
Licensing Sub-Committee

MINUTES of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, ME10 3HT on Wednesday, 6 May 2026 from 11.02 am - 12.06 pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Derek Carnell (Chair), Lee-Anne Moore and Tony Winckless.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Lorraine Crowley, Alona Diachenko, Jo Thomas and Helen Ward.

902 **Emergency Evacuation Procedure**

The Chair outlined the emergency evacuation procedure.

903 **Notification of Chair and Outline of Procedure**

The Chair opened the meeting and asked those present to introduce themselves.

904 **Declarations of Interest**

No interests were declared.

905 **New Premises Licence under the Licensing Act 2003**

The Licensing Officer introduced the report which asked Members to consider an application for the grant of a new premises licence under the Licensing Act 2003 at The Playa, The Leas, Minster-on sea, Sheerness, Kent, ME12 2NL.

She explained that the Premises was situated within the residential area and whilst there was an existing license in place with the previous tenant, an agreement to transfer was not met and therefore a new license had been applied for. The Licensing Officer referred to the existing license as set out at Appendix I of the report; the licensable activities being applied for were shown as paragraph 3.1 of the report; the full application as set out at Appendix II with the plan of the premises at Appendix III of the report.

The Licensing Officer advised that there was the statutory 28-day consultation period during which the responsible authorities, as well as interested parties, had the opportunity to comment on the application. For this application no representations were made by responsible authorities. However, a noise management plan was agreed with the Environmental Health, Swale Borough Council was set out at Appendix IV of the report; and agreed conditions were put in place by the Kent Police which were set out at Appendix V of the report.

The Licensing Officer said five representations had been received from the members of public, and were made on the basis of the licensing objective of prevention of public nuisance as shown at Appendix VI of the report. Of those who made objections, one attended the meeting to present their representation to Members.

The Chair asked the Applicant and their representative to present their case.

The Applicant's comments are set out below:

- The premises known as The Playa had been an established venue along The Leas prior to much of the surrounding residential development;
- subsequent properties had been built in close proximity to the site which had a history of approved development, including previously granted permissions for a motel to the rear and a 120-seat extension to the side;
- the site had long been considered suitable for substantial commercial leisure use. Historically, the premises operated with a marquee and associated music under the licence without significant or substantial issues being raised. There was a clear demand from patrons for the return of structured events and music, particularly during key seasonal periods;
- the applicant recognised that the noise was the primary concern and they had put in clear and enforceable controls; they had submitted a noise monitoring plan; agreed decibel limits, with no amplified music beyond set hours, with the speaker direction away from residential areas, and controlled shutdown procedures;
- the premises would operate with appropriate safeguards, including CCTV, staff training, and instant recording procedures; door staff during events, a refusal log, and a challenge 25 Policy;
- all events would be managed with appropriate capacity controls, trained staff, and risk assessments in place;
- the applicant operated a strict age verification policy and ensured that family-friendly use remained appropriate during permitted hours;
- the applicant was committed to working constructively with local residents and would provide a direct contact for any concerns, ensuring issues were addressed promptly and efficiently;
- this application was for a responsibly managed venue with an established history supported by appropriate controls and a willingness to engage with the community; and
- the applicant believed the application fully promoted the licensing objectives and addressed the concerns raised. The local community were generally very supportive of this application.

The Chair invited Members and the Senior Lawyer (Contentious) to ask questions to the applicant.

A Member asked how many times the applicant planned to be open very late at night and in the early hours of the morning over a period of 12-months.

The applicant made it clear to Members that they had not got anything planned at the moment, that would run till those hours. Currently their opening hours were 12 midday till 11 pm, and those hours seemed to be working well for them. However, she assumed there would be about five times a year when events would continue later into the evening, if that; and it was just to have the option if they did have an event that they wanted to, they could go ahead with it.

The applicant's representative added that they had quite a few requests for events such as engagement parties, birthday parties, christenings where people requested a later finishing time; their current time of shutting at 11 pm would restrict those kind of events being booked in, and obviously a loss of revenue for those times which was why they requested the later time. This was not for permanent use, but just to have the availability, rather than having to consistently apply for the licence for different types of events.

The Senior Lawyer (Contentious) asked if 11 pm was their closing time or time when they stopped selling an alcohol?; on those five occasions what sort of hours they would be operating until?; would they be unable to use Temporary Events Notices (TENs) for any additional occasions?; there was a condition on the existing licence about the garden being closed by 11:30 pm what was not replicated in the application; how they intended to operate generally on a normal trading day, and what was the capacity of inside and outside?

In response, the applicant clarified that they stopped serving an alcohol at 11 pm and closed at some point soon after 11 pm; to the time they supposed that probably, they would be operating until 1 am; and they had actually used all of their TENs to be open at the moment. Currently they did not have any TENs licences left, they had used them in order to be able to open up on the 17 April 2026. They would not look to extend the garden at all, they would be very mindful of their neighbours and probably shut the garden a little bit earlier, to make sure that no one could go outside to reduce the noise levels.

The applicant explained that The Playa was a restaurant and a cocktail bar, currently open from 12 midday what was very much catered towards the community and families, and they wanted to be sure that they ran The Playa as a professional business.

The applicant's representative added that they would be holding music events and entertainment during those hours, but they still used every element of control in terms of how they planned for those evenings, in terms of security, closing down procedure, and keeping noise managements plans in play.

The applicant said that the capacity of inside was 120, and 200 outside.

A Member asked how many music events the applicant would be proposing roughly throughout the year?

In response, the applicant's representative explained that general entertainment in terms of bands, singers or, for example, saxophone players playing, they were looking to have those quite regularly, but not as a whole day event. It would be two to three hours at a maximum; as an actual event they were looking at hosting a few, maybe one a month or one every six weeks of actual event using the outside space; they were looking at hosting food festivals, and also any kind of band stands would be daytime events between 12:00 and 6 pm.

The Chair invited the objectors to speak.

The objector expressed the desire to have a peaceful and quiet life in their own garden, she confirmed that she could not tolerate the thought of somebody playing music from 12:00 until 6 pm and beyond every day of the week, or listen to the recorded music outdoors every day from 12:00 until 8 pm.

In response, the applicant outlined what they applied for, but that was not their intention, if they did have an event, they would inform the objector, and it would not be for more than two or three hours during the day.

The applicant's representative added that they applied for those hours in order to have the option to play during certain hours in those hours rather than having to keep

changing their applications to different times of the day; and their general music that they would be playing would be quite a low volume.

The objector's representative raised concern regarding late time for selling an alcohol up to 1:30 am, and closing time at 2 am.

In response, the applicant explained if the late license would be granted, they were not going to use it to full capacity, they would like to have an option not to lose out the funds that they would make from those kind of events.

The Chair invited the applicant and objector to summarise their closing remarks.

A Member asked if the applicant would be willing to cut their hours back on the basis that any additional events could be run using TENs.

In response, the applicant confirmed that they would be happy to formally amend their application, having considered the representations, to allow for a terminal hour for standard licensable activities of midnight, with close at 00:30 hours. This did not include the non-standard timings noted on the application.

The objector welcomed the amendment to the application.

Members of the Sub-Committee adjourned at 11.44 am to make their decision.

Members of the Sub-Committee and the Senior Lawyer (Contentious) returned to the meeting at 12.04 am and the decision, attached as Appendix I to these minutes, was announced.

Resolved:

- (1) That the application be granted subject to the proposed reduction in hours notified verbally at the hearing and the additional condition regarding the noise management policy to be in place and the earlier closure of the garden as set-out in the Decision Notice.***

906 Adjournment of Meeting

The meeting was adjourned from 11.44 am until 12:04 pm.

Chair

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All minutes are draft until agreed at the next meeting of the Committee/Panel