

**Meadowbank Football Ground, Mill Lane, Dorking, Surrey**

**Decision Notice: Variation of a Premises Licence**

**This notice confirms the decision of the Licensing Sub-Committee made at a meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2019**

**The Application**

1. Mole Valley District Council received an application from Dorking Wanderers FC Limited (**Applicant**) for a variation of a premises licence at Meadowbank Football Ground, Mill Lane Dorking, Surrey RH4 1DX. (**Application**) The Application seeks to (a) extend the sale of alcohol from 22.30 to 00.00 on Friday and Saturday evenings, (b) provide late night refreshments from 23.00 to 00.00 on Friday and Saturday evenings, and (c) extend the opening hours of the premises from 23.00 to 00.30 on Friday and Saturday evenings. The application relates to the clubhouse bar only.
2. 2 relevant representations in respect of the Application were received from members of the public. A hearing was arranged to take place on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2019 at 10.00am in the Council's Chamber to enable the Council's Licensing Sub-Committee; comprising Councillors Tim Loretto, Alan Reilly and Elizabeth Daly to determine the Application. The hearing was chaired by Councillor Elizabeth Daly.
3. Councillor Tim Loretto disclosed that he had a long-standing personal relationship with Mark White of Dorking Wanderers FC Limited but that he did not in any way consider the relationship pecuniary or prejudicial to this committee.

**Attendance and Participation**

4. The hearing was attended by:

Senior Licensing Officer	Paul Holliday	Mole Valley District Council
On behalf of the Applicant	Kris Lea	Director Dorking Wanderers FC Limited
On behalf of the Interested Parties	The parties who had made representations were not in attendance	

5. The Sub-Committee were satisfied that notice of the hearing was served on all relevant parties.
6. There were no representations from Responsible Authorities.

## Summary of Discussion

### Applicant

7. The Applicant handed to the Sub-Committee a written statement which he read out in full. A copy of that statement is attached to this Notice. The Applicant said that the extension to the licence for Friday and Saturday evenings was to maximise trade and to capitalise on their private functions.
8. Councillor Tim Loretto asked the Applicant what steps they would take to defend against the risk that late night drinkers would gravitate to the premises and whether they should consider having a policy of not admitting the public after, say 10pm. The Applicant assured the Sum-Committee that they had 2 security officers for functions and events and that no-one would be admitted if they were intoxicated. He said that late night drinkers were more likely to end up in one of the other late night drinking establishments in Dorking. Furthermore, they already had a policy that no-one was allowed into the premises after 10pm.
9. The Applicant was questioned on the one mile club that he had referred to in his statement. The Applicant said that it only related to a discount for food and football tickets, not alcohol, and had expired now. It had been a way of engaging the local community.
10. The Applicant was questioned as to the provision of a notice being put up to ask customers to leave quietly and via the St Martin's car park to avoid footfall past the residential areas in the immediate proximity of the premises. The Applicant assured the Sub-Committee that, according to their security officers, about 80% of the footfall went via the car park. He was happy to include a provision in the signage to use this exit route and to instruct security to encourage customers to use this exit route.
11. The Applicant was then questioned about the allegation in one of the Representations that there had been an incident with police presence. The Applicant clarified that he was aware of this incident and that it related to a Friday night Surrey County FA cup final. The incident had taken place on the High Street and was unconnected to the premises or to Dorking Wanderers. He further said that Surrey County FA marshalled the match and had removed supporters from the grounds earlier in the day who had smuggled their own alcohol into the stands. They had not consumed alcohol on the premises.
12. The Licensing Officer was then invited to submit his report. He reported that the parties who had lodged objections had informed him that they were unable to attend and wished their written representations to stand in their stead.
13. The Applicant was invited to make closing statements. He said that there was sometimes a misconception that everything at the park, the finger gets pointed at the football club. There is nothing recorded with the police that is directly linked to the club or to the lounge. He further said that they do everything that they can, working closely with the FA and with Surrey police. He was proud of their record and wanted to continue it.

## Decision

14. Having considered the Council's own licensing policy, s.182 Secretary of State guidance and the written and oral representations made by the Applicant and the Interested Parties, the Licensing Sub-Committee decided to grant the variation applied for subject to a condition that requires the following:

**Notices shall be prominently displayed at all exits requesting patrons to respect the needs of local residents and businesses and leave the area quietly via the St Martin's Walk car park.**

15. The reason for this decision is that from all of the evidence to date it appears that this is a responsibly run establishment. However, the Sub-Committee were mindful of the representations received regarding noise when leaving the premises. The Sub-Committee feel that this condition will mitigate this and the condition was informally offered by the Applicant in any case as part of the application.
16. The Sub-Committee was mindful of the need to uphold the fundamental licensing objections of Public Safety, the Prevention of Crime and Disorder and Prevention of Public Nuisance in accordance with the Secretary of State's guidance issued under Section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003.

## Rights of Appeal

16. There is a right to appeal to the Magistrates Court within 21 days of receiving this written decision notice. The variation to the premise licence will take effect from 20<sup>th</sup> June 2019.