

Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

BRIEFING NOTE – No.05 /18

Date: 20 April 2018

Briefing paper to: All Members of the Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Purpose: To inform members of the 'No Alcohol Policy' for the Castle Concerts.

In response to Members item 886 of Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 28 March 2018, the following background advice was received from representatives of the Safety Advisory Group and industry. Appendix A also provides examples of similar policies and Terms and Conditions from other festival and events with similar acts.

In summary:

The decision was based on information and guidance from the industry professionals. Most of this was through conversations at planning meetings, which included:

- This is what happens at the majority of similar venues in the country.
- The Proms are recognised as a 'picnic concert' and therefore treated similar to other picnic events, such as open air theatre.
- There have been several incidents over recent years at the conventional concerts, which have raised concerns from security and stewards, as well as Police observers, which has prompted action to be taken. No incidents have occurred in the past 25 years at the Proms.
- If the decision were to be overturned, there would be a culpability issue. The council would be disregarding advice from qualified industry professionals and the Safety Advisory Group and there would need to be an accountable person identified to explain why the advice was ignored, should anything alcohol related happen at the event.
- All venues of a similar nature in the country, which have conventional and Prom concerts, have terms and conditions that differentiate between the two, as per Appendix A.

- The issue about the glass ban, except for the Proms was imposed before last year's concert, with no objections, as per Appendix B1 (2017).

Kent Police

A Police Officer attended the Thursday Craig David concert last year, 2017, in plain clothes and witnessed high levels of drunken behaviour, patrons bringing in excessive volumes of alcohol and being excessively drunk. At the end of the event there was a very large drunken brawl, which by the time the police arrived on scene there were no official allegations, so would not appear in any official statistics. This was featured as a headline on the Kent Online website the following day.

“From an Operational Events Planner and as an accredited Public Order TAC Advisor, I would suggest that the controlled sale of alcohol from trusted potential sponsors would give an element of control to the event per se and would reduce the potential for anti social behaviour, so ultimately would contribute to the overall safety of the event, thus making it safer for all patrons.”

This is my humble opinion that I would be happy to communicate at a Safety Advisory Group meeting and my colleagues in the Licensing Department would make similar representations regarding this change in the sale/use of alcohol at these concerts.”

AD Health and Safety

“It is accepted best practice at the majority of venues, festivals and concerts that alcohol is not permitted. Much of this comes from the need to support the licencing objectives of preventing crime and disorder, public nuisance, maintaining public safety and protecting children from harm.”

Many premises licences have a number of conditions. Typically alcohol and glass will be banned from being brought in, as broken glass can become a cut hazard or bottles used as missiles, which are also difficult to clear up when broken. It is a mandatory requirement of the premises licence to manage alcohol consumptions.

I can guarantee that people smuggle alcohol in and I also understand that what has been considered reasonable quantities in the past have been quite generous. Sealed plastic bottles will be less likely to have been spiked.”

Dick Tee, Head of Production (EnTEEntainment Ltd)

“I support the amended policy relating to alcohol at the Castle Concerts, which will bring them into line with those staged at a number of similar venues.”

I recall that in years gone by, we did not have any restrictions at any of the Castle Concerts regarding bringing glass onto site. This caused significant issues relating to litter picking, as a result of broken glass and potential injury to those attending the concerts and using the Castle grounds once the events had finished.

The Castle Proms by its nature and design is a 'picnic style concert' and is still an exception to the rule. Whilst glass is restricted to the Proms, this is with the exception of sparkling wines and champagne derivatives. Such bottles tend to be of a stronger nature reflecting the fact that the contents are pressurised.

Regarding contemporary concert based events, it is generally accepted that at these type of concerts at other venues/sites/locations, alcohol is a prohibited item. This would make the Castle Concerts broadly into sync with other events."

Deadline Security

"We feel the ban on bringing alcohol into the Castle grounds for the Castle Concerts is justifiable, as it reduces the chances of under age drinking, will restrict the amount of binge drinking, which is a major factor of anti social behaviour and reduces the chances of people sneaking in glass bottles, which can cause injuries."

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