

LICENSING SUB COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 1 September 2020 at 5.30 p.m.

Online 'Virtual' Meeting - <https://towerhamlets.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

SUPPLEMENTAL AGENDA

This meeting is open to the public to attend.

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**PAGE
NUMBER(S)**

- 3 .2 Application to Review the Premises Licence for (London Oktoberfest Ltd.) Millwall Park, Isle of Dogs London E14 3BA**

3 - 10

Supporting documents submitted on behalf of the Premises Licence Holder.

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Agenda Item 3.2

Dear licensing committee,

London Oktoberfest has been a well-established event in Millwall Park since 2012. This means for more than 8 years we have welcomed more than 15,000 people each year over two weekends uniting the entire community to one of the most appreciated events of the year. From 2012-2016 we worked with a time limited premises license. Meaning each year we had to apply for a new license but there was never a need for any hearings and nearly no objections occurred in this time period. After multiple years of running the event without any accident we applied for an (time unlimited) license in 2017. This license has been granted without objections from either the police, local residence or any councilors.

The event has from the start on experience high appreciation from the local community. As we welcomed a large number of visitors this also boosted business for many surrounding local business profiting from the attraction in Millwall Park. Moreover, we helped to establish a great reputation for the area around Millwall Park helping to shift the area away from a bad reputation with gangs. After careful evaluation of ticket sales we can clearly see that most of our visitors are from surrounding zip codes meaning we are not only a London wide event but also welcome a lot of members from the community. Over the years we contributed to Tower Hamlets budget with more than 350,000 pounds in hire fee and charges.

In 2017, on an early Saturday evening we had an issue with one of our beer pipes which led to the fact that we could not keep up with the demand. We had no choice but to close doors early and offer ticket holders a refund. As we had to turn ticket holders down with a complete refund this lead to some complaints about the event and the police started to evaluate the event differently. (Please not this beer problem was fixed after a few hours and we had no similar issue before or after that date).

Despite not having any major accidents despite this one evening requirements set by the police increased significantly. This can for example be seen by the number of security officers demanded. And as outlined below we see these requirements and interferences as one of the main issues that now led to the objection.

Year	Capacity	Number of security officers
2012	2500	30
2013	2500	30
2014	2500	30
2015	3300	35
2016	3300	35
2017	4000	52
2018	2200	57
2019	2500	62

What happened?

As one can see despite reducing the capacity of the event significantly the number of security required nearly double. We believe that with too much security at the event minor accidents maybe got evaluated more carefully and in conclusion maybe lead to bigger problems. Moreover, the police required that me the event manager Carsten Raun that lead the event successfully for many years should give the control to an external event manager. Despite having picked experienced event mangers together with the council the lack of experience with such an unusual large scale event lead to more problems than it helped resolve.

In the SAG meeting for Oktoberfest 2020 Kathy Driver from the Licensing department said that she thinks that revoking the license is not needed but additional requirements should be put on this license. We are happy with adding these extra requirements to our license. Some of these could be

1. No standing on tables and benches
2. cctv in operation all event opening times
3. No sale of steins after 22:00 from 22-22:30 (bar close) only 1 pint or 1/2 pint
4. Refusal logs controlled by a refusal manager at each bar
5. Saturday evening only pre booked tickets with food included (to make sure no gang just turn up and buy entrance tickets only)

Moreover, for 2020 we suggested a complete makeover of the current event concept leading in our opinion too less incidents and bring the event back to the positive developments experienced during 2012-2017. The concept can be found as an attachment. Since 2018 Carsten Raun was not allowed to be the event manager for the Oktoberfest but with 11 years of experience in organizing Oktoberfests and more than 300 Oktoberfests organized and managed by him we suggest in lifting the requirement of an external event manger.

Comments to the police arguments:

The constant demand for alteration and increase in security numbers and welfare officers from the police is the reason why there have been changes to the event management plan all the way till September. The original well drafted EMP has been ready since April 2019. **The first planning meeting was in February** and the last on the 2nd August.

The Oktoberfest has unfortunately been terrorized by gangs twice:

Ones in Finsbury Park as a fight was provoked by 5 people filmed and send to the Sun newspaper. The participants of this fight left the event directly afterwards and did not wish to get the police involved.

2019 a Millwall gang (known by the police) of about 30 people visited the event with the main purpose just to start a fight and make trouble. Our security got the gang out of the tent but outside the gang wanted to fight the security. The happening around that gang accident are the main arguments by the police.

More than 15,000 people did visit the event 2019 and seen from this number of guests the numbers of incidents are lower than for any normal club in London.

The lady seen in lederhosen in a very bad condition is due to fact she brought herself a bottle of vodka and did drink this (**we don't sell vodka and people are not allowed to bring and drink external drinks to/at the event**). We found the empty bottle close to her. These situations that people preload before the event and then get denied entry are very unfortunate but out of our responsibility.

In 2018 and 2019 we implemented all requirements from the authorities even though we knew some of the demands were out of common sense. As mentioned some implementations lead to more trouble. Too much security lead to more trouble as people tent to feel provoked by too much security around.

In the debrief meeting where the police brought up there concerns other authorities were rather chocked. The health and safety officer even commented “did you go to another event than us?”. Most other authorities where happy and ok with the Oktoberfest event 2019.

Kathy Driver from licensing also partially agreed with some observation mentioned by the police but instead of being radical and revoking the license she commented: “there are no conditions on the license what so ever at the moment” we can look at this. This has unfortunately not been mentioned in the report by the police.

We are happy to implement conditions to our license to make sure the event will work better for the community with less incidents in the future.

Kind Regards,

Carsten Raun

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Proposal for Oktoberfest in Millwall Park 2020

Executive summary:

We have taken on board comments from the SAG members from our meeting on the 17th of January and we are 100% committed to make the below improvements and changes to the concept and setup for Oktoberfest in Millwall Park for the years ahead. We have seriously weighted the needs and demands from stakeholders against the possibility to still make it commercially workable. We expect with these radical changes and improvements that there is no need to challenge our existing license. We want to demonstrate below that the proposed changes will work and are significant.

Overview of changes:

Oktoberfest 2019	Oktoberfest 2020
Big top dark tent	Clear span white and light tent
No flooring	Fully wooden cassette floor
Bigger tent as 2018 70x40m but oval scape	Inside size stays/footprint much smaller outside, size 80x30m square scape equals 70x40 oval
Toilet area no flooring	Toilet area fully floored
Welfare officers for full capacity	Welfare officers stay at same level despite lower Capacity. 4 SIA/2 external Friday and Sat night.
Dancing on Benches allowed	No Dancing on Benches
Capacity Thursday/Sunday 1,500 w/36 Security	Capacity Thursday/Sunday 1,500 w/36 Security
Capacity Friday/Sat morning 2,500 w/56 Security	Capacity Friday/Sat afterno. 1,800 w/49 Security
Capacity Saturday evening 2,500 w/62 Security	Capacity Saturday evening 1,500 w/45 Security
Bar logs – not working	Each bar get one dedicated log manager
Bar with agency staff low training	Bar staff to get 2 hours training before opening
Marketing – have a dance on benches	Marketing – experience the authentic Oktoberfest
Marketing – random crowd	Marketing – targeting better/different crowd
Ticket sales Sat. Evening (options available without food)	Tickets Sat evening only sold with food and only one beer instead of 2, starting at £35.
Ticket sales other days	Various cheaper options available
Music style - party	Change to more Oompah traditional style
Food from waiters + one self-service Bratwurst stand	Food from waiters + multiple food stalls (widen food range available)
Trackway only in the production area	Trackway also at entrance and park corners

Changes:

The above changeover will develop the event in a different direction and significantly reduce incidents and complaints.

We have built this event since 2012 and the large majority of guests we have happy and behaved well but some smaller numbers have caused issue. We want that people should still be able to enjoy the event in Millwall Park for the 9th year and ahead. As of our meeting on the 17th of January we

would like to suggest the following numbers of changes to the event and get additions to our license to make sure we operate in a different and less risky way.

The tent:

The change over to a different tent will have a significant impact on the event. We suggest bringing a white clear span tent fully floored with cassette wooden floor. The size will be 80x30m. The white cover will give more light and by this create a friendlier environment inside the tent. Additionally we will install stronger lightening which will create a completely different event with a more positive mood and light even after dark. The old big top tent was very dark as no light came through. The light will make it even easier to control and at overview the event. Much faster we can spot people both by the security or at the bar and make sure they don't reach intoxication. At the same time the floor heightens the standard of the event.

Capacity:

The second main change will be the below reduced capacity and with the same tent size it will give room in the tent which we use for more space between the tables and the security can easily walk through and control every area. At the same time the extra space between the rows makes sure that different groups at the different rows don't get as close as before which potentially will reduce tensions. For 2020 no more standing on benches. This will be advertised from the beginning and stated on the homepage.

If we review the latest years potentially most trouble bringer was the Saturday evening shift as it was sold out and people arrive at the same time and unfortunately some guests use the afternoon to pre load even if only in a smaller scale this increases the risk of intoxication and stress. To help this out and make the event better we suggest these further changes as:

- 1) Reduce the capacity on Saturday evening from 2,500 to only 1,500 as this is the main trouble area of the latest years.
- 2) Increase the ratio of the security from $2500/62 = 1$ to 40.32 to 1 per 33.33 guests Saturday evening. Which means 45 security, we still keep 4 SIA and 2 external Welfare officers. Also we employ only SIA security no stewards.
- 3) Friday/Saturday afternoon we reduce the capacity from 2,500 to 1,800 at this sessions traditionally has been nearly no issue but we also increase security for the Fri/Sat afternoon: the percentage decrease in capacity would mean 14 security less but we only reduce by 7 security and by this increase the number of security here too to 49 with 4 SIA and 2 external Welfare officers. Also we employ only SIA security no stewards.
- 4) Thursdays and Sunday stays as we had with 1,500 capacities and 36 security as of whom two acts as Welfare and 8 of them are stewards.

A clear advantage of the reduced capacity will ease the entrance time too and make the bars/service run much smoother and release some time to better control the customers and supervise the need of rejection (see more under the point Bar).

Ticket sale:

As tickets sales for the Saturday evening last year to a great extent only was general admission and the first beer tickets we don't offer this kind of tickets anymore, instead we only offer 1,500 tickets

including food, which are the Oktoberfest tickets and the VIP tickets where we in addition also will take away one beer so people only get one beer and food instead of two beer's and food with this tickets. This means for customers to participate Saturday evening will cost 35 pounds for the Oktoberfest ticket and £50 for the VIP ticket. By this we make sure all people attending will eat something and we reduce people turning up to make trouble/ just participate by paying the £10 entrance fee as this is not sold anymore not even on the door. We risk not selling out beforehand but if we have tickets left, we only sell the packages at £35 or £50 on the door Saturday evening.

For the other days we keep the mixed ticket offer as we had as historically much more "food" tickets already presold on the other days. We want at the same time to keep it possible to join the event even if a guest cannot afford to pay such a high amount.

Licensing:

We are happy to add the following points to our License:

- Sales of stein's to stop at 22:00 so 1 hour before closing of the event we only sell ½ pint or 1 pint of beer till 22.30 when the bar closes.
- CCTV must be in operation at the event at all opening hours
- The bars need to deliver a full and detailed refusal book

To make sure this works effective each of the bar's will get a dedicated refusal book manager and all bar staff to get a mandatory 2 hours training before they are allowed to work at our bars. Their certificate will be available at the refusal book manager for inspection by licensing or the police.

Music style:

As our music style might have been developing too much into the direction of party music, we want to go back to traditional Oompah music so we play a totally different style throughout the day. As last year in the evening (late afternoon) we played party music. We will also change the DJ and replaced him by a traditional style DJ. We always play traditional music the first two hours and then change over to party music this has maybe been a mistake as it takes the guests to a higher level where they might get to "wild" if we keep the traditional music we keep people on a lower level and by this very likely less aggressive and less stressed.

Food:

It is very important that people eat in combination with drinking alcohol so we will increase our food offer to include more kinds like vegetarian and vegan food so people have more choices and also by this we will be able to attract different crowd to the event. We add one or two more stalls inside the tent so people easily can buy food without too much queuing.

Marketing:

We change the focus from standing on benches and having a sing along to instead to tell people to experience a traditional Oktoberfest and this will include no standing on Benches. Also we want to attract a different crowd by focusing more on food and the different much nicer tent we will have with flooring.

Carsten Raun, Organizer and Paul Button Health & Safety adviser.

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