

Date 18/02/2022

Hi Arlene,

Thank you for sending through the LSO comments regarding Babylon's new Premises Licence.

In response, please note the following:

We are happy to abide by Ms Sande's comments on a clearly demarcated area and also that no amplified music or entertainment to take place in the outdoor area.

However, with regard to us ceasing to use the area after the 10pm, as per the layout plans provided with the application, the external area is an integral part of the premises. Namely, it is the entrance and exit to the premises and queueing area to get into the venue rather than the public street. This area is also used as the smoking area for patrons to prevent them from congregating on the public walkway to smoke and vape. The venue uses the front gate entrance into the marked licensed area to ask patrons for ID, Covid passports, tickets whilst also checking for checking levels of intoxication and performing drug and weapon searches prior to joining the queue. Whilst the front door to the building houses the cash desk whereby the venue charges an entry fee. Thus, the very nature of this outside space means that it is supervised thoroughly by both Personal Licence Holders and Door Stewards at all times to assist in the management and control of this space and to support the licensing objectives.

Currently Babylon is trading via Occasional Licence applications whereby this area, which includes bright lighting and full CCTV coverage, is utilised as a 'safe space' for our patrons away from the confines of the nightclub inside. This light, spacious part of the premises allows the staff to provide duty of care support to vulnerable individuals prior to them leaving the premises. This external part of the premises is serviced by staff at all times to ensure all glasses and litter are collected and removed from the area whilst the Door Stewards ensure that patrons leaving the premises do not take drinks out onto the street nor are boisterous upon their dispersal.

Babylon has not received any complaints of breaching the licensing objectives since it's re-opening last year from any within its Alford Place community. The location of the premises is between two office blocks which are not open after 10pm therefore not creating a nuisance to any other premises in its vicinity. The use of the external area is in keeping to other licensed buildings within its locality such as The Chester Hotel, Malmaison and The Albyn (to be double checked??). We are aware of our additional responsibilities as not only a licensed premises but also as part of the West End neighbourhood.

Although we appreciate that Ms Sande's comments are reflective of Aberdeen City Centre's current licensing policy on external drinking areas, the applicant, Greg Robertson and I would welcome the opportunity to show and discuss with any of the LSO's the current use of Babylon's outside area and it is vital to the operation of the premises after 10pm.