

APPLICATION FOR A FULL REVIEW OF THE LICENCE FOR FAITH IN STRANGERS 17 ETHELBERT CRESCENT MARGATE

Meeting	9TH December 2021
Report Author	Alison Brock, Technical Support Team Manager
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Saunders
Status	For Decision
Classification:	Unrestricted

Executive Summary:

To review the licence of Faith in Strangers requested by Amanda Berry, Environmental Protection Officer, Thanet District Council. Following the serving of an Abatement Notice.

Recommendation:

The instructions of the Sub-Committee are requested.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Financial and Value for Money

Costs associated with processing the application are taken from licensing fee income.

The applicant or any other person (objector) may appeal the Committee's decision to Magistrates' Court within 21 days. Should this decision be appealed the Council will incur costs defending the appeal. Should the appeal be successful it could result in costs being awarded against the Council. Therefore all decisions should ensure that they are in line with the objectives of the Licensing Act 2003

Legal

Under the Licensing Act 2003 the Licensing Authority has a duty to exercise licensing control of relevant premises.

The Licensing Sub-Committee is obliged to determine applications with a view to promoting the four licensing objectives.

Any decision the Licensing Sub-Committee make should be made with regard to the Secretary of State's guidance made under Section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003 (revised in April 2017) as well as Thanet District Councils adopted Licensing Policy.

Where any decision parts from either the Guidance or the Policy clear and cogent reasons must be given. Members should be aware that if such a departure is made the risk of appeal/challenge is increased. Similarly the risk of appeal/challenge is increased if any decision made is not evidence based and proportionate.

The Licensing Sub-Committee must pay proper attention to the applicant's rights under the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998, which gives further effect in the United Kingdom to the fundamental rights and freedoms contained in the European Conventions on Human Rights. The Licensing Sub-Committee must have proper regard to the rights of the individual applicant when making decisions that affect them. However, it also has to have regard to the safety and protection of the public and therefore to ensure that the right balance is found and think hard about how it can cause the least possible harm to individuals, bearing in mind its duty to ensure the protection of the public.

The effective regulation of licensable activities and of premises at which licensable activities take place can assist in safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 states: "Without prejudice to any other obligation imposed on it, it shall be the duty of each authority to which this section applies to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those function on, and the need to do all that is reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area"

In considering this application the Licensing Sub-Committee will balance the competing Human Rights of the various parties including the right to respect for private and family life, the protection of property and the right to a fair hearing.

There is a right of appeal to a Magistrates' Court within 21 days of the date of the decision of the Licensing Sub-Committee with regard to the grant/refusal of a licence or any of the conditions attached to it.

Corporate

Corporate Priorities should be taken into account when determining the outcome of any application.

Priority 1: Growth

Priority2: Environment

Priority 3: Communities

Equality Act 2010 & Public Sector Equality Duty

Members are reminded of the requirement, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard to the aims of the Duty at the time the decision is taken. The aims of the Duty are: (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it, and (iii) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Protected characteristics: age, sex, disability, race, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief and pregnancy & maternity. Only aim (i) of the Duty applies to Marriage & civil partnership.

In considering this application it is appropriate to consider the rights of both the applicant and other parties, such as “responsible authorities” and/or “other persons” (objectors). The procedure for determining licences has a prescribed format to ensure fair representation of the relevant facts by all parties.

Corporate Priorities

This report relates to the following corporate priorities: -

- *Environment*
- *Communities*

1.0 Introduction and Background

1.1 An application for a review of the premises licence for Faith in Strangers has been submitted by Amanda Berry Environmental Protection Officer Thanet Council in accordance with Section 51 of the Licensing Act 2003

1.2 The application and annexes are attached at Annex 1

2.0 The Current Situation

2.1 The review notice was posted on the premises, on the Thanet Council website and on the doors of the Thanet Council Offices as is required by the Licensing Act. The responsible authorities were also notified of the application, no comments were received from them.

2.2 Eight representations were received that are in support of the review application, these are attached at Annex 2a.

A case review received from Woods Whur the solicitors representing those supporting the review application is attached in Annex 2b.

2.3 127 emails of support for the premises have been received. The main points being that it is a key cultural and community focussed business in the area and provides space for individuals to work from during the day. Only 1 of these support emails is attached as it is the only one that mentions one of the 4 licensing objectives as required by the Licensing Act 2003 – Annex 3

2.4 Environmental Protection now wish to withdraw the application as further appraisal of the evidence has indicated that there is not a public nuisance emanating from the premises as evidence has only been gathered in one premises which does not meet the definition of public nuisance.

2.5 As a hearing had already been set and all three parties could not agree to dispense the need for a hearing this will now take place in accordance with the Licensing Act 2003.

2.6 The Licensing Sub-Committee will be aware that it must carry out its functions under the 2003 Licensing Act to take steps which are appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives. The Licensing objectives are: - the prevention of crime and disorder, public safety, the prevention of public nuisance, and the protection of

children from harm. In carrying out its licensing functions, the Licensing Sub Committee must also have regard to its statement of licensing policy and the Guidance issued under the Act.

- 2.7 The four licensing objectives are the matters the Licensing Sub-Committee must address when considering whether to grant or refuse the application. Each application should be considered on its merits. Reasons must be given for any decision made by the Sub-Committee.

3.0 Options

- 3.1 The instructions of the Sub-Committee are requested.

Contact Officer: Alison Brock Technical Support Team Manager
Reporting to: Penny Button, Director of Neighbourhoods

Annex List

- Annex 1 – review application and annexes
- Annex 2 – Representations
- Annex 3 - Representation in support

Background Papers

Licensing Act 2003 - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/17/contents>

DCMS Guidance documents issued under Section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003 (as amended)-

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/explanatory-memorandum-revised-guidance-issued-under-s-182-of-licensing-act-2003>

Thanet District Council Statement of Licensing Policy-

<https://www.thanet.gov.uk/media/3168621/licensing-document-2016.pdf>