

**McConaghy Julianne**

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**Subject:** FW: Objection to the re-licensing of Spearmint Rhino

-----Original Message-----

From:

Sent: 23 May 2019 07:21

To: licensingservice

Subject: Objection to the re-licensing of Spearmint Rhino

I object to this licence on the grounds of:

**UNSUITABLE LOCATION:**

The location has always been unsuitable even according to your own policy. It is also on a University campus. Refusing to relicense a strip club on the grounds of locality CANNOT be legally challenged.

**UNFIT LICENCE HOLDER / PREVENTION OF CRIME and DISORDER / BREACH OF EQUALITY LAW:**

Independent investigation has shown extreme levels of sexual contact and sex acts at this club, despite numerous regulatory measures. Sexual contact was also shown at the flagship Spearmint Rhino in Camden - despite 63 CCTV cameras.

The Rhino chain has a 20 year history of prostitution, drugs, drink spiking and pimps under different managers and CEOs. A new manager or more cameras clearly is not going to make any difference in Sheffield. The licence holder is unfit. You cannot prevent crime and disorder and you cannot abide by equality law.

If you license this club you will be knowingly licensing a venue which will breach its licensing conditions and be putting women at risk.

I object to any venue that increases demand for the sex trade. Women are people, not commodities.

**McConaghy Julianne**

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**Subject:** FW: Objection to the re-licensing of Spearmint Rhino

-----Original Message-----

From:

Sent: 23 May 2019 07:31

To: licensingservice

Subject: Objection to the re-licensing of Spearmint Rhino

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If you license this club you will be knowingly licensing a venue which will breach its licensing conditions and be putting women at risk.

**McConaghy Julianne**

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**Subject:** FW: Spearmint Rhino Objection

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**From:**  
**Sent:** 23 May 2019 07:47  
**To:** licensingservice  
**Subject:** Spearmint Rhino Objection

Dear Sir,

Please see attached letter. It refers to the application for a Sexual Entertainment Venue (SEV) licence by Spearmint Rhino, 60 Brown Street, Sheffield, S1 2BS.

**It is an objection letter to the application for this licence and I call for the council to refuse it.**

Kind regards,

Licensing Service  
Block C, Staniforth Road Depot  
Staniforth Road  
Surrey Street  
S9 3HD

By email to: [licensing@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@sheffield.gov.uk)

Thursday, 23 May 2019

Dear Licensing

I refer to the application for a Sexual Entertainment Venue (SEV) licence by Spearmint Rhino, 60 Brown Street, Sheffield, S1 2BS.

**This is an objection letter to the application for this licence and I call for the council to refuse it.**

I believe that the Council should refuse the licence application under the Discretionary Grounds for Refusal of the current Sheffield City Council's Sexual Entertainment Venue Licensing Policy on the following grounds:

**The Public Sector Equality Duty and Gender Equality**

Sheffield City Council has "statutory obligations in relation to disability race and gender" (sic as the protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 is "sex" and not "gender") ensuring that these factors are not used to discriminate against anyone. I believe that sexual entertainment venues directly discriminate against women by normalising the sexual objectification of women which contributes to their sexualisation and objectification in other areas of society. SEVs are both cause and effect of inequality between the sexes.

The Council has a fundamental and non-delegable role to give due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), including tackling gender inequality. This applies notwithstanding the fact that Parliament has legislated to allow the possibility for SEVs to be licensed in specific areas – subject to the choices of the local communities. Many women have voiced their concerns and fears about the presence of Spearmint Rhino in previous objections.

Philip Kolvin (2010) cites the Royal Town Planning Institute's *Gender and Spatial Planning Good Practice Note*:

*"In relation to the 24-hour economy policy, ensure that the views of women are considered. Evidence shows that in certain locations, lap-dancing and exotic dancing club make women feel threatened or uncomfortable" [1]*

Kolvin continues with:

*"If a woman, whether objectively justified or not, fears to use part of the town centre characterised by sex establishments, this may be argued to amount to discrimination, in that her access to the public infrastructure of the town is impaired in comparison to that of men. Where relevant these considerations ought properly to be taken into account by authorities at the decision-making stage, and possibly at the policy-making stage" [2].*

This is further corroborated by 2012 research published in *Criminal Justice Matters* which states that:

*". . . the women describe feeling frightened, disempowered, violated, embarrassed, unsafe (particularly if men are around) and avoid certain streets at night where they know there is a lap dancing club." [3]*

Not only do strip clubs appeal to a narrow sector of the community, mostly heterosexual men, they are also antithetical to fostering good relations between the sexes. In their UK study published in 2011 Sanders and Hardy [4] reported that 30% of the women performers interviewed said that as a result of doing the job they had lost respect for men; a finding echoed in many testimonies of former performers, including those who objected to last year's licence renewal where at the hearing, one former dancer stated "I was viewed and treated like a second-class citizen and not just in one club but in all, this made me hate men to an extreme level, they repulsed me." [5]

I am sure that I need not remind the the Council of its duty under the Equality Act's requirement to pay due regard to foster good relations between men and women.

### Location

In its current policy, the Council states:

*"Whilst the Council has not imposed a numerical limit on the number of premises that may be licensed in any area, and whilst it will treat each application upon its own merits, the Council will not licence premises that it feels are in close proximity to:-*

**a) a school, nursery or other premises substantially used by or for children under 16 years of age;**

There are many educational establishments in the vicinity and Brown Street is also an access route to the Sheffield College Granville Road campus and UTC which provides education for children from the age of 14. It is in close proximity to Freeman College which provides education for students (16 – 25) who have a range of complex learning, mental health and behavioural needs.

The Club is also in the centre of the newly designated "Knowledge Gateway".

**b) a park or other recreational area used by or for children under 16 years of age;**

There is the recreational space (formerly known as Festival Square but now named as Cultural Industries Quarter Square on the map of the area which can be found on Sheaf Square) directly adjacent to the club.

**d) a Hospital, Mental Incapacity or Disability Centre or similar premises;**

There are a number of charities and organisations in the area which support vulnerable children and adults, many of whom will have PTSD.

**f) a central gateway to the city or other city landmark, historic building or tourist attraction.**

It is directly opposite the Showroom cinema, which is "one of Europe's largest independent cinemas paired with the longest-running creative business centre in the city. Housed in a converted 1930s car showroom, we're situated right next to the railway station in Sheffield's Cultural Industries Quarter." And further states that their "beautiful Art Deco environs are an ideal setting for the innovative businesses homed at the Workstation, and a perfect place for the determinedly independent and cutting edge cinema of the Showroom." The Showroom also hosts family events as well as many off the Shelf and Doc Fest events, the latter is internationally renowned.

It is also opposite the newly refurbished Site Gallery, Sheffield's international contemporary art space, specialising in moving image, new media and performance. Spearmint Rhino is not only centrally located in terms of proximity to a number of national and international events locations but it is also a direct access route, for example: Doc Fest; the children's media conference; Off the Shelf etc.

There are young students not only studying in the surrounding the area but also residing in it. The 24/7 Addsetts learning centre is in the vicinity with Brown Street and Cultural Industries Quarter Square as direct access routes from numerous student accommodation blocks. The Club is next to Sheffield Hallam Students Union (an iconic and a city landmark building) and backs directly onto student accommodation. Recent revelations about breaches within the club also make its location within the student community highly inappropriate.

**Further grounds for refusal**

The Council is asked to note that in the last few years Leeds City Council successfully defended a refusal to renew two SEV licenses at judicial review:

*R (Bean Trading A Ltd) v Leeds City Council (2014)*

It was held that a council can "take a fresh look" despite no changes to the character of locality. The Council is also asked to note the following from Philip Kolvin regarding licence renewal:

*"Given that there is potential for the discretion to be exercised afresh, the renewal should not just be a rubber stamping exercise, but an opportunity, if needed, to review the principle and content of the license."*[6]

The case of *Thompson v Oxford City Council (2014)* was also supported at court of appeal, and the Council told they could "take a fresh look" at any application for renewal.

When Philip Kolvin represented residents objecting to the renewal of the strip club in Chester in 2015, it is reported that:

*"Their representative Philip Kolvin QC told the meeting that 2009 legislation meant communities now had more say in where such sexual entertainment venues should be located. What Mr Grant had dubbed an 'extraordinary campaign', he called 'the working of democracy'."*

It is further reported:

*"But Mr Kolvin pointed out that this year's committee was entitled to come to an opposite conclusion to last year's committee even where nothing had changed: 'The courts have said that you can respond to a body of feeling in the locality, merely the fact that a number of people are concerned about this justifies refusal.'"*  
(emphasis added) [7]

Please note that the licence renewal was refused. As such, the Council is fully empowered to refuse the licence, particularly in view of the widespread breaches to conditions, recently reported in the local and national press and presented to the Council in April this year.

I look forward to hearing from you.

### References

- [1] Kolvin, P (2010) *Sex Licensing*, The Institute of Licensing p.87
- [2] Patiniotis, J. & Standing, K. (2012) 'License to cause harm? Sex entertainment venues and women's sense of safety in inner city centres' in *Criminal Justice Matters*, 88:1, 10-12.
- [3] Kolvin, P (2010) *Sex Licensing*, The Institute of Licensing p.87
- [4] Sanders, T., & Hardy, K. (2011) 'The Regulatory Dance: Sexual Consumption in the Night Time Economy – Initial Findings' Leeds: University of Leeds
- [5] Sheffield Telegraph: 'Why we want Sheffield to be a strip-club-free city' April 5th 2019  
<https://www.sheffieldtelegraph.co.uk/news/why-we-want-sheffield-to-be-a-strip-club-free-city-1-9695166>
- [6] Kolvin, P op cit. p. 90
- [7] Chester Live: 'Chester Platinum Lounge lap dancing club waits for licensing decision' July 18<sup>th</sup> 2015 <https://www.cheshire-live.co.uk/news/chester-cheshire-news/chester-platinum-lounge-lap-dancing-9610810>

**McConaghy Julianne**

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**Subject:** FW: Objection to the re-licensing of Spearmint Rhino

-----Original Message-----

From:

Sent: 23 May 2019 08:59

To: licensingservice

Subject: Objection to the re-licensing of Spearmint Rhino

I object to this licence on the grounds of:

**UNSUITABLE LOCATION:**

The location has always been unsuitable even according to your own policy. It is also on a University campus. Refusing to relicense a strip club on the grounds of locality CANNOT be legally challenged.

**UNFIT LICENCE HOLDER / PREVENTION OF CRIME and DISORDER / BREACH OF EQUALITY LAW:**

Independent investigation has shown extreme levels of sexual contact and sex acts at this club, despite numerous regulatory measures. Sexual contact was also shown at the flagship Spearmint Rhino in Camden - despite 63 CCTV cameras.

The Rhino chain has a 20 year history of prostitution, drugs, drink spiking and pimps under different managers and CEOs. A new manager or more cameras clearly is not going to make any difference in Sheffield. The licence holder is unfit. You cannot prevent crime and disorder and you cannot abide by equality law.

If you license this club you will be knowingly licensing a venue which will breach its licensing conditions and be putting women at risk.

Sent from my iPhone



**McConaghy Julianne**

---

**Subject:** FW: Objection to the re-licensing of Spearmint Rhino

**From:**

**Sent:** 23 May 2019 09:21

**To:** licensingservice

**Subject:** Objection to the re-licensing of Spearmint Rhino

Dear Sir/Madam,

As a regular visitor to Sheffield for business and leisure and as a young woman that wishes to enjoy the night life, I object to this licence on the grounds of:

**UNSUITABLE LOCATION:**

The location has always been unsuitable even according to your own policy. It is also on a University campus. Refusing to relicense a strip club on the grounds of locality CANNOT be legally challenged.

**UNFIT LICENCE HOLDER / PREVENTION OF CRIME and DISORDER / BREACH OF EQUALITY LAW:**

Independent investigation has shown extreme levels of sexual contact and sex acts at this club, despite numerous regulatory measures. Sexual contact was also shown at the flagship Spearmint Rhino in Camden - despite 63 CCTV cameras.

The Rhino chain has a 20 year history of prostitution, drugs, drink spiking and pimps under different managers and CEOs. A new manager or more cameras clearly is not going to make any difference in Sheffield. The licence holder is unfit. You cannot prevent crime and disorder and you cannot abide by equality law.

If you license this club you will be knowingly licensing a venue which will breach its licensing conditions and be putting women at risk.

Yours faithfully

**McConaghy Julianne**

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**Subject:** FW: Spearmint Rhino Objection Letter

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**From:**

**Sent:** 23 May 2019 09:55

**To:** licensingservice

**Subject:** Spearmint Rhino Objection Letter

Dear Licencing Service,

Please see objection attached, on behalf of the staff and Trustees of Vida Sheffield.

Can we also clarify – if we list everyone’s names on the letter, will we be counted as separate objectors, or only one collective objection?

Regards,

Head of Licensing & Chief Licensing Officer  
 Block C  
 Staniforth Road  
 Sheffield S9 3HD  
 email: [licensing@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@sheffield.gov.uk)

**vida**  
 life without abuse

formerly  
 Sheffield Domestic Abuse Forum

21 May 2019

**Re: Application for Sexual Entertainment Venue Licence  
 by Spearmint Rhino**

Knowle House  
 4 Norfolk Park Road  
 Sheffield S2 3QE  
 t: (0114) 275 0101  
 f: (0114) 278 1308  
 e: [admin@vidasheffield.org.uk](mailto:admin@vidasheffield.org.uk)

Dear Licensing Department,

With reference to the application for a sexual entertainment venue licence by Spearmint Rhino, 60 Brown Street, Sheffield S1 2BS.

**This is an objection letter to the application for this licence and Vida Sheffield call for the council to refuse it. We understand that evidence of unlawful sexual activity at Spearmint Rhino Sheffield is currently under investigation, which would act as evidence of breaches of their existing SEV licence.**

Regardless of this emerging evidence, we believe that the Council should in any case refuse the licence application under the Discretionary Grounds for Refusal of Sheffield City Council's Sexual Entertainment Venues Licensing Policy, on the following grounds:

#### **The Public Sector Equality Duty and Gender Equality**

Sheffield City Council also has 'statutory obligations in relation to disability race and gender' ensuring that these factors are not used to discriminate against anyone. [NB: the protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 is 'sex' and not 'gender']. We believe that a sexual entertainment venue directly discriminates against women by normalising the sexualisation and objectification of women and girls, which contributes to their objectification in other areas of society. SEV's are both a cause and a consequence of inequality between the sexes.

The Council has a fundamental and non-delegable role to give due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), including tackling gender inequality. This applies notwithstanding the fact that Parliament has legislated to allow the possibility for SEVs to be licensed in specific areas – subject to the choices of the local communities. Many women, and men, have voiced their concerns and fears about the presence of Spearmint Rhino in previous objections.

Philip Kolvin (2010) cites the Royal Town Planning Institute's *Gender and Spatial Planning Good Practice Note*:

*"In relation to the 24-hour economy policy, ensure that the views of women are considered. Evidence shows that in certain locations, lap-dancing and exotic dancing club make women feel threatened or uncomfortable" [1]*

Kolvin continues with:

*"If a woman, whether objectively justified or not, fears to use part of the town centre characterised by sex establishments, this may be argued to amount to discrimination, in that her access to the public infrastructure of the town is impaired in comparison to that of men. Where relevant these considerations ought properly to be taken into*

*account by authorities at the decision-making stage, and possibly at the policy-making stage” [2].*

This is further corroborated by 2012 research published in *Criminal Justice Matters* which states that:

*“... the women describe feeling frightened, disempowered, violated, embarrassed, unsafe (particularly if men are around) and avoid certain streets at night where they know there is a lap dancing club.” [3]*

Not only do strip clubs appeal to a narrow sector of the community, overwhelmingly heterosexual men, they are also antithetical to fostering good relations between the sexes. In their UK study published in 2011 Sanders and Hardy [4] reported that 30% of the women performers interviewed said that as a result of doing the job they had lost respect for men; a finding echoed in many testimonies of former performers, including those who objected to last year's licence renewal where at the hearing, one former dancer stated “I was viewed and treated like a second-class citizen and not just in one club but in all... this made me hate men to an extreme level, they repulsed me.”[5]

It should not be necessary to remind the the Council of its duty under the Equality Act's requirement to pay due regard to foster good relations between men and women.

We have been made aware of information from local publicity which indicates that undercover investigations in a number of such establishments, including Spearmint Rhino Sheffield, have revealed significant breaches of the licensing conditions which have not been picked up by the councils' own inspections. This attests that regulation of an inherently unsafe and unfair working environment is impossible. **We understand that evidence of unlawful sexual activity at Spearmint Rhino Sheffield is currently under investigation, which would act as evidence of breaches of their existing SEV licence.**

**Our other terms of objection are as follows:**

- the part of the city that the club is situated is unsuitable due to it being in the '**cultural heart' of the city**. It is within the area of the railway station, the main gateway and welcome point to the city, and the pedestrianised walkway to the town centre;
- the club is situated directly next to Festival Square [just renamed Cultural Industries Quarter Square] and the SHU Students Union [a hub for young impressionable people, often away from home for the first time and very vulnerable]. Now that this whole area in front of the Showroom Cinema and Site Gallery is being pedestrianised, it means that **Spearmint Rhino will effectively become an 'on campus strip club'**;
- when walking around this area, which you encourage as a Council due to the other businesses and services in the area, women and girls feel nervous because of the SEV and have to change their behaviour to take account of it. For example, having to check to see if there are men coming out of the SEV, and taking a different route to the centre of town so that they do not risk walking past it – women and girls should not have to adapt our lives in this way in our city;
- the Council's own promotion is of '**Sheffield – where everyone matters'** – this should include the **female citizens** of the city, who should not have their city leaders normalising and promoting their sexualisation and objectification;
- the image of a high-end establishment portrayed by this SEV goes in some way to normalising this type of venue, in a very busy social hub of the city, giving the **impression that Sheffield as a city condones the sexualisation and objectification of women and**

**girls**, which is in complete contradiction to the Council's equality policies and Sheffield's own widely publicised belief that Sheffield is 'a city where everyone matters.'

- granting a licence would be contradictory to other work that the Council does, funds and promotes, for example the SheFest festival for International Women's Day, the One Billion Rising flash dance event to combat Violence Against Women & Girls, the Equalities Hubs bringing Communities of Identity together to tackle equalities issues within the Council and the city.
- the City Council has a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to work to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

A sexual entertainment venue in the heart of the city, or anywhere in the city, is completely contradictory to everything that the council **says** it stands for, everything that the council **should** stand for, and **has a duty to work towards**.

The law on SEV licensing states that Local Authorities have a duty to consider their legal obligations with regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) when considering license applications. Public Sector Equality Duty decisions should have due regard to fostering good relations between men and women, and this involves tackling inequality.

In their consultations, **many Sheffield Councillors appear to agree that Sexual Entertainment Venues involve the objectification of women**. In allowing the licensing of even one SEV in the city, the City Council is effectively endorsing and facilitating the objectification of women and undermining efforts to promote healthy sexual practices by the Council or your partners.

**This normalisation of harassment and discrimination against women creates a hostile environment for women and girls in Sheffield, and contributes to the appalling levels of sexual and domestic violence and abuse.**

**Vida see the devastating impacts daily in our Eva Therapy Service for women and girls affected by different forms of male violence and abuse, and their resulting trauma [and costly physical and mental health symptoms] and we urge you to take women's objections seriously.**

**We would respectfully but strongly urge the Licencing Committee to refuse this licence application by Spearmint Rhino.**

If the licence committee feel that they cannot make a refusal decision without further discussion, Vida would ask that another hearing is held so that the application can be discussed in more detail.

Vida will fully and actively support the Council in the face of any challenge mounted in reaction to refusal of the licence application.

**We look forward to hearing from you.**

Yours sincerely,




on behalf of the Vida Sheffield Management Committee and staff team



**McConaghy Julianne**

---

**Subject:** FW: Objection letter

**From:**  
**Sent:** 23 May 2019 10:07  
**To:** licensingservice  
**Subject:** Objection letter

Please find attached an objection letter to the application for a Sexual Entertainment Venue (SEV) licence by Spearmint Rhino, 60 Brown Street, Sheffield, S1 2BS

Regards

Licensing Service  
 Block C, Staniforth Road Depot  
 Staniforth Road  
 Surrey Street  
 S9 3HD

By email to: [licensing@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@sheffield.gov.uk)

23<sup>rd</sup> May 2019

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*account by authorities at the decision-making stage, and possibly at the policy-making stage” [2].*

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#### **Location**

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*“Whilst the Council has not imposed a numerical limit on the number of premises that may be licensed in any area, and whilst it will treat each application upon its own merits, the Council will not licence premises that it feels are in close proximity to:-*

**a) a school, nursery or other premises substantially used by or for children under 16 years of age;**

There are many educational establishments in the vicinity and Brown Street is also an access route to the Sheffield College Granville Road campus and UTC which provides education for children from the age of 14. It is in close proximity to Freeman College which provides education for students (16 – 25) who have a range of complex learning, mental health and behavioural needs.

The Club is also in the centre of the newly designated “Knowledge Gateway”.

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There are a number of charities and organisations in the area which support vulnerable children and adults, many of whom will have PTSD.

**f) a central gateway to the city or other city landmark, historic building or tourist attraction.**

It is directly opposite the Showroom cinema, which is “one of Europe’s largest independent cinemas paired with the longest-running creative business centre in the city. Housed in a converted 1930s car showroom, we’re situated right next to the railway station in Sheffield’s Cultural Industries Quarter.” And further states that their “beautiful Art Deco environs are an ideal setting for the innovative businesses homed at the Workstation, and a perfect place for the determinedly independent and cutting edge cinema of the Showroom.” The Showroom also hosts family events as well as many off the Shelf and Doc Fest events, the latter is internationally renowned.

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**Further grounds for refusal**

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*"Their representative Philip Kolvin QC told the meeting that 2009 legislation meant communities now had more say in where such sexual entertainment venues should be located. What Mr Grant had dubbed an 'extraordinary campaign', he called 'the working of democracy'."*

It is further reported:

*"But Mr Kolvin pointed out that this year's committee was entitled to come to an opposite conclusion to last year's committee even where nothing had changed: **'The courts have said that you can respond to a body of feeling in the locality, merely the fact that a number of people are concerned about this justifies refusal.'**"*  
(emphasis added) [7]

Please note that the licence renewal was refused. As such, the Council is fully empowered to refuse the licence, particularly in view of the widespread breaches to conditions, recently reported in the local and national press and presented to the Council in April this year.

I look forward to hearing from you.

### References

[1] Kolvin, P (2010) *Sex Licensing*, The Institute of Licensing p.87

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[4] Sanders, T., & Hardy, K. (2011) 'The Regulatory Dance: Sexual Consumption in the Night Time Economy – Initial Findings' Leeds: University of Leeds

[5] Sheffield Telegraph: 'Why we want Sheffield to be a strip-club-free city' April 5th 2019  
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[6] Kolvin, P op cit. p. 90

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**McConaghy Julianne**

---

**Subject:** FW: I am sharing 'SR template objection letter copy 2019.docx' with you

**From:**

**Sent:** 23 May 2019 10:24

**To:** licensingservice

**Subject:** I am sharing 'SR template objection letter copy 2019.docx' with you

Shared from Word for Android

<https://office.com/getword>

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android

23/5/2019

Licensing Service  
Block C, Staniforth Road Depot  
Staniforth Road  
Surrey Street  
S9 3HD

By email to: [licensing@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@sheffield.gov.uk)

Dear Licensing

I refer to the application for a Sexual Entertainment Venue (SEV) licence by Spearmint Rhino, 60 Brown Street, Sheffield, S1 2BS.

**This is an objection letter to the application for this licence and I call for the council to refuse it.**

I believe that the Council should refuse the licence application under the Discretionary Grounds for Refusal of the current Sheffield City Council's Sexual Entertainment Venue Licensing Policy on the following grounds:

**The Public Sector Equality Duty and Gender Equality**

Sheffield City Council has "statutory obligations in relation to disability race and gender" (sic as the protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 is "sex" and not "gender") ensuring that these factors are not used to discriminate against anyone. I believe that sexual entertainment venues directly discriminate against women by normalising the sexual objectification of women which contributes to their sexualisation and objectification in other areas of society. SEVs are both cause and effect of inequality between the sexes.

The Council has a fundamental and non-delegable role to give due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), including tackling gender inequality. This applies notwithstanding the fact that Parliament has legislated to allow the possibility for SEVs to be licensed in specific areas – subject to the choices of the local communities. Many women have voiced their concerns and fears about the presence of Spearmint Rhino in previous objections.

Philip Kolvin (2010) cites the Royal Town Planning Institute's *Gender and Spatial Planning Good Practice Note*:

*"In relation to the 24-hour economy policy, ensure that the views of women are considered. Evidence shows that in certain locations, lap-dancing and exotic dancing club make women feel threatened or uncomfortable" [1]*

Kolvin continues with:

*"If a woman, whether objectively justified or not, fears to use part of the town centre characterised by sex establishments, this may be argued to amount to discrimination, in that her access to the public infrastructure of the town is impaired in comparison to that of men. Where relevant these considerations ought properly to be taken into account by authorities at the decision-making stage, and possibly at the policy-making stage" [2].*

This is further corroborated by 2012 research published in *Criminal Justice Matters* which states that:

*“... the women describe feeling frightened, disempowered, violated, embarrassed, unsafe (particularly if men are around) and avoid certain streets at night where they know there is a lap dancing club.” [3]*

Not only do strip clubs appeal to a narrow sector of the community, mostly heterosexual men, they are also antithetical to fostering good relations between the sexes. In their UK study published in 2011 Sanders and Hardy [4] reported that 30% of the women performers interviewed said that as a result of doing the job they had lost respect for men; a finding echoed in many testimonies of former performers, including those who objected to last year's licence renewal where at the hearing, one former dancer stated “I was viewed and treated like a second-class citizen and not just in one club but in all, this made me hate men to an extreme level, they repulsed me.”[5]

I am sure that I need not remind the the Council of its duty under the Equality Act's requirement to pay due regard to foster good relations between men and women.

### **Location**

In its current policy, the Council states:

*“Whilst the Council has not imposed a numerical limit on the number of premises that may be licensed in any area, and whilst it will treat each application upon its own merits, the Council will not licence premises that it feels are in close proximity to:-*

**a) a school, nursery or other premises substantially used by or for children under 16 years of age;**

There are many educational establishments in the vicinity and Brown Street is also an access route to the Sheffield College Granville Road campus and UTC which provides education for children from the age of 14. It is in close proximity to Freeman College which provides education for students (16 – 25) who have a range of complex learning, mental health and behavioural needs.

The Club is also in the centre of the newly designated “Knowledge Gateway”.

**b) a park or other recreational area used by or for children under 16 years of age;**

There is the recreational space (formerly known as Festival Square but now named as Cultural Industries Quarter Square on the map of the area which can be found on Sheaf Square) directly adjacent to the club.

**d) a Hospital, Mental Incapacity or Disability Centre or similar premises;**

There are a number of charities and organisations in the area which support vulnerable children and adults, many of whom will have PTSD.

**f) a central gateway to the city or other city landmark, historic building or tourist attraction.**

It is directly opposite the Showroom cinema, which is “one of Europe's largest independent cinemas paired with the longest-running creative business centre in the city. Housed in a converted 1930s car showroom, we're situated right next to the railway station in Sheffield's Cultural Industries Quarter.” And further states that their “beautiful Art Deco environs are an ideal setting for the innovative businesses homed at the Workstation, and a perfect place for the determinedly independent and cutting edge cinema of the Showroom.” The Showroom also hosts family events as well as many of the Shelf and Doc Fest events, the latter is internationally renowned.

It is also opposite the newly refurbished Site Gallery, Sheffield's international contemporary art space, specialising in moving image, new media and performance. Spearmint Rhino is not only

centrally located in terms of proximity to a number of national and international events locations but it is also a direct access route, for example: Doc Fest; the children's media conference; Off the Shelf etc.

There are young students not only studying in the surrounding the area but also residing in it. The 24/7 Addsetts learning centre is in the vicinity with Brown Street and Cultural Industries Quarter Square as direct access routes from numerous student accommodation blocks. The Club is next to Sheffield Hallam Students Union (an iconic and a city landmark building) and backs directly onto student accommodation. Recent revelations about breaches within the club also make its location within the student community highly inappropriate.

### **Further grounds for refusal**

The Council is asked to note that in the last few years Leeds City Council successfully defended a refusal to renew two SEV licenses at judicial review:

*R (Bean Trading A Ltd) v Leeds City Council (2014)*

It was held that a council can "take a fresh look" despite no changes to the character of locality. The Council is also asked to note the following from Philip Kolvin regarding licence renewal:

*"Given that there is potential for the discretion to be exercised afresh, the renewal should not just be a rubber stamping exercise, but an opportunity, if needed, to review the principle and content of the license."*[6]

The case of *Thompson v Oxford City Council (2014)* was also supported at court of appeal, and the Council told they could "take a fresh look" at any application for renewal.

When Philip Kolvin represented residents objecting to the renewal of the strip club in Chester in 2015, it is reported that:

*"Their representative Philip Kolvin QC told the meeting that 2009 legislation meant communities now had more say in where such sexual entertainment venues should be located. What Mr Grant had dubbed an 'extraordinary campaign', he called 'the working of democracy'."*

It is further reported:

*"But Mr Kolvin pointed out that this year's committee was entitled to come to an opposite conclusion to last year's committee even where nothing had changed: **'The courts have said that you can respond to a body of feeling in the locality, merely the fact that a number of people are concerned about this justifies refusal.'**" (emphasis added) [7]*

Please note that the licence renewal was refused. As such, the Council is fully empowered to refuse the licence, particularly in view of the widespread breaches to conditions, recently reported in the local and national press and presented to the Council in April this year.

I look forward to hearing from you.

### **References**

[1] Kolvin, P (2010) *Sex Licensing*, The Institute of Licensing p.87

[2] Patiniotis, J. & Standing, K. (2012) 'License to cause harm? Sex entertainment venues and women's sense of safety in inner city centres' in *Criminal Justice Matters*, 88:1, 10-12.

[3] Kolvin, P (2010) *Sex Licensing*, The Institute of Licensing p.87

[4] Sanders, T., & Hardy, K. (2011) 'The Regulatory Dance: Sexual Consumption in the Night Time Economy – Initial Findings' Leeds: University of Leeds

[5] Sheffield Telegraph: 'Why we want Sheffield to be a strip-club-free city' April 5th 2019  
<https://www.sheffieldtelegraph.co.uk/news/why-we-want-sheffield-to-be-a-strip-club-free-city-1-9695166>

[6] Kolvin, P op cit. p. 90

[7] Chester Live: 'Chester Platinum Lounge lap dancing club waits for licensing decision' July 18<sup>th</sup> 2015 <https://www.cheshire-live.co.uk/news/chester-cheshire-news/chester-platinum-lounge-lap-dancing-9610810>

Thank you



**McConaghy Julianne**

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**Subject:** FW: SPEARMINT RHINO. LICENCE OBJECTION

-----Original Message-----

From:

Sent: 23 May 2019 10:38

To: licensingservice

Subject: SPEARMINT RHINO. LICENCE OBJECTION

Please see below attached

Licensing Service

Block C, Staniforth Road Depot

Staniforth Road

Surrey Street

S9 3HD

By email to: [licensing@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@sheffield.gov.uk)

[REDACTED]

23 may 2019

Dear Licensing

I refer to the application for a Sexual Entertainment Venue (SEV) licence by Spearmint Rhino, 60 Brown Street, Sheffield, S1 2BS.

**This is an objection letter to the application for this licence and I call for the council to refuse it.**

I believe that the Council should refuse the licence application under the Discretionary Grounds for Refusal of the current Sheffield City Council's Sexual Entertainment Venue Licensing Policy on the following grounds:

**The Public Sector Equality Duty and Gender Equality**

Sheffield City Council has "statutory obligations in relation to disability race and gender" (sic as the protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 is "sex" and not "gender") ensuring that these factors are not used to discriminate against anyone. I believe that sexual entertainment venues directly discriminate against women by normalising the sexual objectification of women which contributes to their sexualisation and objectification in other areas of society. SEVs are both cause and effect of inequality between the sexes.

The Council has a fundamental and non-delegable role to give due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), including tackling gender inequality. This applies notwithstanding the fact that Parliament has legislated to allow the possibility for SEVs to be licensed in specific areas – subject to the choices of the local communities. Many women have voiced their concerns and fears about the presence of Spearmint Rhino in previous objections.

Philip Kolvin (2010) cites the Royal Town Planning Institute's *Gender and Spatial Planning Good Practice Note*:

*"In relation to the 24-hour economy policy, ensure that the views of women are considered. Evidence shows that in certain locations, lap-dancing and exotic dancing club make women feel threatened or uncomfortable" [1]*

Kolvin continues with:

*"If a woman, whether objectively justified or not, fears to use part of the town centre characterised by sex establishments, this may be argued to amount to discrimination, in that her access to the public infrastructure of the town is impaired in comparison to that of men. Where relevant these considerations ought properly to be taken into account by authorities at the decision-making stage, and possibly at the policy-making stage" [2].*

This is further corroborated by 2012 research published in *Criminal Justice Matters* which states that:

*"... the women describe feeling frightened, disempowered, violated, embarrassed, unsafe (particularly if men are*

around) and avoid certain streets at night where they know there is a lap dancing club.”[3]

Not only do strip clubs appeal to a narrow sector of the community, mostly heterosexual men, they are also antithetical to fostering good relations between the sexes. In their UK study published in 2011 Sanders and Hardy [4] reported that 30% of the women performers interviewed said that as a result of doing the job they had lost respect for men; a finding echoed in many testimonies of former performers, including those who objected to last year’s licence renewal where at the hearing, one former dancer stated “I was viewed and treated like a second-class citizen and not just in one club but in all, this made me hate men to an extreme level, they repulsed me.”[5]

I am sure that I need not remind the the Council of its duty under the Equality Act’s requirement to pay due regard to foster good relations between men and women.

**Location**

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There are a number of charities and organisations in the area which support vulnerable children and adults, many of whom will have PTSD.

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**Further grounds for refusal**

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*"Their representative Philip Kolvin QC told the meeting that 2009 legislation meant communities now had more say in where such sexual entertainment venues should be located. What Mr Grant had dubbed an 'extraordinary campaign', he called 'the working of democracy'."*

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Please note that the licence renewal was refused. As such, the Council is fully empowered to refuse the licence, particularly in view of the widespread breaches to conditions, recently reported in the local and national press and presented to the Council in April this year.

I look forward to hearing from you.



**References**

[1] Kolvin, P (2010) *Sex Licensing*, The Institute of Licensing p.87

[2] Patiniotis, J. & Standing, K. (2012) 'License to cause harm? Sex entertainment venues and women's sense of safety in inner city centres' in *Criminal Justice Matters*, 88:1, 10-12.

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[4] Sanders, T., & Hardy, K. (2011) 'The Regulatory Dance: Sexual Consumption in the Night Time Economy – Initial Findings' Leeds: University of Leeds

[5] Sheffield Telegraph: 'Why we want Sheffield to be a strip-club-free city' April 5th 2019 <https://www.sheffieldtelegraph.co.uk/news/why-we-want-sheffield-to-be-a-strip-club-free-city-1-9695166>

[6] Kolvin, P op cit. p. 90

[7] Chester Live: 'Chester Platinum Lounge lap dancing club waits for licensing decision' July 18<sup>th</sup> 2015 <https://www.cheshire-live.co.uk/news/chester-cheshire-news/chester-platinum-lounge-lap-dancing-9610810>

1

**McConaghy Julianne**

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**Subject:** FW: Objection to the re-licensing of Spearmint Rhino

**From:**

**Sent:** 23 May 2019 10:58

**To:** licensingservice

**Subject:** Objection to the re-licensing of Spearmint Rhino

I object to this licence on the grounds of:

UNSUITABLE LOCATION:

The location has always been unsuitable even according to your own policy. It is also on a University campus. Refusing to relicense a strip club on the grounds of locality CANNOT be legally challenged.

UNFIT LICENCE HOLDER / PREVENTION OF CRIME and DISORDER / BREACH OF EQUALITY LAW:

Independent investigation has shown extreme levels of sexual contact and sex acts at this club, despite numerous regulatory measures. Sexual contact was also shown at the flagship Spearmint Rhino in Camden - despite 63 CCTV cameras.

The Rhino chain has a 20 year history of prostitution, drugs, drink spiking and pimps under different managers and CEOs. A new manager or more cameras clearly is not going to make any difference in Sheffield. The licence holder is unfit. You cannot prevent crime and disorder and you cannot abide by equality law.

If you license this club you will be knowingly licensing a venue which will breach its licensing conditions and be putting women at risk.

0131 P1

**McConaghy Julianne**

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**Subject:** FW: Spermint Rhino

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**From:**  
**Sent:** 23 May 2019 11:40  
**To:** licensingservice  
**Subject:** Spermint Rhino



Objection to re - licensing of Spearmint Rhino, Brown Street, Sheffield -2019

---

Name

Address

23/05/19

To: Licensing Service, Block C, Staniforth Road Depot, Staniforth Road, Sheffield S9 3HD email:  
licensing@sheffield.gov.uk

Dear Madam/Sir

I am writing to object to the relicensing of Spearmint Rhino because strip and lap dancing clubs are outdated and harmful and promote inequality between women and men, which is incompatible with the Council's obligation under the Public Sector Equality Duty. Spearmint Rhino has no place in this city and its current location is particularly problematic being next to Sheffield Hallam University student's union, opposite the Site Gallery and Showroom Cinema- both used by children and families -and near Freeman College, attended by many vulnerable young people. On grounds of location listed in the council's SEV Policy the license can be declined

This council has already been subject to two judicial reviews about its failure to consider the effects on all women of licensing strip clubs. On both occasions it has lost. Strip clubs promote a message that it is acceptable to buy women's bodies for sexual gratification, thus treating women as sex objects. This at a time of greater awareness of the impact of such views on both women's sense of safety and their actual safety and no evidence that violence against women, including street harassment of women, is decreasing. Research shows that men who hold objectifying views of women are more likely to be violent to women. In licensing Spearmint Rhino Sheffield City Council gives a confusing message about its commitment to women's safety and equality.

Women have a right to employment which is safe and not exploitative nor psychologically harmful. There is information about the impact of working in such establishments, including from women who have worked in them, about sexual harassment and assault of the women performers by users and even staff and evidence suggests that this is rife.

I am also aware of information from local publicity which indicates that in a number of such establishments, including Spearmint Rhino Sheffield, there have been significant breaches of the licensing conditions which have not been picked up by the council's own inspections. This attests that regulation of an inherently unsafe and unfair working environment is impossible. In Spearmint Rhino Sheffield evidence of unlawful sexual activity is also under investigation.

Given this I can see no reason for Spearmint Rhino to retain its license. As the law permits a local authority to decide not to allow any strip and lap dancing clubs within its area, I would like the licensing hearing to refuse this license, provide support services for women who may be affected and to address this aspect of inequality between the sexes by undertaking a comprehensive overview of the links between the sex trade, female poverty and violence against women to inform future policy making.

OIBL P1

**McConaghy Julianne**

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**Subject:** FW: Objection

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**From:**  
**Sent:** 23 May 2019 11:51  
**To:** licensingservice  
**Subject:** Objection

Please find my objection to Spearmint Rhino license attached.

Objection to re - licensing of Spearmint Rhino, Brown Street, Sheffield -2019

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23/05/2019

To:

Licensing Service, Block C, Staniforth Road Depot, Staniforth Road, Sheffield S9 3HD email:  
licensing@sheffield.gov.uk

Dear Madam/Sir

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Signed:

**McConaghy Julianne**

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**Subject:**

FW: Objection to the re-licensing of Spearmint Rhino

-----Original Message-----

From:

Sent: 23 May 2019 12:33

To: licensingservice

Subject: Objection to the re-licensing of Spearmint Rhino

I object to this licence on the grounds of:

**UNSUITABLE LOCATION:**

The location has always been unsuitable even according to your own policy. It is also on a University campus. Refusing to relicense a strip club on the grounds of locality CANNOT be legally challenged.

**UNFIT LICENCE HOLDER / PREVENTION OF CRIME and DISORDER / BREACH OF EQUALITY LAW:**

Independent investigation has shown extreme levels of sexual contact and sex acts at this club, despite numerous regulatory measures. Sexual contact was also shown at the flagship Spearmint Rhino in Camden - despite 63 CCTV cameras.

The Rhino chain has a 20 year history of prostitution, drugs, drink spiking and pimps under different managers and CEOs. A new manager or more cameras clearly is not going to make any difference in Sheffield. The licence holder is unfit. You cannot prevent crime and disorder and you cannot abide by equality law.

If you license this club you will be knowingly licensing a venue which will breach its licensing conditions and be putting women at risk.

When you allow women's bodies to be sold to men for sex you are supporting slavery.

0124

**McConaghy Julianne**

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**Subject:** FW: Relicensing of Spearmint Rhino

**From:**  
**Sent:** 23 May 2019 13:19  
**To:** licensingservice  
**Subject:** Relicensing of Spearmint Rhino

23/05/2019

Dear Madam/Sir

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**McConaghy Julianne**

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**Subject:** FW: Spearmint Rhino licence application

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**From:**

**Sent:** 23 May 2019 13:28

**To:** licensingservice

**Subject:** Spearmint Rhino licence application

Dear Licensing,

I would like to register my objection to the licence application of Spearmint Rhino, Brown Street, Sheffield. In my view, there is an important difference between private clubs which permit consensual sexual activity and clubs in which women display or 'sell' their bodies to men, reinforcing the objectification of women's bodies that is causing so much distress, including to girls and young women, in our society.

I understand that there is currently an investigation going on into serious breaches at the Spearmint Rhino club. I trust that if the outcome of this investigation is that breaches did happen then the Council will not grant the licence.

Yours faithfully,

**McConaghy Julianne**

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**Subject:** FW: Objection to the re-licensing of Spearmint Rhino

**From:**

**Sent:** 23 May 2019 13:59

**To:** licensingservice

**Subject:** Objection to the re-licensing of Spearmint Rhino

Please find attached a written objection received by us from a former lap dancer of the Spearmint Rhino chain to further testify to the 'rule breaching' and exploitation that we recently exposed and that goes hand-in-hand with how this club, this chain and the entire strip trade operates.

Thank you

**Statement to Sheffield City Council May 2019**

I am an ex 'dancer' and survivor of sex trafficking whereby Spearmint Rhino, along with other well-known strip clubs, alongside brothels perpetrated a culture not only that parallels one another but that is a variant of modern slavery itself by way of structure.

**Recruitment by deception:**

The predominant target for recruitment into the strip and sex industry is the young, often teenage girl. This is not only because she is more sellable and therefore a more profitable commodity in the eyes of the exploiters but also because the human brain does not fully develop or become cognitively mature until between the ages of 25-30 years old. (This is a widely accepted scientific fact). Young teenage girls are much more impressionable to the deployment of deceptive and aggressive tactics in recruitment. Lies of a life of riches and freedom from the oppression of low paid and unsustainable jobs, rent arrears, poverty and low self-esteem are often used. The false image that has been propagandised by media of an empowered, respected woman who is financially secure is in no way a reflection of the truth, which leads on to my next point.

**Debt bondage:**

From the moment a dancer starts her shift she is indebted to the club, amounts of monetary coercion varies from club to club on average between £80-150. This is a clear-cut method of trafficking perpetrators use and is the definition of modern slavery. "Often traffickers keep victims under their control by saying they will be free after they pay their debt. The 'Debt is supposedly incurred from their recruitment, upkeep, transportation or even their crude sale - thus sex trafficking may occur within debt bondage/bonded labour" (End Slavery Now). It is important to realise that the amounts of £80-150 are large sums for someone coming from a working class background, already struggling to make ends meet, which further destabilises and breaks moral boundaries because the need to pay back the debt and make a profit takes precedence as an act of self-preservation.

**Family ties?**

I find it abhorrent that a lot of clubs deliberately create a Stockholm syndrome type of trauma-bond between those exploited and the ones profiting from the exploitation by creating a false narrative and comparison to a family atmosphere. A lot of clubs make dancers call the women responsible for micro-managing them "house mums" This is not entirely dissimilar to run of the mill pimps making their girls call them "daddy" except this is more sophisticated as the female pronoun is perceived to be non-threatening and therefore not a form of emotional abuse and exploitation. Perhaps not all, but a vast majority of women working in these clubs come from a background of family trauma, this is not a judgement, I myself did. When there is no healthy blueprint of family dynamics and an unmet need of belonging stemming from childhood trauma, it is easy to replicate a dysfunctional family narrative. It is certainly not healthy or normal for a mother figure to encourage competition, back stabbing and sexual exploitation of her "girls".

**Culture of abuse:**

The women working in strip clubs are perceived as cash cows by those who profit from them. It is common practice in clubs for dancers to charge extra to allow a closer dance, sometimes inclusive of touching. We used to call this "naughty forties" because we charged £40 rather than the standard £20. It isn't a free choice, given the debt bondage and the number of dancers on the floor at one time (sometimes forty dancers to ten customers!) It is a matter of survival. The normalisation of this leads



not only to women feeling degraded therefore further entrenched and controlled by the club but also it enables customers to treat women with absolute lack of regard for their humanity. Sexual assault is a daily occurrence as is sexual harassment and propositions, a gateway for those more vulnerable into prostitution. It is not acceptable in any other workplace for workers to be subjected to regular and daily emotional abuse and harassment so why are you licencing and allowing this? On one occasion I was assaulted by a customer and scorned by the manageress for calling security as he was spending a lot on drink from the bar. I also witnessed assaults on other dancers by customers every shift, the rule of thumb was not to call security unless the customer wasn't paying any money to the club. Selective protection and duty of care unfortunately are club culture and it's the women who suffer.

#### Coercive control:

Dancers, although self employed by definition are made to sign a contract giving the club complete control over what they wear down to lengths of dresses, stockings or no stockings, which accessories are acceptable or not. The club also controls a dancer's time by keeping them on call the entirety of the shift as unpaid stage shows are on regular rotation. Going to take a breather after being sexually assaulted or spoken down to by a customer is not an option as you may be required on stage at any moment. This keeps women operating like robots and some turn to drink or drugs to maintain the shift and numb any feelings that may be arising from the maltreatment. Petty fines are regularly deployed to keep control over women, fines for things such as chewing gum or wearing the wrong colour thong under a dress. As you can imagine, this creates an uneven power dynamic and encourages bullying of certain woman by "house mums".

#### Unsanitary conditions:

Changing rooms are often tiny for the number of women on shift which creates an even more territorial and competitive atmosphere as well as problems with sanitation and cleanliness. It is an absolute mainstay for most clubs to have a faulty toilet (usually there is only one toilet for 20-40 women to share!) This leads to flooding as well as arguments between dancers.

#### Men seen as walking ATM machines:

It's not just the women that are exploited, the sex industry structure inverts its tactics on men too. Men are lied to and fed a false narrative that the women enjoy their company and are sexually attracted to them when this couldn't be further from the truth given the sterile and cold environment. I witnessed credit card fraud perpetrated against men regularly. The men were promised to be given some kind of sexual favour by entering the VIP suite or similar. Sometimes this promise was honoured, mostly it wasn't. When they went to pay, the waiter or waitress would type in a huge sum on the card machine which was not the amount the man was originally quoted, the screen would then be quickly progressed to a new one requiring the man enter his pin. Trusting a well-established club not to commit fraud the customers fall for the trick. They were often drunk when this happens and too ashamed to report to police.

#### Pimps using clubs to recruit:

Pimps often loiter outside clubs as well as enter them with a view to recruit more women. Often, they already have their own women working within the club hence why they loiter, awaiting their money at the end of the shift.

Overall the structure and culture of the strip industry is one and the same as brothel owners and human traffickers in how they keep women under control. I feel that strip clubs are nothing but a legalised and enabled shop front for the darker things within the industry.

I am absolutely pro-choice for women and am not of any kind of moral high ground stance when it comes to sexual promiscuity or freedom of expression, however I feel that this industry is the opposite of freedom. If money wasn't being exchanged, then I do not feel these acts would be carried out consensually therefore that in itself is an act of coercion when coupled with the leverage of financial hardship for the women trapped within this cycle.

There will be lots of opposition to what I am saying by women still within the industry. I feel that is because they are operating in survival mode. This is their livelihood yes and it is a fear-based responses, however I feel that a long term solution by way of exit strategies needs to be in place coupled with the refusal to re licence spearmint rhino.

**Rhodes-Evans Emma (CEX)**

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**Subject:** FW: Objection to Spearmint Rhino license

**From: Sent:** 23 May 2019 20:50

**To:** licensingservice

**Subject:** Objection to Spearmint Rhino license

Dear Licensing

I refer to the application for a Sexual Entertainment Venue (SEV) licence by Spearmint Rhino, 60 Brown Street, Sheffield, S1 2BS.

**This is an objection letter to the application for this licence and I call for the council to refuse it.**

The council has a duty under the Public Sector Equality Duty to promote equality between the sexes. Licensing this venue does the opposite. It actively works against equality by making it seem normal and acceptable for women's bodies to be used as entertainment devices.

There is no point in the Council trying to make any headway promoting equality in employment, education etc, if it is giving out this message.

Saying "but the women need jobs" is no excuse. Women, indeed all people, need access to their share of the bounteous wealth of this country. Expecting them to sell their bodies and their dignity to get it, is unacceptable. Why should they? You don't. You get food and a roof over your head without having to perform sexual acts on, or in front of, strangers for whom you feel no desire. Why inflict that on others?

The argument that women can sell sexual favours if they want to, also does not wash. We are not allowed to sell our kidneys, or our babies, and for good reason. The opportunity for exploitation is simply too high.

Sheffield does not need to encourage its citizens to exploit each other sexually for money. We can move beyond this.

Yours,

**Rhodes-Evans Emma (CEX)**

---

**Subject:** FW: Objection to Spearmint Rhino

**From:**

**Sent:** 23 May 2019 21:23

**To:** licensingservice

**Subject:** Objection to Spearmint Rhino

Dear Sheffield Council

I object to this licence as its location is entirely unsuitable even according to your own policy - it is even on a University campus. As you should know, a strip club CANNOT legally challenge a decision not to relicence on the grounds of unsuitable locality.

Further, recent independent investigations have shown extreme levels of sexual contact and sex acts at this club, despite numerous regulatory measures. Sexual contact was also shown at the flagship Spearmint Rhino in Camden - despite 63 CCTV cameras. The Rhino chain has a 20 year history of prostitution, drugs, drink spiking and pimps under different managers and CEOs. A new manager or a few more cameras is obviously not going to make any difference whatsoever in Sheffield. The licence holder is clearly unfit. You cannot prevent crime and disorder and you cannot abide by equality law.

If you license this club you are knowingly licensing a venue which will breach its licensing conditions and you are knowingly putting women at risk.

Yours sincerely

**Rhodes-Evans Emma (CEX)**

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**Subject:** FW: Sexual Entertainment Venue (SEV) licence by Spearmint Rhino, 60 Brown Street, Sheffield, S1 2BS  
**Attachments:** Objection to Spearmin Rhino licence.docx

**From:**  
**Sent:** 23 May 2019 18:33  
**To:** licensingservice  
**Subject:** Sexual Entertainment Venue (SEV) licence by Spearmint Rhino, 60 Brown Street, Sheffield, S1 2BS

I trust you will weigh up all the objections to this degrading "entertainment" venue and revoke their licence, which many Sheffield citizens feel revulsion towards.

Best regards,

23<sup>rd</sup> May 2019

Licensing Service  
Block C, Staniforth Road Depot  
Staniforth Road  
Surrey Street  
S9 3HD

By email to: [licensing@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@sheffield.gov.uk)

Dear Licensing Service,

I refer to the application for a Sexual Entertainment Venue (SEV) licence by Spearmint Rhino, 60 Brown Street, Sheffield, S1 2BS.

**This is an objection letter to the application for this licence and I call for the council to refuse it.**

I believe that the Council should refuse the licence application under the Discretionary Grounds for Refusal of the current Sheffield City Council's Sexual Entertainment Venue Licensing Policy on the following grounds:

**The Public Sector Equality Duty and Gender Equality**

Sheffield City Council has "statutory obligations in relation to disability race and gender" (sic as the protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 is "sex" and not "gender") ensuring that these factors are not used to discriminate against anyone. I believe that sexual entertainment venues directly discriminate against women by normalising the sexual objectification of women which contributes to their sexualisation and objectification in other areas of society. SEVs are both cause and effect of inequality between the sexes.

The Council has a fundamental and non-delegable role to give due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), including tackling gender inequality. This applies notwithstanding the fact that Parliament has legislated to allow the possibility for SEVs to be licensed in specific areas – subject to the choices of the local communities. Many women have voiced their concerns and fears about the presence of Spearmint Rhino in previous objections.

Philip Kolvin (2010) cites the Royal Town Planning Institute's *Gender and Spatial Planning Good Practice Note*:

*"In relation to the 24-hour economy policy, ensure that the views of women are considered. Evidence shows that in certain locations, lap-dancing and exotic dancing club make women feel threatened or uncomfortable" [1]*

Kolvin continues with:

*"If a woman, whether objectively justified or not, fears to use part of the town centre characterised by sex establishments, this may be argued to amount to discrimination, in that her access to the public infrastructure of the town is impaired in comparison to that of men. Where relevant these considerations ought properly to be taken into*

*account by authorities at the decision-making stage, and possibly at the policy-making stage” [2].*

This is further corroborated by 2012 research published in *Criminal Justice Matters* which states that:

*“... the women describe feeling frightened, disempowered, violated, embarrassed, unsafe (particularly if men are around) and avoid certain streets at night where they know there is a lap dancing club.” [3]*

Not only do strip clubs appeal to a narrow sector of the community, mostly heterosexual men, they are also antithetical to fostering good relations between the sexes. In their UK study published in 2011 Sanders and Hardy [4] reported that 30% of the women performers interviewed said that as a result of doing the job they had lost respect for men; a finding echoed in many testimonies of former performers, including those who objected to last year’s licence renewal where at the hearing, one former dancer stated “I was viewed and treated like a second-class citizen and not just in one club but in all, this made me hate men to an extreme level, they repulsed me.”[5]

I am sure that I need not remind the the Council of its duty under the Equality Act’s requirement to pay due regard to foster good relations between men and women.

#### **Location**

In its current policy, the Council states:

*“Whilst the Council has not imposed a numerical limit on the number of premises that may be licensed in any area, and whilst it will treat each application upon its own merits, the Council will not licence premises that it feels are in close proximity to:-*

**a) a school, nursery or other premises substantially used by or for children under 16 years of age;**

There are many educational establishments in the vicinity and Brown Street is also an access route to the Sheffield College Granville Road campus and UTC which provides education for children from the age of 14. It is in close proximity to Freeman College which provides education for students (16 – 25) who have a range of complex learning, mental health and behavioural needs.

The Club is also in the centre of the newly designated “Knowledge Gateway”.

**b) a park or other recreational area used by or for children under 16 years of age;**

There is the recreational space (formerly known as Festival Square but now named as Cultural Industries Quarter Square on the map of the area which can be found on Sheaf Square) directly adjacent to the club.

**d) a Hospital, Mental Incapacity or Disability Centre or similar premises;**

There are a number of charities and organisations in the area which support vulnerable children and adults, many of whom will have PTSD.

**f) a central gateway to the city or other city landmark, historic building or tourist attraction.**

It is directly opposite the Showroom cinema, which is “one of Europe’s largest independent cinemas paired with the longest-running creative business centre in the city. Housed in a converted 1930s car showroom, we’re situated right next to the railway station in Sheffield’s Cultural Industries Quarter.” And further states that their “beautiful Art Deco environs are an ideal setting for the innovative businesses homed at the Workstation, and a perfect place for the determinedly independent and cutting edge cinema of the Showroom.” The Showroom also hosts family events as well as many off the Shelf and Doc Fest events, the latter is internationally renowned.

It is also opposite the newly refurbished Site Gallery, Sheffield’s international contemporary art space, specialising in moving image, new media and performance. Spearmint Rhino is not only centrally located in terms of proximity to a number of national and international events locations but it is also a direct access route, for example: Doc Fest; the children’s media conference; Off the Shelf etc.

There are young students not only studying in the surrounding the area but also residing in it. The 24/7 Addsetts learning centre is in the vicinity with Brown Street and Cultural Industries Quarter Square as direct access routes from numerous student accommodation blocks. The Club is next to Sheffield Hallam Students Union (an iconic and a city landmark building) and backs directly onto student accommodation. Recent revelations about breaches within the club also make its location within the student community highly inappropriate.

**Further grounds for refusal**

The Council is asked to note that in the last few years Leeds City Council successfully defended a refusal to renew two SEV licenses at judicial review:

*R (Bean Trading A Ltd) v Leeds City Council (2014)*

It was held that a council can “take a fresh look” despite no changes to the character of locality. The Council is also asked to note the following from Philip Kolvin regarding licence renewal:

*“Given that there is potential for the discretion to be exercised afresh, the renewal should not just be a rubber stamping exercise, but an opportunity, if needed, to review the principle and content of the license.”[6]*

The case of *Thompson v Oxford City Council (2014)* was also supported at court of appeal, and the Council told they could “take a fresh look” at any application for renewal.

When Philip Kolvin represented residents objecting to the renewal of the strip club in Chester in 2015, it is reported that:



*"Their representative Philip Kolvin QC told the meeting that 2009 legislation meant communities now had more say in where such sexual entertainment venues should be located. What Mr Grant had dubbed an 'extraordinary campaign', he called 'the working of democracy'."*

It is further reported:

*"But Mr Kolvin pointed out that this year's committee was entitled to come to an opposite conclusion to last year's committee even where nothing had changed: 'The courts have said that you can respond to a body of feeling in the locality, merely the fact that a number of people are concerned about this justifies refusal.'"*  
(emphasis added) [7]

Please note that the licence renewal was refused. As such, the Council is fully empowered to refuse the licence, particularly in view of the widespread breaches to conditions, recently reported in the local and national press and presented to the Council in April this year.

I look forward to hearing from you.

**Yours faithfully,**

### **References**

[1] Kolvin, P (2010) *Sex Licensing*, The Institute of Licensing p.87

[2] Patiniotis, J. & Standing, K. (2012) 'License to cause harm? Sex entertainment venues and women's sense of safety in inner city centres' in *Criminal Justice Matters*, 88:1, 10-12.

[3] Kolvin, P (2010) *Sex Licensing*, The Institute of Licensing p.87

[4] Sanders, T., & Hardy, K. (2011) 'The Regulatory Dance: Sexual Consumption in the Night Time Economy – Initial Findings' Leeds: University of Leeds

[5] Sheffield Telegraph: 'Why we want Sheffield to be a strip-club-free city' April 5th 2019  
<https://www.sheffieldtelegraph.co.uk/news/why-we-want-sheffield-to-be-a-strip-club-free-city-1-9695166>

[6] Kolvin, P op cit. p. 90

[7] Chester Live: 'Chester Platinum Lounge lap dancing club waits for licensing decision' July 18<sup>th</sup> 2015 <https://www.cheshire-live.co.uk/news/chester-cheshire-news/chester-platinum-lounge-lap-dancing-9610810>

0140 Pi

**Rhodes-Evans Emma (CEX)**

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**Subject:** FW: Spearmint Rhino License objection  
**Attachments:** Letter of Objection SR (DECSY) 2019.docx; ATT00001.htm

**From:**  
**Sent:** 23 May 2019 17:57  
**To:** licensingservice  
**Subject:** Spearmint Rhino License objection

Dear Colleagues,

Please find attached a letter of objection to the Spearmint Rhino License application.

Kind regards

0140 P2

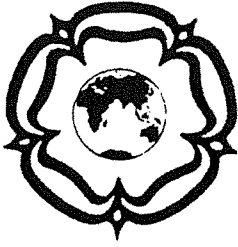
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# Development Education Centre

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(South Yorkshire)

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation: 1153377)



Scotia Works,  
Leadmill Road,  
Sheffield S1 4SE  
Tel: (0114) 241 2754  
Fax: (0114) 2412752  
email:  
Web: [www.decsy.org.uk](http://www.decsy.org.uk)

Licensing Service  
Block C, Staniforth Road Depot  
Staniforth Road  
Surrey Street  
S9 3HD  
[licensing@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@sheffield.gov.uk)

23<sup>rd</sup> May 2019

Dear Licensing Officers

## **Objection to Spearmint Rhino licence renewal**

I refer to the application for a Sexual Entertainment Venue licence by Spearmint Rhino ("the club"), 60 Brown Street, Sheffield, S1 2BS.

I believe that the Council should refuse the licence application under the Discretionary Grounds for Refusal of the current Sheffield City Council's 2018 Sex Establishment Policy ("the Policy") on the following grounds:

Discretionary Ground d)

### 1) Character of the relevant locality

(a) the fact that the premises are sited in a residential area;

The club backs onto student accommodation and the area is increasingly becoming more residential for students and non-students alike. A high number of young students (18+) who walk close the entrance to the SEV on their way back to their flats at Leadmill Point. A further large complex of student flats has recently been completed on Suffolk Road. Many of these students are away from home for the very first time, and a very high number are from overseas and some may be vulnerable to misunderstanding the behaviour and intentions of SEV customers, or being drawn into the club themselves. Education students from SHU also come down Charles Street, Grinders Hill, Shoreham Street to Leadmill Road to take part in our activities, and those of CRESST at Scotia Works. I contend that an SEV in the CIQ area is turning a vibrant part of the city with a cinema and music venue frequented by young people, many under the age of 18, into something of a red light area particularly attractive to SEV customers and dancers, prospective dancers and potentially prostitutes and their customers. This impacts the character of the area and the quality of the environment and also potentially contravenes Unitary Development Plan, 1, LR2 by undermining 'the vitality and viability of the evening economy of the City Centre.'

(b) the premises are sited near premises or areas which are sensitive because they are frequented by children, young persons or families, including but not limited to educational establishments, leisure facilities such as parks, libraries or swimming pools, markets and covered markets;

The area is actively frequented by young people, many below the age of 18. I am aware that children from 14-18 years from the neighbouring UTC on Shoreham Street also pass close by to the entrance of the venue. This potentially unsupervised children passing the SEV on a daily basis.

As tenants of Scotia Works, also known as the Centre for Learning, Development and Citizenship, my organisation, along with others in the building, is committed to the education and well-being of young people. To this end we, and others at Scotia like 'CRESST' and 'Sheena Amos Youth Trust' hold periodic or regular events for young people (with or without family members or teachers present). Although our entrance is on Leadmill Road, a couple of streets away from the entrance of the SEV, our young people are still likely to encounter the SEV and everything it implies about the role of women in society. I believe this is unacceptable.

The Leadmill club organises regular (100 per year) evening youth (14+) events. Here is another inevitable opportunity for under 18 year olds to encounter SEV customers. This may carry even higher risks than for the school children because the time in the evening when The Leadmill events take place is more likely to coincide with SEV customers leaving the venue (who may be intoxicated with alcohol and whose behaviour may be influenced by their very recent experience of sexual entertainment). However tightly Spearmint Rhino seek to manage their activities inside the venue, they cannot control their customers (or dancers) once they leave the premises. I would argue that allowing an SEV to continue in this area is likely to contravene section 4 of The Licensing Act 2003 with regard failure in 'The protection of children from harm'. Heightened awareness of issues of child sexual exploitation locally, following the Jay Report, is likely to make those responsible for the well-being of children and young people particularly sensitive to the potential behaviour of adults around an SEV. Whilst in some cases this might reduce the risk to children, it will certainly impact on people's quality of life.

(c) the premises are sited near places and or buildings of historical/cultural interest and other tourist attractions.

It is opposite the Showroom cinema, which is "one of Europe's largest independent cinemas paired with the longest-running creative business centre in the city. Housed in a converted 1930s car showroom, we're situated right next to the railway station in Sheffield's Cultural Industries Quarter." And further states that their "beautiful Art Deco environs are an ideal setting for the innovative businesses homed at the Workstation, and a perfect place for the determinedly independent and cutting edge cinema of the Showroom." The Showroom also hosts family events as well as many off the Shelf and Doc Fest events, the latter is internationally renowned.

It is also opposite the newly refurbished Site Gallery, Sheffield's international contemporary art space, specialising in moving image, new media and performance. Spearmint Rhino is not only centrally located in terms of proximity to a number of national and international events locations but it is also a direct access route, for example: Doc Fest; the children's media conference; Off the Shelf etc.

The Showroom and Leadmill Road are part of the Cultural Industries Quarter (CIQ) recognised by Core Strategy 17 as a key growth cluster for the creative and digital industries.

Core Strategy 20 recognises how much the two universities have invested in the public realm and have contributed to the knowledge economy, this is particularly the case for Sheffield Hallam University (SHU) in the CIQ area.

Core Strategy 54 aims to promote pedestrian routes and following the Heart of The City developments and the improved gateway into the city from the main railway station (five minutes

walk from the site of the SEV). As a result many visitors to the city will turn left at the top of the water cascades outside the station to visit the Showroom, Leadmill, other venues, and will encounter the SEV.

## 2) People's privacy

There are residential properties in the vicinity of the proposed SEV. In addition to the Unite Student accommodation at Leadmill Point, Columbia Works, which also faces Leadmill Road and Suffolk Road, has approximately 70 flats, Leadmill Court on Leadmill Street has over 80, Liberty Works and others add to this number. There a number of young families now living at Columbia Place and Leadmill Court. The nature of the activity at the SEV is particularly unsuited to the privacy of young families.

## 3) Employment, local economy

Although it is argued that the SEV supports employment, it is hard to see how it won't continue to affect the local economy, including other employment prospects elsewhere in the immediate locality. This could include UNITE and the owners of other accommodation or offices who lose tenants or profit and feel obliged to reduce staffing.

4) the layout, character or condition of the premises, vehicle, vessel or stall in respect of which the application is made.

The building, despite the removal of signage during its closed hours, is a blacked out sinister presence incongruous with its surroundings and clearly marked buildings. Removal of the signage is "a sticking plaster to a gaping wound" approach by Licensing. Regardless of whether the club's signage is visible in the day, it is widely known what the building is. Those who are not familiar with the building's use visiting SHU on open days and viewing properties in the vicinity during the day will be unable to make an informed decision about moving into an area with a sex establishment on the doorstep.

Furthermore, the building could be put to a different use serving a far more diverse and greater number of people thereby enriching the CIQ in a more inclusive and compatible way.

## 6) The Public Sector Equality Duty and Gender Equality

Sheffield City Council has "statutory obligations in relation to disability race and gender" (sic as the protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 is "sex" and not "gender") ensuring that these factors are not used to discriminate against anyone. I believe that sexual entertainment venues directly discriminate against women by normalising the sexual objectification of women which contributes to their sexualisation and objectification in other areas of society. SEVs are both cause and effect of inequality between the sexes.

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I am sure that I need not remind the Council of its duty under the Equality Act's requirement to pay due regard to foster good relations between men and women.

**Further grounds for refusal**

The Council is asked to note that in the last few years Leeds City Council successfully defended a refusal to renew two SEV licenses at judicial review:

*R (Bean Trading A Ltd) v Leeds City Council (2014)*

It was held that a council can "take a fresh look" despite no changes to the character of locality. The Council is also asked to note the following from Philip Kolvin regarding licence renewal:

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The case of *Thompson v Oxford City Council (2014)* was also supported at court of appeal, and the Council told they could "take a fresh look" at any application for renewal.

When Philip Kolvin represented residents objecting to the renewal of the strip club in Chester in 2015, it is reported that:

"Their representative Philip Kolvin QC told the meeting that 2009 legislation meant communities now had more say in where such sexual entertainment venues should be located. What Mr Grant had dubbed an 'extraordinary campaign', he called 'the working of democracy'."

It is further reported:

"But Mr Kolvin pointed out that this year's committee was entitled to come to an opposite conclusion to last year's committee even where nothing had changed: **'The courts have said that you can respond to a body of feeling in the locality, merely the fact that a number of people are concerned about this justifies refusal.'**" (emphasis added) [7]

Please note that the licence renewal was refused. As such, the Council is fully empowered to refuse the licence, particularly in view of the widespread breaches to conditions, recently reported in the local and national press and presented to the Council in April this year.

I look forward to hearing from you.

In conclusion, I would argue that no amount of further conditions or restrictions on the opening hours etc on the SEV would alter the fact that this SEV continues to affect the character and impact the quality of life of the area, primarily because of the number of under 18 year olds who use it on a daily basis.

Yours sincerely



Education Adviser

Development Education Centre (South Yorkshire)  
Centre for Learning, Development and Citizenship

### References

- [1] Kolvin, P (2010) *Sex Licensing*, The Institute of Licensing p.87
- [2] Patiniotis, J. & Standing, K. (2012) 'License to cause harm? Sex entertainment venues and women's sense of safety in inner city centres' in *Criminal Justice Matters*, 88:1, 10-12.
- [3] Kolvin, P (2010) *Sex Licensing*, The Institute of Licensing p.87
- [4] Sanders, T., & Hardy, K. (2011) 'The Regulatory Dance: Sexual Consumption in the Night Time Economy – Initial Findings' Leeds: University of Leeds
- [5] Sheffield Telegraph: 'Why we want Sheffield to be a strip-club-free city' April 5th 2019  
<https://www.sheffieldtelegraph.co.uk/news/why-we-want-sheffield-to-be-a-strip-club-free-city-1-9695166>
- [6] Kolvin, P op cit. p. 90
- [7] Chester Live: 'Chester Platinum Lounge lap dancing club waits for licensing decision' July 18<sup>th</sup> 2015  
<https://www.cheshire-live.co.uk/news/chester-cheshire-news/chester-platinum-lounge-lap-dancing-9610810>

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