

Item No. 6.	Classification: Open	Date: 12 November 2018	Meeting Name: Licensing Sub-Committee
Report Title		Licensing Act 2003: KG2P Convenience Store – 2 Northchurch, Dawes Street, London SE17 2AQ	
Ward(s) of group(s) affected		Faraday ward	
From		Strategic Director of Environment and Leisure	

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the licensing sub-committee considers an application made by Murugesu Sundarapalan for a premises licence to be granted under the Licensing Act 2003 in respect of the premises known as KG2P Convenience Store – 2 Northchurch, Dawes Street, London SE17 2AQ.
2. Notes:
 - a) This application forms a new application for a premises licence, submitted under Section 17 of the Licensing Act 2003. The application is subject to representations from responsible authorities and is therefore referred to the sub-committee for determination.
 - b) Paragraphs 8 to 11 of this report provide a summary of the application under consideration by the sub-committee. A copy of the full application is attached as Appendix A.
 - c) Paragraphs 12 to 17 of this report deal with the representations submitted in respect of the application. Copies of the representations submitted by the responsible authorities are attached to this report in Appendix B. A map showing the location of the premises is attached to this report as Appendix G.
 - d) A copy of the council's approved procedure for hearings of the sub-committee in relation to an application made under the Licensing Act 2003, along with a copy of the hearing regulations, has been circulated to all parties to the meeting.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Licensing Act 2003

3. The Licensing Act 2003 provides a licensing regime for:
 - The sale of and supply of alcohol
 - The provision of regulated entertainment
 - The provision of late night refreshment.
4. Within Southwark, the licensing responsibility is wholly administered by this council.
5. The Act requires the licensing authority to carry out its functions under the Act with a view to promoting the four stated licensing objectives. These are:
 - The prevention of crime and disorder
 - The promotion of public safety
 - The prevention of nuisance
 - The protection of children from harm.

6. In carrying out its licensing functions, a licensing authority must also have regard to
 - The Act itself
 - The guidance to the act issued under Section 182 of the Act
 - Secondary regulations issued under the Act
 - The licensing authority's own statement of licensing policy
 - The application, including the operating schedule submitted as part of the application
 - Relevant representations.
7. The premises licence application process involves the provision of all relevant information required under the Act to the licensing authority with copies provided by the applicant to the relevant responsible bodies under the Act. The application must also be advertised at the premises and in the local press. The responsible authorities and other persons within the local community may make representations on any part of the application where relevant to the four licensing objectives.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

The premises licence application

8. On 24 August 2018 Murugesu Sundarapalan applied for a premises licence to be granted under the Licensing Act 2003 in respect of the premises known as KG2P Convenience Store – 2 Northchurch, Dawes Street, London SE17 2AQ. The premises are described in the application as being:

“Front left hand side of the store is the counter. Behind the counter there is alcohol and cigarettes. Left hand side middle of the shelf there is wine. Left hand side back corner there are beer fridges and beers.”

9. The hours applied for are summarised as follows:

The sale by retail of alcohol (off sales only)

- Monday to Sunday 08:00 to 23:00

Opening hours

- Monday to Sunday 08:00 to 23:00

10. The designated premises supervisor is to be Murugesu Sundarapalan, who holds a personal licence with the London Borough of Kingston and Sutton.
11. The premises licence application form provides the applicant's operating schedule. Parts A, B, C, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, and M of the operating schedule set out the proposed licensable activities, operating hours and operating control measures in full, with reference to the four licensing objectives as stated in the Licensing Act 2003. Should a premises licence be issued in respect of the application the information provided in part M of the operating schedule will form the basis of conditions that will be attached to any licence granted subsequent to the application. A copy of the application and premises plan is attached to this report in Appendix A.

Representations from responsible authorities

12. A representation has been received from the Metropolitan Police service (Licensing Division) which raises concerns regarding the recent premises licence review in which the licence was revoked by the Southwark licensing sub-committee. There is concern that there is no real change of ownership since that time. There are further concerns that unlicensed alcohol was sold at the premises

13. A representation has been provided by this council's public health team with concerns regarding high-strength alcohol.
14. A representation has been submitted by the licensing department in their role as responsible authority with concerns regarding the previous review and provides a copy of the notice of decision from that hearing.
15. A representation has been received from the council's trading standards department with concerns that the previous premises licence had been revoked and that the same business owner is effectively applying for the current licence.
16. The representations from responsible authorities are all available in Appendix B.

Representations from other persons

17. There are no representations from other persons.

Conciliation

18. All representations were sent to the applicant; however, at the point this report was submitted no attempt had been made by the applicant to contact the responsible authorities.

Premises history

19. A premises licence was issued in respect of the premises on 5 October 2005, it was then known as 'Lee's Newsagents'. Murugesu Kunapalan was the premises licence holder and DPS.
20. In October 2010, a vary DPS application was received and subsequently granted into the name of Noris Nagarajah.
21. In November 2017, a new vary DPS application was received and granted back into the name of Murugesu Kunapalan. A copy of the previous premises licence is available in Appendix C.
22. On 27 February 2018, an application was submitted by this council's Trading Standards service, for the review of the premises licence. The premises licence was revoked at a hearing held on 23 April 2018. A copy of the notice of decision is appended with the representation from the licensing authority in Appendix B.
23. On 17 May 2018, Mr Kunapalan appealed this decision at Camberwell Green Magistrates Court.
24. On 8 June 2018, a vary DPS application was received in the name of Sundarapalan Murugesu with immediate effect and was granted in light of the appeal.
25. On 11 July, a transfer application was received from Murugesu Kunapalan to Murugesu Sundarapalan. The Metropolitan Police service made representation to this transfer and it was due to be heard by the Southwark licensing sub-committee on 22 August 2018.
26. The appeal to the revocation was withdrawn on 26 July 2018. As a result, the revocation of the licence was upheld and the application to transfer fell away.
27. On 24 August 2018 Murugesu Sundarapalan applied for a premises licence to be granted under the Licensing Act 2003 in respect of the premises known as KG2P Convenience Store – 2 Northchurch, Dawes Street, London, SE17 2AQ.

28. At 20:05 on Friday 24 August 2018 a test purchase was carried out at the premises. A bottle of Nigerian Guinness was sold at a cost of £1.69. The seller gave his name as Mr S. R. and advised that Mr Murugesu Kunapalan was the premises owner and produced addressed mail to that effect.
29. On 28 August 2018, a Land Registry Search was carried out against the premises which showed that the Title Absolute remains in the names of Murugesu Kunapalan (and Gowri Kunapalan) since September 2006.
30. On 11 September 2018 at 12:46 police officers from Southwark Licensing attended; Mr Kunapalan was working in the store and advised the officer that he was in charge. He was found displaying alcohol within the store.
31. A letter dated 13 September 2018 was received by the Licensing Authority from the seller, Mr S R, admitting the offence of an unlicensed sale of alcohol. A copy of this is available in Appendix D.
32. Both Mr Murugesu Kunapalan and the new applicant, Mr Murugesu Sundarapalan were invited to attend interviews under caution at the Council Offices on 11 September 2018, to which they both attended and were interviewed separately. The following points were taken from the interviews. Transcripts of those interviews are available in Appendix E.
 - Mr Kunapalan and Mr Murugesu Sundarapalan are brothers
 - Mr Kunapalan remains the owner and in charge of the business
 - Mr Kunapalan admits that the unlicensed sale of alcohol did take place by his paid employee, but without his explicit consent
 - Mr Kunapalan admits that if his brother does not get the licence, he will need to look for another buyer for the shop as his brother would not take over.

 - Mr Sundarapalan is not involved with the running of the business has no intention of running the business in the future, even if the application is successful; in fact he cannot work due to long-term ill health and as a result claims certain benefits
 - The intention would be to have a third party to run the shop for him, but has no business plan at present, the premises is too far away for him to attend
 - Mr Sundarapalan has only been to the shop twice since 2003
 - Mr Sundarapalan did not complete the application for the premises licence himself and states that Mr Kunapalan asked him to apply for the licence and further paid for the application
 - Mr Kunapalan would remain part of the business in the event of a grant by taking profits from the business.
33. Further to the interviews, it was decided to issue warnings to both Mr Murugesu Kunapalan and the new applicant, Mr Murugesu Sundarapalan and to offer a Simple Caution to the seller, Mr R. This has been signed and returned to the Authority on 23 October 2018.
34. During the consultation for the new premises licence, the applicant, Mr Murugesu Sundarapalan, was written to on 3 September, 12 September and 25 September 2018 to which no responses were received. The case officer had been asking for a copy of the newspaper advert and confirmation that the blue notices had gone up at the premise. Further to the interviews under caution, Mr Kunapalan, the previous licence holder, was copied in. A response from the previous licence holder was received on 25 September 2018. A copy is available in Appendix F.
35. No TENs have been submitted in regards to the premises.

Map

36. A map of the local area is attached as Appendix G. There is only one similarly licensed premises in the immediate vicinity, namely:

- **Chris Convenience Store – 100 Dawes Street, SE17 2EB:**
The sale of alcohol to be consumed off the premises -
Monday to Saturday from 08:00 to 23:00
Sunday from 10:00 to 22:30

Southwark council statement of licensing policy

37. Council assembly approved Southwark's Statement of Licensing Policy 2016-20 on 25 November 2015. The policy came into effect on 1 January 2016.

38. Further sections of the statement that are considered to be of particular relevance to the sub-committee's consideration are:

- Section 3 - Purpose and Scope of the Policy. This reinforces the four licensing objectives and the fundamental principles upon which this Authority relies in determining licence applications
- Section 5 – Determining Applications for Premises Licences and Club Premises certificates. This explains how the policy works and considers issues such as location; high standards of management; and the principles behind condition setting
- Section 6 – Local Cumulative Impact Policies. This sets out this Authority's approach to cumulative impact and defines the boundaries of the current special policy areas and the classifications of premises to which they apply. To be read in conjunction with Appendix B to the policy
- Section 7 – Hours of Operation. This provides a guide to the hours of licensed operation that this Authority might consider appropriate by type of premises and (planning) area classification.
- Section 8 – The Prevention of Crime and Disorder. This provides general guidance on the promotion of the first licensing objective
- Section 9 – Public Safety. This Which provides general guidance on the promotion of the second licensing objective
- Section 10 – The Prevention of Nuisance. This provides general guidance on the promotion of the third licensing objective
- Section 11 – The Protection of Children from Harm . This provides general guidance on the promotion of the fourth licensing objective.

39. The purpose of Southwark's statement of licensing policy is to make clear to applicants what considerations will be taken into account when determining applications and should act as a guide to the sub-committee when considering the applications. However, the sub-committee must always consider each application on its own merits and allow exceptions to the normal policy where these are justified by the circumstances of the application.

40. Within Southwark's Statement of Licensing Policy 2016 - 2020, the premises are identified as being outside of a CIP area and within a residential area. Under the Southwark Statement of Licensing Policy 2016 - 2020 the Local CIP applies to night clubs, public houses and bars, off licences, supermarkets and grocers. The closing time recommended

in the Statement of Licensing Policy for off licences, and grocers or supermarkets with off sales of alcohol in this area is 23:00 daily.

Resource implications

41. A fee of £190.00 has been paid by the applicant company in respect of this application being the statutory fee payable for premises within non-domestic rateable value.

Consultations

42. Consultation has been carried out on this application in accordance with the provisions of the Licensing Act 2003. A public notice was published in a local newspaper and similar notices were exhibited outside of the premises for a period of 28 consecutive days.

Community impact statement

43. Each application is required by law to be considered upon its own individual merits with all relevant matters taken into account.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Director of Law and Democracy

44. The sub-committee is asked to determine the application for a premises licence under section 17 of the Licensing Act 2003.
45. The principles which sub-committee members must apply are set out below.

Principles for making the determination

46. The general principle is that applications for premises licence applications must be granted unless relevant representations are received. This is subject to the proviso that the applicant has complied with regulations in advertising and submitting the application.
47. Relevant representations are those which:
- Are about the likely effect of the granting of the application on the promotion of the licensing objectives
 - Are made by an interested party or responsible authority
 - Have not been withdrawn
 - Are not, in the opinion of the relevant licensing authority, frivolous or vexatious.
48. If relevant representations are received then the sub-committee must have regard to them, in determining whether it is necessary for the promotion of the licensing objectives to:
- to grant the licence subject to:
 - The conditions mentioned in section 18 (2)(a) modified to such extent as the licensing authority considers necessary for the promotion of the licensing objectives
 - Any condition which must under section 19, 20 or 21 be included in the licence
 - to exclude from the scope of the licence any of the licensable activities to which the application relates
 - to refuse to specify a person in the licence as the premises supervisor
 - to reject the application.

Conditions

49. The sub-committee's discretion is thus limited. It can only modify the conditions put forward by the applicant, or refuse the application, if it is necessary to do so. Conditions must be necessary and proportionate for the promotion of one of the four licensing objectives, and not for any other reason. Conditions must also be within the control of the licensee, and should be worded in a way which is clear, certain, consistent and enforceable.
50. The four licensing objectives are:
 - The prevention of crime and disorder
 - Public safety
 - The prevention of nuisance
 - The protection of children from harm.
51. Members should note that each objective is of equal importance. There are no other licensing objectives, and the four objectives are paramount considerations at all times.
52. Conditions will not be necessary if they duplicate a statutory position. Conditions relating to night café and take away aspect of the license must relate to the night time operation of the premises and must not be used to impose conditions which could not be imposed on day time operators.
53. Members are also referred to the Home Office Revised Guidance issued under section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003 on conditions, specifically section 10.

Reasons

54. If the sub-committee determines that it is necessary to modify the conditions, or to refuse the application for a premises licence application, it must give reasons for its decision.

Hearing procedures

55. Subject to the licensing hearing regulations, the licensing committee may determine its own procedures. Key elements of the regulations are that:
 - The hearing shall take the form of a discussion led by the authority. Cross examination shall not be permitted unless the authority considered that it is required for it to consider the representations.
 - Members of the authority are free to ask any question of any party or other person appearing at the hearing.
 - The committee must allow the parties an equal maximum period of time in which to exercise their rights to:
 - Address the authority
 - If given permission by the committee, question any other party.
 - In response to a point which the authority has given notice it will require clarification, give further information in support of their application.
 - The committee shall disregard any information given by a party which is not relevant to the particular application before the committee and the licensing objectives.
 - The hearing shall be in public, although the committee may exclude the public from all or part of a hearing where it considers that the public interest in doing so outweighs the public interest in the hearing, or that part of the hearing, taking place in private.

- In considering any representations or notice made by a party the authority may take into account documentary or other information produced by a party in support of their application, representations or notice (as applicable) either before the hearing or, with the consent of all the other parties, at the hearing.
56. This matter relates to the determination of an application for a premises licence under section 17 of the Licensing Act 2003. Regulation 26(1) (a) requires the sub-committee to make its determination at the conclusion of the hearing.

Council's multiple roles and the role of the licensing sub-committee

57. Sub-committee members will note that, in relation to this application, the council has multiple roles. Council officers from various departments have been asked to consider the application from the perspective of the council as authority responsible respectively for environmental health, trading standards, health and safety and as the planning authority.
58. Members should note that the licensing sub-committee is meeting on this occasion solely to perform the role of licensing authority. The sub-committee sits in quasi-judicial capacity, and must act impartially. It must offer a fair and unbiased hearing of the application. In this case, members should disregard the council's broader policy objectives and role as statutory authority in other contexts. Members must direct themselves to making a determination solely based upon the licensing law, guidance and the council's statement of licensing policy.
59. As a quasi-judicial body the licensing sub-committee is required to consider the application on its merits. The sub-committee must take into account only relevant factors, and ignore irrelevant factors. The decision must be based on evidence, that is to say material, which tends logically to show the existence or non-existence of relevant facts, or the likelihood or unlikelihood of the occurrence of some future event, the occurrence of which would be relevant. The licensing sub-committee must give fair consideration to the contentions of all persons entitled to make representations to them.
60. The licensing sub-committee is entitled to consider events outside of the premises if they are relevant, i.e. are properly attributable to the premises being open. The proprietors do not have to be personally responsible for the incidents for the same to be relevant. However, if such events are not properly attributable to the premises being open, then the evidence is not relevant and should be excluded. Guidance is that the licensing authority will primarily focus on the direct impact of the activities taking place at the licensed premises on members of the public, living, working or engaged in normal activity in the area concerned.
61. Members will be aware of the council's code of conduct which requires them to declare personal and prejudicial interests. The code applies to members when considering licensing applications. In addition, as a quasi-judicial body, members are required to avoid both actual bias, and the appearance of bias.

The sub-committee can only consider matters within the application that have been raised through representations from other persons and responsible authorities. Other persons must live in the vicinity of the premises. This will be decided on a case to case basis.

62. Under the Human Rights Act 1998. The sub-committee needs to consider the balance between the rights of the applicant and those making representations to the application when making their decision. The sub-committee has a duty under section 17 Crime and Disorder Act 1998 when making its decision to do all it can to prevent crime and disorder in the borough.

63. Other persons, responsible authorities and the applicant have the right to appeal the decision of the sub-committee to the magistrates' court within a period of 21 days beginning with the day on which the applicant was notified by the licensing authority of the decision to be appealed against.

Guidance

64. Members are required to have regard to the Home Office guidance in carrying out the functions of licensing authority. However, guidance does not cover every possible situation, so long as the guidance has been properly and carefully understood, members may depart from it if they have reason to do so. Full reasons must be given if this is the case.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Licensing Act 2003 DCMS Guidance to the Act Secondary Regulations Southwark statement of licensing Policy Case file	Southwark Licensing, C/O Community Safety & Enforcement, 160 Tooley Street, London, SE1 2QH	Kirty Read Tel: 020 7525 5748

APPENDICES

Name	Title
Appendix A	Application for a premises licence
Appendix B	Representations submitted by responsible authorities
Appendix C	Previous premises licence
Appendix D	Copy of letter from Mr R. admitting sale
Appendix E	PACE Transcripts from 11 September 2018 of Murugesu Kunapalan and Murugesu Sundarapalan
Appendix F	Email dated 25 September from Mr Kunapalan
Appendix G	Map of the locality

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Deborah Collins, Strategic Director of Environment and Leisure	
Report Author	Andrew Heron, Principal Licensing Officer	
Version	Final	
Dated	30 October 2018	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments sought	Comments included
Director of Law and Democracy	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team		30 October 2018