

MINUTES of a meeting of the LICENSING COMMITTEE held in the Council Chamber on THURSDAY, 28 APRIL 2005

Present: Councillor P A Hyde (Chairman) (In the Chair)

Councillors J G Coxon, P Holland, D Howe, J Tacey and R Woodward

Officers: Messrs G Crossley, J E Peters, Miss M Lister and Ms E Warhurst

In attendance:

Mr I Baker, Capita-Symonds Consultants

Mr J Probyn, Clear Channel Entertainment and Festival Manager for the Download Festival

Apologies: Councillors R A Evans, A C Saffell, J B Webster and D H Wintle

758. MINUTES

... Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2005 (copy previously circulated and retained with the official copy of the minutes).

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2005 be approved and signed as a correct record.

759. DOWNLOAD FESTIVAL 2005, DONINGTON PARK

Ms Warhurst introduced the item and gave an outline of the application details.

The Chairman invited Mr Probyn to present his application.

Mr Probyn started by advising members that it was Clear Channel's third year of organising the Download Festival and the company were keen to improve on previous festivals. Following last year's successful festival, he outlined a number of issues which would be addressed as part of this year's application. These included Friday night arrivals; a problem with camp site queues; the introduction of a new entrance system and additional lighting and entertainment for queuing crowds at the entrance areas. In making changes, Mr Probyn emphasised the importance of getting the organisation right for customers at the beginning of the 3 day festival.

In addition, the security firm for this year had been changed and in acknowledgement of the young audience, the festival organisers had increased the number of showers, water points and toilets on site.

Mr Probyn accepted that there had been traffic problems at last year's festival and a traffic consultant had been appointed to plan traffic management at this year's festival. One immediate change was deciding to swap the camping and day parking areas.

The Chairman invited Committee members for their comments on concerns and problems at last year's festival.

Chairman's initials

In response to questions, Mr Probyn confirmed that this year all security staff would be clearly and individually identifiable; entrance lanes had been increased from 6 to 36 in order to provide an even flow; the search policy (on entry) would be less intrusive; water points, toilets and entertainment would be provided in the queuing area; day tickets would be limited to 3000 in order to control the pedestrian and vehicle movements on any particular day; VIP and press personnel would have their own site access; and the organisers were hoping to avoid any major migration between the festival site and Castle Donington village by providing a range of on site entertainment during the event.

Members sought further clarification on a number of issues. In respect of drug and weapon searches, Mr Probyn confirmed that the list of confiscated items had been reviewed and on advice from the police, had been significantly reduced from last year's list of 50 items. Mr Probyn acknowledged that there had been a problem with the main act at last year's festival starting late and running over. He explained the reasons why this occurred and stated that the festival organisers had told the tour managers that if a performer was late then they would not be allowed to appear. To assist in this matter the festival organisers had appointed a new artist liaison manager with responsibility to establish the whereabouts of each performer(s) on the day of their scheduled performance.

In response to a question on the anticipated number of people attending the festival, Mr Probyn explained the different ticket types and the total number of festival goers estimated from current ticket sale trends. He advised the Committee that the majority of tickets sold to date were for attending the whole festival. Mr Probyn also explained that festival organisers were in general trying to move away from concerts with headline acts and instead provide festivals to encourage the whole weekend attendance.

Members recalled residents' concerns over performers swearing during their acts. Mr Probyn replied that complaints at previous festivals had related to a particular performer and he confirmed that that person would not be performing at this year's festival.

One member referred to health and safety issues. The member had attended last year's festival and during his visit had noticed vandalised water points and supply pipes; unattended and out of order toilets and large amounts of uncollected rubbish and debris. Mr Probyn accepted these concerns and stated that changes had been put in place for this year. The festival organisers were introducing a new water point system and were hoping to run a percentage of supply pipes underground, on a semi-permanent basis, with the landlord's approval. Furthermore a new contractor and cleaning company had been appointed and they would be instructed to provide attendants and cleaners at the toilet facilities. In addition, the organisers were introducing a rubbish system where tokens would be given for collected rubbish. The tokens could be redeemed at festival food and drink outlets. It was hoped to encourage some recycling of trade waste through this scheme.

With regard to the damaged water facilities and supply pipes, Mr Probyn confirmed that any person behaving in an anti-social fashion or destroying the enjoyment of others would be ejected from the festival site. To remind people, signs would be erected on site and a warning would be placed on tickets.

Chairman's initials

Mr Probyn invited members to visit the festival site during the 3 days of the festival or prior to the site's opening and he welcomed members' attendance or observations at a multi-agency de-briefing meeting to address issues or concerns.

Miss Lister reported the receipt of a verbal objection to the application from Councillor Wintle. She understood that the objection related to the closure of a footpath which ran through the camp site. Mr Crossley confirmed that he had spoken with Councillor Wintle and his objection related to the diversion of definitive footpath L87. The footpath was well used by local residents and Councillor Wintle wished to ensure that it was properly diverted (if necessary) and that diversion signs were put up to assist residents. Mr Crossley confirmed that the footpath would need to be diverted in order to secure the campsite. The diversion was supported by Leicestershire Constabulary. In practical terms it was up to the festival organisers to establish what needed to be done and to arrange the actual diversion with Leicestershire County Council.

Finally, members asked what measures would be put in place to control noise from the festival site and concert. Mr Probyn had commissioned a noise action plan from Capita-Symonds Consultants. The plan contained recommendations to address and limit noise break out during musical performances and at night time from the site. Mr Crossley confirmed that the proposals were in line with World Health Organisation guidance.

In his closing address to the Committee, Mr Probyn stated that he was keen to receive comments and feedback immediately after the event. He also undertook to compile a summary of all site incidents reported to the festival control point.

At 7.13pm the applicant, Mr Baker, Mr Crossley and Miss Lister left the room while the group deliberated. Parties were invited to return to the room at 7.15pm.

RESOLVED:

That the application for an occasional public entertainment licence in respect of the Download Festival 2005 to be held at Donington Park on Friday 10 June, Saturday 11 June and Sunday 12 June 2005 be granted, subject to the lawful diversion of definitive footpath L87.

The meeting terminated at 7.17pm.

Min884cp

Chairman's initials