

LICENSING ACT 2003:
Application to vary the Premises Licence at Stockport County AFC, Hardcastle Road, Edgeley, Stockport, SK3 9DD

Report of the Corporate Director for Place Management & Regeneration

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1. For Members to consider an application from Stockport County 2010 Limited to vary the premises licence for Stockport County AFC, Hardcastle Road, Edgeley, Stockport, SK3 9DD.

2. DETAILS

- 2.1. Applicant: Stockport County 2010 Limited
Designated Premises Supervisor: Della Mitchell
Name of Premises: Stockport County AFC
Address of Premises: Hardcastle Road, Edgeley, Stockport, SK3 9DD
Situation: A location plan is attached at **Appendix D**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. On the 11 August 2021, Stockport County 2010 Limited made an application to vary the Premises Licence. The proposed variation seeks to;
1. *Permit licensable activities to take place both indoors and outdoors.*
 2. *Add 'anything similar to live music, recorded music and performances of dance' as a licensable activity.*
 3. *Add non-standard timings for NYE.*
 4. *Increase the maximum capacity of the premises to 19,000.*

*This shall be for the purpose of a maximum of 6 'large outdoor events' per calendar year, which shall last no more than 5 days each.
These outdoor events may include such activities as live music events, pantomime or stand-up comedy.*

5. *Add conditions governing the operation of 'large outdoor events'.*

*These conditions are contained within the attached operating schedule, which also defines large outdoor events as those with a capacity of between 5,000 and 19,000 which involve the use of the football pitch for spectators.
These conditions limit the timings of regulated entertainment and sale of alcohol at large scale events such that they must cease at 22:30.*

6. *Vary the layout of the premises to add the attached plans which show how the premises shall be laid out during 'large outdoor events'. The existing plans attached to the licence will remain attached to the licence to show how the premises will operate when large outdoor events are not taking place.*

The new plans show the layout of the stadium and pitch, which includes fixed seating in the stands facing the pitch which is customarily used for spectators viewing football matches.

They also show the likely location of a stage for a large outdoor event, but the specific location and size of the stage, as well as the layout of any temporary seating on the pitch, for any given event shall be determined and confirmed as part of the event management plan required to be implemented as part of the conditions included within the attached operating schedule.

7. *Amend Condition 4 of Annex 2 as follows: 'to attend a private or pre-arranged function or event (including a large outdoor event) admission to which is afforded by written invitation or by a pass or ticket obtained prior to gaining admission to the premises.'*

- a. A copy of the application to vary the premises licence is attached at **Appendix A** this includes the requested hours for licensable activities and the licence conditions proposed by the applicant
- b. A copy of the current premises licence including the existing hours of licensable activities and conditions attached to the licence is attached at **Appendix B**
- c. The application was advertised on the boundary of the premises for 28 days following receipt of the application and a copy of the notice was published in the Stockport Express on 18th August 2021.
- d. There were 12 parties (party being the legal term used in the licensing act, which includes people who have submitted representations) who initially made representations on the application, only 9 of the 12 parties subsequently confirmed their intention to proceed with their representation. The representations are attached at **Appendix C1, C2, C3, C4, C5, C6, C7, C8, C9**. The 9 parties who have made representations have been invited to attend the hearing
- e. Attached at **Appendix D** is a copy of a locality plan.

4. GUIDELINES

- 4.1. Section 34 of the Licensing Act 2003 states that the holder of a premises licence may apply for a variation of that licence. Section 35(3) of the Act states that, having regard to the representations made, the Authority may take such steps as it considers necessary to promote the licensing objectives. The steps are:
 - a) to modify the conditions of the licence by altering or omitting them or by adding new conditions
 - b) to reject the whole or part of the application

and for this purpose the conditions of the licence are modified if any of them is altered or omitted or any new condition is added.

4.2. The Statutory Guidance issued under section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003 was amended to reflect changes made to the Licensing Act 2003 by the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2012 and was most recently amended in April 2018. This guidance gives the following advice on the issues raised in the representation.

4.2.1. In relation to the Prevention of Public Nuisance licensing objective, paragraph 2.15 states that the 2003 Act enables licensing authorities and responsible authorities, through representations, to consider what constitutes public nuisance and what is appropriate to prevent it in terms of conditions attached to specific premises licences and club premises certificates. It is therefore important that in considering the promotion of this licensing objective, licensing authorities and responsible authorities focus on the effect of the licensable activities at the specific premises on persons living and working (including those carrying on business) in the area around the premises which may be disproportionate and unreasonable. The issues will mainly concern noise nuisance, light pollution, noxious smells and litter.

4.2.2 Paragraph 2.16 states that Public nuisance is given a statutory meaning in many pieces of legislation. It is however not narrowly defined in the 2003 Act and retains its broad common law meaning. It may include in appropriate circumstances the reduction of the living and working amenity and environment of other persons living and working in the area of the licensed premises. Public nuisance may also arise as a result of the adverse effects of artificial light, dust, odour and insects or where its effect is prejudicial to health.

4.2.3. Paragraph 2.17 states that Conditions relating to noise nuisance will usually concern steps appropriate to control the levels of noise emanating from premises. This might be achieved by a simple measure such as ensuring that doors and windows are kept closed after a particular time, or persons are not permitted in garden areas of the premises after a certain time. More sophisticated measures like the installation of acoustic curtains or rubber speaker mounts to mitigate sound escape from the premises may be appropriate. However, conditions in relation to live or recorded music may not be enforceable in circumstances where the entertainment activity itself is not licensable (see chapter 16). Any conditions appropriate to promote the prevention of public nuisance should be tailored to the type, nature and characteristics of the specific premises and its licensable activities. Licensing authorities should avoid inappropriate or disproportionate measures that could deter events that are valuable to the community, such as live music. Noise limiters, for example, are expensive to purchase and install and are likely to be a considerable burden for smaller venues.

4.2.4. Paragraph 2.18 states that as with all conditions, those relating to noise nuisance may not be appropriate in certain circumstances where provisions in other legislation adequately protect those living in the area of the premises. But as stated earlier in this Guidance, the approach of licensing authorities and responsible authorities should be one of prevention and when their powers are engaged, licensing authorities should be aware of the fact that other legislation may not adequately cover concerns raised in relevant representations and additional conditions may be appropriate.

- 4.2.5. Paragraph 2.19 states that where applications have given rise to representations, any appropriate conditions should normally focus on the most sensitive periods. For example, the most sensitive period for people being disturbed by unreasonably loud music is at night and into the early morning when residents in adjacent properties may be attempting to go to sleep or are sleeping. This is why there is still a need for a licence for performances of live music between 11 pm and 8 am. In certain circumstances, conditions relating to noise emanating from the premises may also be appropriate to address any disturbance anticipated as customers enter and leave.
- 4.2.6. Paragraph 2.20 states that Measures to control light pollution will also require careful thought. Bright lighting outside premises which is considered appropriate to prevent crime and disorder may itself give rise to light pollution for some neighbours. Applicants, licensing authorities and responsible authorities will need to balance these issues
- 4.2.7. Paragraph 2.21 states that beyond the immediate area surrounding the premises, these are matters for the personal responsibility of individuals under the law. An individual who engages in antisocial behaviour is accountable in their own right. However, it would be perfectly reasonable for a licensing authority to impose a condition, following relevant representations, that requires the licence holder or club to place signs at the exits from the building encouraging patrons to be quiet until they leave the area, or that, if they wish to smoke, to do so at designated places on the premises instead of outside, and to respect the rights of people living nearby to a peaceful night.
- 4.2.8 Paragraph 10.10 states that The 2003 Act requires that licensing conditions should be tailored to the size, type, location and characteristics and activities taking place at the premises concerned. Conditions should be determined on a case-by-case basis and standardised conditions which ignore these individual aspects should be avoided. For example, conditions should not be used to implement a general policy in a given area such as the use of CCTV, polycarbonate drinking vessels or identity scanners where they would not be appropriate to the specific premises. Licensing authorities and other responsible authorities should be alive to the indirect costs that can arise because of conditions. These could be a deterrent to holding events that are valuable to the community or for the funding of good and important causes. Licensing authorities should therefore ensure that any conditions they impose are only those which are appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives.

5. OPTIONS

Following the consideration of the application the sub committee has the following options

- To grant the variation application as applied for
- To grant the variation application subject to any additional conditions it considers appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives
- To grant the variation application in part but amend the hours of any licensable activities to which the application relates – based on the failure to promote the licensing objectives
- To refuse the variation application

6 RECOMMENDATION

6.1 The Committee is asked to determine the application to vary the Premises Licence in respect of Stockport County AFC, Hardcastle Road, Edgeley, Stockport, SK3 9DD.

6.2 Full reasons should be given for the decision reached to inform the formal decision notice which must be sent to all parties following the meeting.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Licensing Act 2003

Statutory Guidance to the Licensing Act 2003, as revised, April 2018.

Stockport Council's Licensing Policy, 2016-2021

Anyone wishing to inspect the above background papers or requiring further information should contact Sarah Tooth by email on sarah.tooth@stockport.gov.uk.