

Council NTE visits – The Empire Lounge

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22/10/2021	20:51 NTE Visit	<p>Visit to premises with Farhad Chowdhury (Principal Health & Safety Officer) and Gavin Blackburn (Planning Enforcement Officer). ATOV the premises licence holder & DPS George Nwachukwu was on site. We walked around the premises and were shown a separate entrance and exit for the premises as well as a rear fire exit. The premises has been extensively refurbished and now has dedicated toilets for patrons (X1 male toilet / X 1 female toilet and X1 disabled toilet). A kitchen has also be installed in the premises. ATOV there was a wedding party with patrons sat at tables with some dancing. Food was on display within the premises for the benefit of the wedding party. Extensive CCTV within the premises that has been specifically enabled for full facial recognition as well as CCTV covering the designated floor area of the premises as well as the external perimeter of the premises. Noted that there is a inter-connecting door between Unit 1 & Unit 2 which is currently being operated as Empire Lounge (Unit 2). I have been advised that Unit 1 Will be operated by a different DPs from Unit 2. Picture attached which shows the inter connected door between Unit 1& Unit 2. A Perimeter walk around the external part of the premises did not find any sound escape. Known residential address where complaints have been received from was used as a noise monitoring point however sound was not audible. Some parking congestion issues observed however we could not attribute this to the premises.*** Dasiy Business Park, Sylvan Grove, London SE15 1PD - File Note(Not to be circulated)*** Advised by George Nwachukwu that a premises within the Dasiy Business Park around the corner from Empire Lounge is being used as a club. We have been advised that one of the units behind closed doors has been refurbished with a bar and dancefloor. George Nwachukwu states the club on some nights are operating to 04:00hrs and are also sometimes providing strippers within the club. I have confirmed that we will investigate the allegation.</p>
26/11/2021	20:28 NTE Visit	<p>Visit to premises with Farhad Chowdhury to hand deliver a warning letter in relation to the use of the premises. Premises operational with X13 patrons within the premises eating and drinking. Music being played at background level and no compliance issues noted. The Executive Lounge, "Unit 1", 777 Old Kent Road, London, SE15 1NZ located adjacent was non-operational ATOV. Warning letter hand delivered to George Nwachukwu the premises licence holder and briefly discussed pending application for Executive lounge. I have been advised that in the event that the licensing application for Executive Lounge is granted, the inter –connecting door between Empire Lounge and Executive Lounge will be bricked up. I have been advised that both premises will then have their own independent entrances and no longer be inter – connected via an internal door within the premises. George Nwachukwu has advised that he has been awaiting the outcome of the licensing application</p>

		for Executive Lounge before instructing building works to be completed.
26/11/2021	20:40 NTE Visit	Visit with Charlie for NTE - met Richard and Farhad. See RAC notes. Query about current application - 875588 - passed to Wes to respond.
16/01/2022	19:21 NTE Visit	Visit to premises to carry out observations following amendment to government Covid - 19 lockdown restrictions to Plan B.X18 patrons within premises eating and drinking. No music audible from perimeter of premises. No ASB activity witnessed in the immediate vicinity of the premises.
21/01/2022	20:28 NTE Visit	Visit to premises to carry out observations following amendment to government Covid - 19 lockdown restrictions to Plan B.X22 patrons within premises eating and drinking. Music was not audible from perimeter of premises. No ASB activity witnessed in the immediate vicinity of the premises. There did however appear to be some minor parking elated congestion around the perimeter of the premises however I could not identify and attribute this to the operation of the premises.
23/01/2022	23:36 NTE Visit	Visit to premises to carry out observations following amendment to government Covid - 19 lockdown restrictions to Plan B.X33 patrons within premises eating and drinking. Music not audible externally when I carried out a perimeter check of the premises. X2SIA staff at the entrance of premises carrying out ID checks.
06/05/2022	23:38 NTE Visit	Observations completed very little noise escape and area outside quiet with no customers, only issue noted was cars parked on pavement.
18/08/2023	22:10 NTE Visit	Raining quiet heavily this point which along with the holidays meant most places were quiet. Only unit 2 was open with maybe 20 customers in all consuming food. Spoke with owner... George NWACHUKWU and did full check of license conditions. He disappeared for about 15 minutes when I asked for records and finally admitted he couldn't find them. Things went further downhill with the CCTV which he couldn't operate. Issues with lots of conditions... letter will follow today and be attached to

		<p>LVA... [REDACTED] ... he was getting very stressed and it was nearly 23:00hrs by the time we got out.</p>
<p>18/08/2023</p>	<p>NTE Visit; 22:10 Letter to PLH</p>	<p>Dear Mr NWACHUKWU, Inspection – Premises Licence 877124, Speedlink Services Ltd T/A “The Empire Lounge”, Units 1 and 2, 777 Old Kent Road, SE15 1NZ On Friday 18th August 2023 I visited the above premises accompanied by a colleague and two members of the police night time economy team. During the course of the visit I dealt with the owner, Mr NWACHUKWU, and did a full inspection of the premises license. I noted a number of issues with license conditions that need to be addressed. These were as follows:-1. Mr NWACHUKWU couldn't locate any written records relating to licence conditions which contravened the following conditions:-“Condition 101: Every supply of alcohol under the premises license must be made, or authorised, by a person who hold a premises license.” Although a personal licence holder was present no written authorisations were available. “Condition 341: That all staff shall be trained in their responsibilities under the Licensing Act 2003 and in regards to the terms and conditions of this licence. Such training should include the prevention of sales of alcohol to underage persons, and the challenge 25 scheme in operation at the premises. Records pertaining to such training shall be kept / be accessible at the premises at all times, shall be updated every six months and shall be made immediately available for inspection at the premises to council and /or police officers on request.” No such records were available for inspection. “Condition 354: An incident book / incident recording system shall be kept at the premises to record details of any of the following occurrences at the premises:(i) Instances of anti-social behaviour or violence(ii) Calls to the police or fire brigade(iii) Abuse of staff and / or customers(iv) Ejections of people from the premises(v) Visits to the premises by the local authority, police or fire brigade(vi) Refused sales of alcohol(vii) Any malfunction in respect of the CCTV system(viii) Any other relevant incidents The incident book / incident recording system shall record the time, date, location and description of each incident and any action taken in respect of the incident. The incident book / recording system shall be made available to officers of the council, police or fire brigade on request. A record of the preceding 12 months incidents shall be available at the premises at any time.” No such records were available for inspection. “Condition 358: That a register of refused sales of alcohol shall be maintained in order to demonstrate effective operation of the challenge 25 policy. The register shall be clearly legibly marked on the front cover as a register of refused alcohol sales, with the address of the premises and the name of the license holder. The register shall be kept / be</p>

accessible at the premises at all times. The register shall be made immediately available for inspection at the premises to council officers or police officers on request.” No such records were available for inspection. “Condition 360: That a dispersal policy will be implemented and maintained to assist with patrons leaving the premises in an orderly and safe manner and all relevant staff will be trained in the contents of this policy and made aware of any changes. A record of this training will be kept including the date and the trainee’s name and made available for inspection when requested. A copy of the dispersal policy shall be made available to the licensing officer and the police on request.” No such records were available for inspection.

2. SIA Door Staff: “Condition 353: That a minimum of 2 SIA registered door supervisors shall be on duty from 22:00hrs until the premises are shut on Friday and Saturday and shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that patrons do not cause a nuisance in the vicinity of the premises.” On arrival at 22:10 hours there were two men on the door – one of whom was displaying an SIA badge. When we returned to check the SIA badges only one person was there and the second did not return for the rest of the time we were at the premises which was until shortly before 23:00hrs.

3. CCTV: “Condition 340 (a) That a CCTV system shall be installed at the premises and maintained in full working order at all times that the premises are in use. Any recordings made by the CCTV system shall be retained for a minimum of 31 days and shall be made immediately available to officers of the council or police on request. The CCTV system shall record at a minimum of 6 frames per second (FPS) (b) That at all times that the premises are in operation there shall be a member of staff will be on duty who is capable of downloading recordings within a reasonable time should the police or council officers request a copy of any recordings. (c) That should the system break down then the police will be informed immediately and the system shall be repaired within two working days, or sooner if the police request. (d) That the system shall record inside and outside the entrance to the premises and the rear fire exit. (e) That the system shall be able to record clear images in all lighting conditions. “Mr NWACHUKWU first showed me a CCTV system maintained behind the bar in Unit 2. This was fuzzy and in black and white. The cameras appeared to be operating but he was not able to show anything other than the current images, so it was not possible to check if there was any previous recordings. He then showed me a second CCTV system in Unit 1... both covered both Units as required (inside and out). The CCTV in Unit 1 was new and had clear colour pictures... but once again Mr NWACHUKWU was unable to show me anything other than current images... again it was not possible to check if there were any previous recordings.

4. Signage: Conditions 342; 352; 361 and 370 relate to signage which was complied with.

5. Conditions which I was unable to check at the time of the visit. Condition 485: in relation to irresponsible drinks promotions. There was no evidence of anything like this. Condition 487: In relation to the provision of water. Mr NWACHUKWU assured me this was available. Condition 489: In relation to measures for

		<p>alcohol. This was complied with but there was no sign stating that “gin; vodka; rum or whisky “are sold in 25ml measures as required by the Weights and Measures Act1985. Condition 343: Staff trained in first aid – Mr NWACHUKWU assured me his was trained as a first aider. It may be useful to keep a record of such training with other records the business I required to maintain. Condition 349 and 350: All window and doors were kept closed during the course of the visit. Condition 359: At the time of the visit there were only about 20customers (compliance with condition 367) on the premises – all appeared to be taking a table meal with alcohol. Condition 365 and 366: In relation to a sound limiting device. Mr NWACHUKWU showed me a device beneath the DJ controller unit but I would be unable to comment on if this was a sound limiter or if it was working. I could not comment on the following conditions at all due to the circumstances at the time of the visit: 344; 345; 346; 347; 348; 351;355; 356; 362; 363; 364; 368; 369 and 371.The matters where non-compliance has been identified in this letter should be rectified immediately. You should note that it is an offence under section 136 of the Licensing Act 2003 for each non-compliance with a license condition. I enclose copies of advisory material for training staff on under age sales and a refusals register for your use should you not already have access to such materials. Yours faithfully Ray MOORE Principal Trading Standards Enforcement Officer Enc.</p>
24/11/2023	21:20 NTE Visit	
08/12/2023	NTE Visit	NTE visit carried out on 24/11 no issues reported
02/03/2024	00:15 NTE Visit	00:15hrs Empire Lounge, Unit 1 & 2, 777 Old Kent Road, SE15 1NZ... full inspection / SIA OK... took the owner a while to operate the new CCTV but eventually managed to show me that it dates back 31 days...otherwise OK. Letter to follow.