

THE LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN

At a hearing of **LICENSING PANEL E** held on **THURSDAY, 22ND MAY, 2025** at 10.00 am, which was held remotely via Microsoft Teams

MEMBERS OF THE PANEL PRESENT

Councillors Sylvia McNamara and Steve Adams

MEMBERS OF THE PANEL ABSENT

Councillors Meric Apak and Pat Callaghan

The minutes should be read in conjunction with the agenda for the hearing. They are subject to approval and signature at the next hearing of Licensing Panel E and any corrections approved at that hearing will be recorded in those minutes.

MINUTES

1. GUIDANCE ON REMOTE MEETINGS HELD UNDER THE LICENSING ACT 2003 AND ASSOCIATED REGULATIONS

RESOLVED –

THAT the guidance on remote meetings be noted.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Meric Apak and Pat Callaghan.

Councillors Steve Adams attended the meeting as substitute.

The meeting was quorate with two members in attendance.

3. DECLARATIONS BY MEMBERS OF STATUTORY DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS, COMPULSORY REGISTERABLE NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND VOLUNTARY REGISTERABLE NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS IN MATTERS ON THIS AGENDA

There were no such declarations.

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Webcasting

The Chair announced that the meeting was being broadcast live to the internet and would be capable of repeated viewing and copies of the recording could be made available to those that requested them. Those participating in the meeting were deemed to be consenting to being filmed.

Supplementary Agenda

The Chair also announced that a supplementary agenda had been published, which contained documents submitted by the licence holder regarding Agenda Item 7 in respect of the application for review for The Camden.

5. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR DECIDES TO TAKE AS URGENT

There was no notification of urgent items of business.

6. MINUTES

Consideration was given to the Minutes of the previous meeting.

RESOLVED –

THAT the Minutes for the meeting that took place on 13 March 2025 be agreed and signed as an accurate record.

7. THE CAMDEN, 61-65 CROWDALE ROAD, LONDON, NW1 1TN

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Director Supporting Communities, which detailed an application to review a premises licence under Section 51 of the Licensing Act 2003.

The Licensing Officer introduced the report and explained that the review had been submitted by the Metropolitan Police on the grounds that the licensing objective of preventing crime and disorder was not being upheld. This followed multiple visits to the premises and intervention meetings with the licence holder and their representatives. The grounds for the review were detailed in the review statement contained within the agenda pack.

It was clarified that two relevant representations had been received, which were from the Licensing Responsible Authority and a local resident association, both in support of the review.

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The Licencing Officer reported that the Police, as applicant for the review, were initially seeking the revocation of the premises licence, however following engagement with the licence holder the Police had since indicated that they were no longer seeking revocation.

It was noted that any decision made by the Licensing Panel would not take effect until either the end of the appeal period or, if appealed, until the appeal was resolved.

The Police as applicant for the review were represented by PC Dominic Hallam, PC Joel Francis and PS Ailsa Naish and accompanied by their legal representative Emma Rowland.

Emma Rowland provided the following information to the Panel:

- The review of the premises licence had been applied for on the grounds of the prevention of crime and disorder licensing objective.
- Initial concerns included persistent breaches of licence conditions, poor management practices, and an employee's immigration status. The immigration issue was under investigation but was no longer being relied upon by the police due to inconclusive evidence.
- Originally, revocation of the premises licence had been sought. However, due to recent positive engagement by the premises with the police, revocation was no longer being pursued.
- However, improvements in management and compliance were still necessary and an adjournment was sought so that the premises could work with the Police to improve operations.
- The Police were of the view that the venue's operating schedule should be completely rewritten in collaboration with the police and licensing authority, as it was considered to be outdated.
- Therefore, the Police requested an adjournment to allow time for joint work on an updated operating schedule.
- The Police had only recently seen the premises licence holder's representation and were concerned that it sought to relax conditions, particularly regarding last entry times and the number of SIA staff. The Police opposed these proposed changes.
- There had been repeated failures by the venue to provide CCTV footage in accordance with licence conditions, undermining the police's ability to investigate incidents.
- For example, CCTV from 27 July 2024 was requested three times before it was eventually provided.
- CCTV from 22 September 2024 was not provided when requested; during a visit on 28 September, staff could not access the footage.
- Footage relating to incidents on 3 August, 30 August, and 12 October 2024 was either not provided or was of poor quality.
- The venue gave varying reasons for these failures, including technical issues, but the Police noted the problems persisted over four months with no effective resolution.

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- These breaches raised serious concerns about the venue's commitment to upholding the licensing objectives and complying with conditions.
- Despite being informed of breaches on 27 July 2024, the venue was still found to be non-compliant on 10 August 2024.
- There were concerns about unreported incidents outside the venue and failure to share information.
- On 1 August 2024, CCTV from another venue showed a large crowd and nitrous oxide use outside the premises on 27 July 2024, but this was not reported by the venue.
- On 12 August 2024, police reviewed footage of an incident on 3 August 2024; the venue claimed it was closed, but police stated CCTV showed it was open.
- On 15 September 2024, a robbery was reported by phone, but staff did not provide witness statements or the requested CCTV footage.
- On 14 October 2024, police received CCTV from another venue showing a robbery on 30 August 2024 and an incident on 7 July 2024. Neither was reported by the venue.
- The police believed the cumulative effect of these failures demonstrated an unwillingness or inability to uphold the licensing objective of preventing crime and disorder.

The Police in their submission also noted that the licence holder had provided additional documentation which had requested to amend some of the conditions on the licence and provided the following information in response:

- In relation to condition 34 on the licence, the premises had specified that they wished to hold family events so wanted this condition removed so children could attend the venue. The police were not satisfied the venue could safely accommodate children while operating as a nightclub and whilst the Police were open to discussing specific events, such as weddings, they did want the condition specifying that there were to be no children in the premises to be removed.
- In relation to condition 37, the venue had proposed reduced SIA staffing on Thursdays and Sundays for "low risk" events. The Police noted the venue could operate until 03:30hrs on Thursdays and 01:30hrs on Sundays, potentially making these late nights high-risk. Furthermore, the premises was within a cumulative impact area and had experienced a number of robberies, necessitating an adequate SIA presence.
- In relation to condition 48, the licence holder had proposed a relaxation of the last entry time. The Police opposed this, citing repeated non-compliance and the risk of disorder caused by large late-night crowds.
- The licence holder had proposed a seasonal variation so that Temporary Event Notices (TENs) were not required for events on bank holiday weekends. The Police maintained that TENs should still be required for bank holiday weekends, due to potential high demand and the area's location within a cumulative impact area.

Responding to a question Emma Rowland explained that the Police were no longer seeking revocation of the licence. The premises had engaged with the Police and

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improvements had been made. The Police instead wished to work with the premises on a revised operating schedule, provided time was allowed for constructive engagement. The Police requested that the review hearing be adjourned so engagement could continue, and further improvements be made.

The Panel sought advice on the request for adjournment. The Legal Adviser explained that adjournment was not a reasonable course of action, particularly given that it was a very late request and because other parties were in attendance at the meeting to present their representations. The Legal Adviser reminded the Panel of the options available to them and advised that a decision would need to be made today, based on the information currently available to the Panel.

The Legal Adviser reminded those in attendance that if any party was dissatisfied that the premises was not being adequately operated following the review, a further review could be applied for in the future.

The applicant for review provided the following information in response to further questions:

- Despite the licence holder claiming the premises was not operating, the Police believed that the venue had been open on both 3 August 2024 and 30 August 2024, based on video footage and the presence of security personnel outside the premises.
- Recent CCTV footage of incidents provided by the licence holder lacked timestamps, which made precise timing difficult to verify.
- A lack of response from the former management at the premises had hindered proper assessment and communication and created some of the issues described.
- As such, it was accepted that much of the historical concern related to previous management and that the current management had shown greater cooperation.
- A full compliance check had not been undertaken recently due to time constraints during their last visit.
- However, many of the proposed changes from the new management team seemed to be satisfactory in principle.

The Licensing Responsible Authority, represented by Peter Agbley (Licensing Team Leader), outlined their representation, as set out in the written submission in the agenda pack, and provided the following information in support of the review:

- The Licensing Authority supported the police-led review application and supported the suggestion that an alternative to revocation should be considered.
- The collaborative approach that had recently taken place between the licence holder and responsible authorities was good progress, and it was strongly recommended that this should continue.
- As such, the Panel were recommended to establish a framework for this engagement to continue.

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- Breaches relating to the licensing objective of prevention crime and disorder and noise complaints were highlighted, including a noise complaint in November 2023, a public nuisance complaint in April 2024, and a further public nuisance complaint in August 2024.
- Previous engagement between the police, community safety officers, licensing officers and the licence holder included a visit in December 2023 following resident complaints of noise and antisocial behaviour and an engagement interview in August 2024 with police and licensing officers.
- It was noted during these meetings that the premises had failed to notify police of incidents of crime and disorder, in breach of conditions on their licence.
- A comprehensive review of the premises licence should be undertaken to ensure full alignment with regulatory expectations and to promote responsible management.
- It was recommended that the Panel propose a deadline for initiating meetings aimed at addressing the issues highlighted.
- A condition requiring monthly meetings between the licence holders, residents and Police was proposed for the Panel to consider.

The licence holder's representatives stated that some of the complaints had occurred before the current Licence holder took ownership of the premises in May 2024, and questioned whether these complaints were relevant at this hearing in light of this. In response, the Licencing Team Leader advised that that it was necessary to provide the Panel with a full history of the premises, regardless of who the owner was at the time, to inform their decision. This was standard practice for a review hearing.

The Chair acknowledge that the applicants had recently taken over the premises and confirmed that the panel was aware of engagement efforts made since the new management assumed control. The Chair clarified that the review had been prompted by the premises' previous history of incidents and that the panel's task was to assess whether the new management could be trusted to implement necessary improvements and uphold the licensing objectives.

The interested party, Rachel representing Friends of Oakley Square, outlined their representation as set out in the written submission contained within the agenda, and highlighted the following key points:

- Friends of Oakley Square represented residents from Oakley Square and Crowndale Road, where the venue is located.
- The venue was surrounded by residential properties, including those above shops and to the rear.
- The group had submitted a letter outlining ongoing issues, which included unacceptable noise levels, anti-social behaviour, and environmental concerns such as litter and waste.
- Noise complaints had continued beyond the date of the venue's change in ownership, with the most recent made during the weekend preceding the hearing.

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- The venue did not appear to have proper soundproofing, despite claims of using noise limiters and conducting checks outside.
- Whilst noise could not be heard from the street to the front of the residential properties, it was clearly audible from the rear, where residents' bedrooms were located.
- During a recent event loud bass could be heard from 14:00 through to at least 19:30.
- A resident living five doors away on Crowndale Road reportedly experienced a constant thumping noise when events were taking place.
- The barrier and smoking area outside the venue blocked two-thirds of the pavement, posing access issues for wheelchair users and people with pushchairs, particularly during daytime events.
- Although other venues contributed to local disturbance, venues like Koko maintained communication with residents and deployed security when needed. The Camden did not appear to do this.
- Nitrous oxide canisters, broken glass, and general litter was left in the street and in residents' front gardens.
- Camden had a thriving night-time economy, which many residents supported, but stressed that this should not come at the cost of quality of life for residents.

Responding to a question about engagement with the premises Rachel, representing Friends of Oakley Square, advised that although the venue claimed to have invited residents to a community gathering in January 2025 via letter and event invitations, no one she had spoken to was aware of such an event. Rachel, or other residents, had not had direct contact with the new management because there was no clear method for residents to reach out to the venue.

The licence holder claimed that an invitation for a community event had been hand delivered to Rachel in December 2024. In response, Rachel clarified that this had not been her and was likely another local person. The licence holder accepted this could have been the case and reiterated that efforts had been made to distribute letters and encourage community engagement. The licence holder thanked Rachel for her contributions and extended an invitation for future contact.

Kashka Ray, Sonia de Leon and Jose Angel representing the premises licence holder objected to the review and provided the following information:

- The threshold required for a Summary Review under section 53A of the Licensing Act 2003 was high and the licence holder did not agree that the current review met the legal or evidential standard necessary for such proceedings.
- The trigger for the review was a false immigration allegation instigated by a former manager.
- The former manager was accused of making repeated false and damaging claims to the police and licensing authority, including an allegation of illegal employment.
- The licence holder's sister venue Kiss had been subject to a separate review, concerning similar issues, on 1 May 2025. The Panel for this review had had

found the claims about immigration unsubstantiated and concluded that there was not sufficient evidence that illegal employment or immigration breaches had occurred.

- Official documentation was provided in the Supplementary Agenda (Exhibit 1) and confirmed that the employee in question had full legal status to work in the UK.
- Two alleged licensing breaches (dated 2 November 2023 and 20 April 2024) had occurred before the current operators took ownership of the premises and holding the new management accountable for these incidents was unfair.
- Another cited incident involved an attempted robbery on 30th August 2024, which was allegedly ignored by the manager. However, it was clarified that the premises were closed at that time, and no evidence was presented linking the robbery to the venue or its patrons.
- Since November 2024, the venue had implemented several operational improvements following engagement with authorities, including appointment of a new compliance officer and operations manager, comprehensive staff training, including WAVE, and the Ask for Angela scheme, and the introduction of a formal incident log system and CCTV upgrades, with daily checks logged by management.
- The venue also introduced proactive measures for dispersal and community engagement, including external area patrols by security staff during dispersal and regular night patrols by the venue manager to monitor neighbourhood impact and collect litter.
- The action taken by the licence holder demonstrated responsible management committed to public safety and compliance.

The Licensing Team Leader clarified that the review under consideration was a review of a premises licence under Section 51 of the Licensing Act 2003, not a summary review as stated by the licence holder in their representations and in their written submission on page 6 of the Supplementary Agenda.

The licence holder requested that the licence and conditions be amended as follows:

- Removal of condition 34 – to allow for family and community events, with responsible supervision and trained staff in place.
- Amendment to condition 37 – to remove the requirement for two SIA-registered door supervisors Sunday to Thursday and instead apply dynamic risk assessments to determine appropriate staffing levels.
- Amendment to Condition 38 – to allow flexibility on the requirement for four SIA-registered door supervisors for all events, allowing staffing levels to reflect the nature and risk level of individual events.
- Amendment to Condition 48 – to allow for flexibility on the 1:00 AM last entry rule to permit entry up to 2:00 AM for ticket holders and guests showing no signs of intoxication, based on dynamic risk assessments by management and head of security.
- Late Sunday events – to requested that events held on Sundays before bank holidays be treated the same as Saturdays, removing the need for Temporary Event Notices (TENs) for such occasions.

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The Chair clarified the review was not an opportunity for the licence holder to request changes and amendments to their licence and conditions, and a variation should instead be applied for to request these changes.

Responding to a question about noise disturbance the premises licence holder's representatives explained that patrols were conducted during events to minimise disturbance and that the premises could be contacted directly by residents with regard any potential future issues, so that a quick resolution could be sought.

The Licensing Team Leader noted that the licensees had not responded to the police's proposal to work collaboratively to which the licence holder responded to confirm they intended to work with both the police and licensing authority to address issues.

The Licensing Team Leader sought clarification on what a "dynamic risk assessment" in relation to SIA door staff was. The licence holder explained that the number of SIA staff should be based on factors such as event size. As per the conditions, all events needed a particular number of SIAs depending on the day of the week, so even a small event of only 50 people required four SIA staff on a Saturday, which was deemed to be unnecessary and not cost effective by the licence holder.

The Police as applicant for the review made some closing remarks.

The Licensing Responsible Authority made some closing remarks.

The interested party made some closing remarks.

The premises licence holder made some closing remarks.

Decision and Reasons

Panel Members confirmed that they had been able to follow and understand the submissions and discussion in relation to the application for review of a premises license in respect of The Camden.

In deliberation, the Panel noted the information provided by the applicant for review, the Police, and the representations from the Licensing Responsible Authority, the interested party and the licence holder.

The Panel considered all the options available to them by virtue of Section 52 the Licensing Act 2003, as follows:

- Allow the license to continue operating as before
- Modify the conditions of the licence
- Exclude a licensable activity from the scope of the licence
- To remove the designated premises supervisor
- To suspend the licence for a period not exceeding three months

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- To revoke the license

The Panel recognised that revocation was no longer being recommended by the Police, which was supported by Licensing Responsible Authority, therefore they did not consider this to an appropriate course of action. The Panel agreed that that the license could not continue to operate as before but did not consider that excluding a licensable activity from the scope of the licence or removing the designated premises supervisor were relevant in this instance, so disregarded these options.

Therefore, the Panel agreed that suspension and modifying conditions were potential options and considered each of these. On balance, Panel Members agreed that modifying the conditions would be more appropriate in light of the available evidence and because the licence holder had demonstrated that they were committed to a collaborative approach towards improvements.

The Panel suggested that conditions should be added to the licence as follows:

- 1) A meeting be arranged with residents, the Police and other responsible authorities before 19 June 2025.
- 2) Monthly meetings are to be held thereafter until a suitable operating schedule had been produced and agreed to the Police's satisfaction.

The Panel confirmed that the meetings with residents, the Police and other responsible authorities could be held jointly or separately.

Overall, Panel Members were in agreement that the review was entirely appropriate to allow the issues with the operations at the premises to be addressed and should the current issues not be rectified a future review was entirely possible. Having considered all options available to them, the Panel deemed that modifying the conditions on the licence was the most suitable course of action.

Therefore, it was

RESOLVED –

THAT the premises licence in respect of The Camden, 61-65 Crowndale Road, London, NW1 1TN be modified to add the following conditions:

- 1) A meeting be arranged with residents, the Police and other responsible authorities before 19 June 2025.
- 2) Monthly meetings are to be held thereafter until a suitable operating schedule had been produced and agreed to the Police's satisfaction.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

There was none.

The hearing ended at 11.44 am.

CHAIR

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MINUTES END