

LICENSING ACT 2003

Licence: Review following Closure Order

Reference: 25790

12/08/2022

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am employed by the London Borough of Brent as a Licensing Enforcement Officer. I have been in this role since 23/05/2022. In this capacity I am authorised to exercise duties under the Licensing Act 2003.

On 16/06/2022 I applied for a review of the premises licence for VYBZ BAR, 1 CRAVEN PARK ROAD, LONDON, NW10 8SE. This was then heard at an Alcohol and Entertainment Licensing Sub-Committee virtual hearing on the 3rd August 2022. The decision was that;

- The licence will be suspended for three months from the 24 August 2022.
- The designated premises supervisor is to be removed and replaced with a new designated supervisor to be appointed by the end of the period of suspension.

The licence conditions are amended as following:

- The premises opening hours are amended to be from 11.00 to 02.00 hours.
- All licensable activities to cease at 01.30 hours.
- The premises is required to adopt a queuing and dispersal policy to ensure the dispersal of its customers and staff from the premises' immediate vicinity by 03.00 hours, such policy is to be adopted by the end of the suspension period.
- The names of personal licence holders working at the premises to be provided to the Licensing authority by the end of the suspension period. The names of any additional personal licence holders who commence work at the premises is to be provided to the Licensing authority within seven days of them commencing work.

At the time of this hearing there was a closure notice in place on the premises issued by the Metropolitan Police and the full hearing of this matter was heard on the 9th August at Willesden Magistrates Court. On hearing all the evidence the Deputy District Judge decided to issue a Closure Order in respect of the premises for the maximum 3 months and this ends on 9th November 2022 at 11.59pm. At any time before the expiry of the closure order, an application may be made to a justice of the peace, by complaint, for an extension (or further extension) of the period for which the order is in force.

This closure order has now triggered a further review hearing for Vybz Bar.

PC [REDACTED] has submitted the closure order hearing bundle for this review hearing. This bundle contains a number of statements that were not part of the review hearing on 3rd August. These include;

- Impact statement from Dawn Butler MP
- Statement from [REDACTED] who is Head Chair of the Harlesden SNT Ward Panel
- Statement from [REDACTED] LB Brent ASB Officer
- Anonymous statement from Harlesden resident
- 2 x statements from PC [REDACTED]
- Statement from Insp [REDACTED]

These statements give further weight of evidence to the serious problems of crime, disorder and ant-social behaviour linked to Vubz Bar.

At the Closure Order hearing it was established that Police had also identified a number of unreported incidents that were captured via local CCTV cameras during their closure order investigations.

1. 12 June 2022 - patrons can be seen exiting the venue in a steady stream at around 05:00, after which they begin to congregate outside. An argument begins between two patrons which then turns into a mass brawl which spills south down the road into Harlesden High Street. There are no door staff present to prevent this and the fight continues until approximately 05:10.

2. 18 June 2022 - patrons can be seen exiting the Premises from approximately 04:50 before congregating in the street outside. A small group move northbound up Craven Park Road and begin milling around the Harlesden Food Centre, where blatant drug use and drinking in the street can be observed. At 05:15, a fight breaks out between patrons who can then be seen stamping on someone who is on the floor. There is no door staff present to prevent this.

3. 25 June 2022 – from 04:50, patrons can be seen congregating in the street outside the venue. Blatant drug use in public can be observed, with patrons appearing to be receiving nitrous oxide balloons from a white Mercedes Benz parked outside the Premises before inhaling from them. At 05:02 a male, who can be seen exiting the Premises at around 04:50, can be observed assaulting another male in the street outside the Harlesden Food Centre. The attacker kicks the victim whilst he is on the floor and the victim does not stand back up again for the remainder of the clip, which lasts for approximately 20 minutes. No door staff is present to prevent this or offer medical assistance to the injured male.

4. 1 July 2021 – at 03:01, a hooded male can be seen kicking a rubbish bag north up Craven Park Road, it splits open, and the rubbish is left strewn around the street. He stops doing this outside the Premises before entering the venue.

5. 2 July 2022 - patrons can be seen slowly exiting the Premises at 05:00. A fight spills out of the front door between two males, before more patrons decide to join in. One of the originally involved males then begins to fight a different male, which prompts more people to get involved in the fight. This eventually gets out of hand and spills south down the road onto Harlesden High Street. Throughout the clip there is one male attempting to calm down the situation whilst the rest of the crowd decide to join in with the melee. The crowd then moves northbound up Craven Park Road towards Harlesden Food Centre. From 05:04 to 05:05 the originator of the fight picks up a glass bottle that has been left near a bin and begins to move back towards VYBZ before being disarmed by another male. He then attempts to strangle the male that has just disarmed him before being dragged away by another group and pinned up against the shutters of Prestige Hairdressers. Two Police Officers then arrive on scene but are unable to successfully detain the male due to the size of the crowd of patrons that has now gathered. There are no door staff present that are able to contain the incident.

The Premises Licence Holder and current Designated Premises Supervisor Kamika Samuel has had little or no involvement in both the review and closure order hearings. This highlights concerns that she is not in control of her premises. This control would appear to have been passed onto her husband [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. At both the previous review hearing and the closure order hearing he has played himself out to be a victim in all of these proceedings and that the incidents of serious crime and disorder and ASB has nothing to do with his patrons or premises despite evidence to the contrary. In fact, at the closure order hearing I was accused by [REDACTED] solicitor of being a racist and being recently employed by Brent Council to just close down Vybz Bar. I refuted these allegations.

I am totally convinced that this premise has been the source of serious incidents of crime, disorder and ASB both at the premises and its immediate vicinity for a number of years. This has resulted in both the Licensing Authority and the Metropolitan Police having to take their own actions to deal with this problem premises. [REDACTED] has indicated that he is going to appeal both decisions that has been made against Vybz Bar.

On behalf of the Licensing Authority I respectfully ask the Alcohol and Entertainment Licensing Sub-Committee to consider REVOKING the premises licence for Vybz Bar.

Yours sincerely

John McGann

John McGann
Licensing Officer
Regulatory Services
