to open only for two or three late evenings each weekend, from 10pm - 4am, whereas the other clubs open on an almost daily basis. There have been a very small number of objections in this period, each of which were of course addressed satisfactorily. Most of our members are male, but we also welcome female members. It is important we point out again that our operations are very different indeed from the other two premises in our city, in that we are a private members club, in a discreet location, with very restricted opening hours, highly regulated admission procedures, and a 25+ year history trading in our city.

### **The Premises**

The building, of which we occupy the smallest part, has three different tenants. A gay sauna occupies the ground floor and basement, we occupy the first and second floor, and the entire southern side and third floor above us is occupied by a hotel/hostel. The freeholder is Alien 1 Limited, a completely unconnected third party that owns the whole building and many others.

Our frontage to Grand Parade is considered by us to be discreet and inoffensive with only an unbranded outer door and an A5 size name poster on each side of that door. Immediately within that door is a computer where we can check validity of membership, prior to entry. We have illuminations to the front which only become active at 10pm on weekends when we open. Our first floor consists of a bar area for seated service only, with waitress service only and our second floor contains our dance area, fully monitored by CCTV. On any typical evening, we would expect to have only up to 20 members and guests on premises at any one time. When we close at 4am, the front doors are locked and the dancers and staff (who are escorted by security) later leave the premises by the rear exit to prevent any unintended interaction with customers. The dancers changing room is a female only area, accessible only with a 4 digit code entry lock. The premises, including stairways but excluding the changing room, are covered throughout by CCTV. We have a strong relationship with our sauna neighbour below and share access to their state of the art external CCTV coverage of both the frontage and rear of the building.

### **Our Staff & Dancers**

Our current and two most recent DPS have both been female and the current one first experienced the club as a dancer. She now has teenage children and has become fully qualified to enable her to become our DPS. It is our deliberate policy to engage a female in this role.

Dancers have a flexible rota and are able to choose which nights and weekends they work. What we are doing is not exploitation, but providing a safe, well paid occupation for those that would like to dance. Statements from current dancers are attached to the end of this document. We have a rich history of dancers that have a variety of backgrounds and beliefs,

including those that identify as non-female, have disability, and have differing sexualities. This variety of dancers is something that we pride ourselves on.

### **Business Structure**

**Kristopher McGrath (Director & 100% Shareholder)**

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**Saltire Investments Ltd (SEV license holder)**

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**Ms Amy Dixon (DPS)**

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**Mr Paul Robinson (Licensee/Manager)**

### **Dancer Statements**

1. In my experience working various dance clubs in England & abroad I find the working environment at Pussycat Club to be well above the standard in terms of staff support, understanding from management & general work place moral. We as dancers are treated with respect by staff, management & security team members. I always enjoy coming to work & find it an understanding environment to work in as someone with ADHD who finds it difficult to find work in a lot of type of work place.
2. I have been working at the club for about 6 months now. I like working at the club because I feel comfortable and safe. Also the customers are very respectful. I also like the way I can work when I want as it fits around my personal life. Over all the club is a very nice place to work. Everyone is lively here everyone looks out for each other overall a great atmosphere.
3. I have been working at the club for 2 years 8 months. I like working at the club because I feel very happy when I am here and most importantly feel safe and comfortable. I love how respectful the customers are. I have never been put in any danger. I class the other staff as my second family. It has given me more confidence and helped improve my mental health. I feel more safe working than in a nightclub. The club, staff and management are my happy place.
4. I have been working at the club for over a year and a half. Working at the club makes me have a nicer and safer time rather than going out in Brighton, plus I get fair pay. I'm not judged for who I am. The members are respectful and have never made me feel in danger. The other staff at Pussycats are so lovely, even management. It is the best working environment I've ever worked at.