

## The Dice Bar Evidence Bundle No 2

London Borough of Croydon Licensing Committee Hearing 15<sup>th</sup> April 2016

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### Statement of Roy Seda

I write in relation to the additional papers served by Sgt Emery on 11 April 2016.

19 March 2016

On Saturday 19 March 2016, one female became intoxicated and was escorted out of the premises. As confirmed in the police papers, 3 members of door staff accompanied the female, and the female had *three* of her friends with her. She was not by herself. They were taken to a safe area which is the bench opposite our bar, which is in view of the Security Staff. The friends called the female's father who was on his way to pick them up. Security were providing after care, when they heard 2 males talking very loudly in the smoking area. In order to prevent public nuisance they left the female with her friends in a safe place and ensured that arrangements were in place for the female to be taken home, and returned to the barriers, where they told the males to quieten down. The males did not listen and were rude to a member of security, who then asked them to leave, they were refusing to leave and the door staff were calmly ushering them to leave when they began scuffling with Security. The Head Doorman, Martyn kept a close eye on the female, who were soon being attended to by the police.

The two situations occurred at the exact same time, and the Security Staff did everything that they could in the circumstances.

If the female was unaccompanied and not with three friends, then security would have remained with her. The fact of the matter is that she was with three of her friends who were looking after her and arrangements had been made. The Security staff must consider covering their positions inside the venue, if a serious situation were to occur inside the venue and there were no Security Staff present we would be blamed for that as well. Every situation is judged on its own merits and appropriate action is taken.

Again it appears that Licensing are blaming us for doing what we are supposed to do.

I then note in the papers that at 0221, a male sneaks around our barriers to enter the venue. The police did not tell us this in person, and they did not use the Town Radio to pass this information to us, which is not a partnership approach by them. In any case, we identified this male and ejected him from the venue within minutes.

In order to prevent customers from entering via our smoking area, we have a double barrier system, anti-climb fences, and a moat in between the two barriers, two Security Staff standing near the smoking area to observe customers outside, and one standing inside. I have done everything that I can, short of building a castle wall.

At 0227 a male outside gives his friend a cigarette through the fencing. I am not sure why this is being said to be a problem?

All of the above is captured on CCTV.

### 27 March 2016

The police mention a female that exits the venue and falls to the floor. The female did not have her right boot on properly and tripped on the step and landed on her bottom. It is obvious to see this when watching the CCTV. She was in the presence of her friends, and Security staff assisted her, asked her if she was okay, she said that she was fine and told us to leave her alone.

CCTV also clearly shows that when the female purchased her alcohol at the bar she was not intoxicated, she was steady on her feet and dancing. We do not serve customers when they are drunk, and she was not drunk at the time of service.

Alcohol takes time to affect the body, and I note from the police papers that she was intoxicated outside of the venue at 0356am.

Sgt Emery is intent at throwing the kitchen sink at us. I believe that he is acting this way as I exposed his discrimination against the Jamaican community when he banned us from playing Bashment, what he described as "unacceptable forms of music".

It is interesting to note that the review of my premises licence was only instigated once I challenged the ban on Bashment music. This is an attack on me and my business.



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**Dice Bar**

36 High Street, Croydon, CRO 1YB

**Report and Observations.**

To assist Croydon's Licensing Sub-Committee.

**Prepared on behalf of the Premises Licence Holder by:**

**Geoffrey P Cooper**



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## Report

*From: Geoffrey P Cooper*

*Date: 09/04/2016*

*To: Mr R Seda*

*Ref: Dice Bar, Croydon - Review*

### Conclusions

1. I have visited Dice Bar on a number of occasions in 2015 and early 2016 at the request of the Premises Licence Holder and my reports, compliance audits and advice are attached to this report.
2. I believe that the management and staff at Dice Bar have achieved compliance with the Premises Licence conditions, and improvements to management systems and processes, staff training and static and dynamic security over that period.
3. To reduce the terminal hour for Licensable Activities to midnight at this venue, as suggested by the Metropolitan Police, would have the effect of closing the business as it is presently operated .



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4. I believe that the management and DPS at Dice Bar have been responsive to Police advice and have taken reasonable steps to support the Licensing Objectives in the Licensing Act 2003 in the operation of this Premises Licence in what is a difficult, town centre environment.

#### **Expertise**

1. I retired from the Metropolitan Police Service at the rank of Sergeant, with 30 years' service in December 2014. I received a certificate of exemplary Service from the Commissioner. During my career I was commended on five occasions.
2. I served with Sussex Police for the first twenty years and served the remainder with the Metropolitan Police.
3. I joined the Brighton Licensing Unit in 1996 and I was involved operationally in Police Licensing for the rest of my career serving at Hove and Shoreham, Worthing and then from 2006, as the Licensing Sergeant for the Metropolitan Police at Croydon until my retirement.
4. I have a wide experience of licensing in rural, city and suburban areas and as a licensing practitioner I have detailed knowledge of the Licensing Act 2003, the Gambling Act 2005 and related legislation and their application in a wide variety of licensed premises.



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5. I am a committee member of the Institute of Licensing (London Region), an Affiliate of the British Institute of Innkeepers and a qualified Crime Prevention Officer.
6. Since 2015, I have worked as an independent licensing consultant with Chapter Three Consulting Ltd. Our aim is to provide impartial, objective and constructive support to all parties in the licensing process.
7. I understand that I have a duty to provide an independent, expert assessment in this case and this report has been prepared in compliance with that duty. All matters relevant to the issues on which my expert evidence is given have been included in this report. I believe the facts I state in this report and the opinions I have expressed are correct to the best of my judgement.

**Dice Bar and Club, 36 High Street Croydon CR0 1YB.**

8. Dice Bar is located in High Street Croydon and occupies the basement (Twilight Lounge), ground floor and first floor (Fusion room) of the premises, which have been in use as licensed premises for many years. It has only one main entrance on the ground floor and tables and chairs are situated outside the premises in the day time and early evenings. When the club operation starts at 9pm at the weekends, the tables and chairs are replaced by a smoking area with high barriers and a space for queue management, and the assessment and searching of customers.





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9. The site benefits from:- a CCTV system with a number of HD and day/night cameras; Security Industry Authority door-supervisors with radio communication, deployed at the weekends and for club nights in the week; membership of the Safer Croydon Radio scheme and lighting which supports the use of CCTV recordings and provides a bright operating environment with the minimum of 'reduced light' areas. I am aware that Mr Seda attends the local Pub-watch meeting on behalf of Dice Bar.
  
10. The CCTV system is of good quality and provides for convenient downloading of CCTV images, when required.
  
11. Dice Bar is a family business with Mr Seda, his wife Farra and his father all being involved in the management and operation of the premises.

#### **Licensing Consultancy Time Line**

12. The following paragraphs set out my interactions with Dice Bar from January 2015 to date, as documented in my reports and compliance checklists, sent to Mr Seda, following each visit to the premises.



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13. January 2015 - I spoke to Mr Seda and visited the venue on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of January 2015, emphasising the need for daily management reports and compliance with the Premises Licence conditions. I attach my report, later submitted to Mr Seda by e mail. I am aware that Mr Seda submitted his response to Police concerns during January 2016 and that this included a revised 'DJ' contract.
14. February 2015 - I visited the venue on the 28<sup>th</sup> of February and outlined my advice in relation to compliance and management of the venue. I attach my report and CCTV assessment, later submitted to Mr Seda by e mail.
15. March 2015 - I devised an improved management report format, for use each night that the club was in operation and spoke to Mr Seda about electronic storage of these documents. I also devised a Premises Licence conditions checklist, suggesting that the manager at the site completed this weekly. I also suggested that I carried out monthly visit to check compliance using this checklist. I discussed changes to the security log for use at the front door of the venue with Mr Seda and supplied a suggested format to him for future use.
16. April 2015 - I was informed that the main trading area at Dice Bar was painted in a lighter colour in line with my advice, however I did not visit the venue.



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17. May 2015 – I visited the venue on the 30<sup>th</sup> of May 2015, I attach my report, later submitted to Mr Seda by e mail. I also attach the Premises Licence checklist completed on the 30<sup>th</sup> of May 2015. In this month the Police were addressing their concerns about the configuration of smoking areas outside all of the premises in Croydon Town Centre and I am aware that Mr Seda responded swiftly to a request from the police to reduce the size of the smoking area at Dice Bar, also submitting a plan to the police of the revised area and how it would be supervised.
18. June 2015 – I became aware that Mr Seda met with the police regarding incidents in the vicinity of the premises and that on the 27<sup>th</sup> of June 2015 a closure notice was issued. At this point I advised Mr Seda to consult with Mr S Burnett of Poppleston Allen solicitors.
19. July 2015 - I was made aware that a further meeting with the police took place in early July 2015. I visited Dice bar and met with Mr Seda and his wife and discussed the need for a fresh Operational Policy. I advised that they should seek the advice of Mr Burnett to complete this task
20. August 2015 – I visited Dice Bar on the 28<sup>th</sup> of August 2015 and later submitted an interim report (9<sup>th</sup> September 2015) and a full report with observations (14<sup>th</sup> September 2015), to Mr Seda by Email (attached). I also attach the Premises Licence checklist completed on the 28<sup>th</sup> of August 2015. I noted that the new Operational Policy had been introduced and suggested some training requirements arising from this new focus for the club



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operation. On this occasion I observed the operation of the venue until 1000hrs on the 29<sup>th</sup> of August 2016.

21. September 2015 – I visited Dice Bar on the 25<sup>th</sup> of September to discuss management and training at the venue. I attach my report, later submitted to Mr Seda by e mail. I also attach the Premises Licence checklist completed during that visit. I also provided a format for the display of a s57 notice inside the venue. I now considered compliance with the Premises Licence conditions was improving and I noted that ' first priority is being given to the new Operational Policy.'
22. October 2015 – I visited Dice Bar on the 5<sup>th</sup> of October 2015 and delivered training to the bar staff regarding the Operational Policy. In a 1 hour session I found the staff enthusiastic and responsive to the training and aspects of the policy document. The management team were also present. I visited Dice Bar on the 31<sup>st</sup> of October 2015 and I attach the Premises Licence checklist completed on that date. I characterised compliance with the Premises Licence conditions as 'good' on this visit. I also became aware that Mr Seda met with police to discuss the operation at Dice Bar during October 2015.
23. November 2015 – I discussed Mr Seda's reply to a letter sent to him by PC Garrod, following the Police meeting in October 2015. I visited the venue on the 20<sup>th</sup> of November 2015 and I attach my report, later submitted to Mr Seda by e mail. I also attach the Premises Licence checklist completed on that date – in my opinion records and organisation were improving.



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24. December 2015 – I visited the venue on the 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> of December 2016 and I attach my report, later submitted to Mr Seda by e mail. I also attach the Premises Licence checklists completed on those dates. I noted that a full compliance check could now be completed in forty minutes, whereas in the past substantially longer was needed to locate and examine the relevant documents. Organisation of the office area had also improved.
25. January 2016 – I did not visit the venue in January 2016, however I became aware that the Premises Licence Holder had obtained updated Fire and Health and Safety risk-assessments during this month.
26. February 2016 – I became aware that Police officers from the MPS central licensing unit has visited the site and checked compliance at the venue during February 2016. I visited Dice Bar on the 26<sup>th</sup> of February 2016 and I attach the Premises Licence checklist completed during this visit. On this occasion there was full compliance with the Premises Licence conditions.
27. March 2016 – I became aware that the Metropolitan Police submitted a Review application in relation to Dice bar and I have spoken to Mr Seda and Mr Burnett in relation to this matter.



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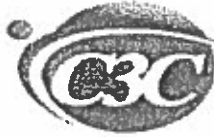
28. I am familiar with all the documentation relating to compliance at Dice Bar Croydon and I am aware that the training records, security logs checklists and management reports along with other records relating to the Premises Licence conditions, will be produced to the Licensing Sub-Committee by Mr Seda when the Review application is heard.

### **Opinion**

29. As described above, I can verify that the management team at Dice Bar have been in communication with the police on a regular basis and responsive to the concerns raised by police officers relating to the operation of the premises. I believe that there are functional systems and processes in place to ensure compliance with the Premises Licence conditions and the Operational Policy at the venue.

30. Considerable effort has been made by the Premises Licence Holder in relation to compliance at the venue over the period from January 2015 to date and this is evidenced by my reports and compliance checklists as well as the documented training session held with staff and management.

31. Both the implementation of the Operational Policy and the history of compliance with the Premises Licence conditions documented here demonstrate sustained support for the Prevention of Crime and Disorder and



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Public Safety as well as the remaining Licensing Objectives in the Licensing Act 2003.

32. Whilst the operators of Licensed Premises and the Responsible Authorities are important parties to the partnership envisaged by the Licensing Act 2003, residents and members of the community using licensed premises are also to be considered. The actions of individuals when they leave licensed premises and their reaction to the actions of the Authorities, particularly the police, in public places cannot reasonably be said to be under the control of any of the Premises Licence Holders in Croydon Town Centre.

33. I recommend that a CCTV operator is employed for club events to enable the dynamic use of the CCTV system in support of the management team.

34. Continued contact with the Responsible Authorities on a regular basis, with the opportunity to discuss local problems and solutions, would also be an advantage.

**G. P. Cooper**





## Statement of Steven Baverstock

5<sup>th</sup> April 2016

My name is Steven Baverstock, I am a Personal Licence holder and the Assistant Manager of Dice Bar. I have been the Assistant Manager of Dice Bar for nearly 3 years.

I have worked in Croydon High Street for 8 years, and I was born and raised in Croydon which has given me a good knowledge of the locals and frequent visitors to the Croydon night time economy.

I first started working at Reflex on 4 February 2010. I took my Personal Licence course six months later. I then became a Duty Manager for Reflex where I was in charge of the day to day running of the business. Under Stonegate I was sent on various Team Leader and Management courses, included fire awareness, drugs awareness, age verification and A USP (award in underage sales prevention).

For Stonegate I also worked at The Slug and Lettuce, Croydon, and The Goose on the Market during the weekdays.

During my employment at Reflex, the majority of work was done by Head Office: you just had to click on a button on the computer. All the paper work was completed by management at the end of the night. Any police enquiries were always dealt with by Management and the Head Doorman. There were many incidents in the premises but due to the venue having so many fire exits, a lot of ejections were always dealt with this way to avoid detection by the police. This is a common practice in nightclubs across the country. At Dice every ejection has been carried out from the front of the building.

I started work at Rehab on 10 September 2012, now known as SLVR, and I was there for 18 months. I was the Assistant Manager under Janine, however, we did not always see eye to eye due to being trained differently.

After Rehab changed to SLVR, I did not want to stay there due to the way the establishment was run.

The paper work was not in order and Security files were everywhere. It became my duty and another member of bar staff's duty to put all Security paperwork into order. There were no staff files either. There was always intoxication however the managers above me did not do anything about it, and I felt like I was fighting a losing battle.

I had an interview with Roy Seda and was hired as the Assistant Manager of Dice Bar.

I have been now working at Dice for 3 years and I am currently completing my Level 3 Management course under the venues Personal Development Plan. I have passed Level 1 and Level 2 with flying colours. There are three Team Leaders who are also on the course and they too have completed various levels as well as NVQs in Hospitality Management, all of which have been paid for by Dice Bar. I pass on my knowledge and experience, onto the bar staff, and train the Team Leaders on how to run the establishment properly.

Beyond my role running the day to day business, I work alongside and closely with Roy Seda. We have strict systems, processes, and procedures in place to help with the running of the venue. Management meetings occur frequently throughout the week, and formal meetings occur every Tuesday as the business is closed on Mondays. There is a good relationship between the managers where I feel that I can talk freely, we put plans in place and action them. This is in stark comparison to

when I worked at Rehab where there was a breakdown in communication.

At Dice we have a number of check lists which must be completed every day to ensure that the business is running properly, and check lists ensure that we are compliant with our premises licence conditions and the licensing objectives, such as check lists for ensuring that glassware is not used after 9pm and instead only polycarbonate glasses, noise levels are monitored every hour during times of Regulated Entertainment to prevent Public Nuisance, toilets are frequently checked, fire exits are fire alarms are checked for Public Safety, and during the day to day running of the business we also of course protect children from harm.

I also manage and control the change from day to night procedures, this includes the following:

- Barriers being placed outside, and cable tied together for security.
- The ID Scanner is placed outside, and Security Paperwork and Security Briefing check lists and ready for when Security Staff arrive.
- Radios are charged and tested.
- A check of the CCTV to ensure that it is functioning.
- Weekly Premises Licence Check Lists to ensure we are compliant with our Premises Licence.

There is also a checklist to help all staff so that they are on top of it all and ensure that nothing has been missed.

At night my responsibility is on the front door, meeting and greeting guests, and constantly watching all customers in the queue. I have an extensive knowledge of the locals having worked and lived in Croydon for so many years. I can identify people that went to the same School in Croydon as I did, and who visited the other clubs where I worked in Croydon, some

good, and some bad who we do not let into the venue. I can identify locals that live in my area, and because I know so many people I am able to find out information through the grapevine which assists me in my role as Assistant Manager.

I keep a close eye on customers and security during the entire shift. Customers have to pass and go through our four step procedure on arrival. (1) Selecting customers based on their attitude, dress, appearance, identification (2) Scanning customers onto the ID Scanner (3) Thorough searching by SIA Security (4) Then the manager at the door till, Farrah.

Before entering the venue all customers must go through four members of security and two managers and at any point, any of the managers and any members of Security can object to the person entering the venue. Should anyone of the Security or the Management have an objection to the person entering, the person is not permitted to enter. Our working policy/practice is that when there is such an occurrence, we respect the decision of whoever has made it, we don't disagree with one another or try to change their mind. Working on the front door, even if a person has their ID, is dressed appropriately etc you still have to use your gut instinct, listen to your conscience, your "spider-senses" if you will. Roy encourages this on the front door, and also encourages the bar staff to go with their gut instinct as more often than not the survival instinct is right.

Security Staff and Management communicate constantly throughout the night and we work closely together as one unit.

Every 15-20mins I do a walk around of the venue of all floors if open, toilets and serving areas. I try to talk to one member of staff on each location to see if they need anything or would like anything, and I ask the Bartenders and Security Staff if everything is okay, are there any persons of concern, any persons reaching a point where we have to stop service. The communication inside of the Dice Bar is the best I have ever

seen in any venue that I have worked in.

At 1.30 am I then go inside and I will remain on the floor and still do my routine checks. I am being vigilant at all times by watching customers and talking to them and constantly looking around.

All bar staff are provided with radios and even the glass collector has one, just in case he sees something he can radio through to us. The staff are amazing with the communication and with their roles and responsibilities.

At the end of the night I remain on the front door from approximately 2.30am-3:30am to watch customers leave the venue. We always close-off the smoking area 30 minutes before we close and we stop serving 30 minutes before we close. We then disperse our guests down as far as required where they can get food and we also offer taxi service which is available in the venue through a free phone which is linked to the mini cab office. I would say our dispersal is the best in town as NO other venue is doing anything close to what we do.

Incidents at Dice Bar are not frequent, we have a number of regular customers that are well behaved, and if we see new customer behaving in a fashion that we don't like we ban them from our venue. Good customers are rewarded with a Membership Card so that they return.

Incidents do unfortunately occur in any Licensed Premises. At Dice I can say that when incidents arise they are properly managed.

At the end of the night, Roy and I have a debrief with the Security Team, as well as a debrief with Bar Staff. We discuss any positives and negatives, and put plans of action in place for the next shift.

We have had many wonderful nights at Dice Bar that go without a single incident occurring.

Dice Bar is a home to many of the locals, we provide fun filled entertainment and safety to all our patrons.

Police Licensing have been absolutely horrible to Roy and Farrah, who are good honest people that are trying to make an honest living, and work extremely hard at running the business as professionally as I have ever seen.

Should the committee decided to curtail the operating hours, the business would not survive, other operators such as Bad Apple and SLVR are opening until 4am and customers are already going to those venues because of the late closing times. Visitors to Croydon's nightclubs leave their houses at 11:30pm, the streets are practically empty before then and the police know this. Asking the committee for Dice to close at midnight is a ploy to close the business down.

Footfall has dramatically decreased largely to the way the police are heavy handedly patrolling the High Street. The common consensus amongst customers and Licensed Premises Operators is that there is an agenda to close down the night time economy. They have picked on Roy , and have just about everyone else in their sights.

## STATEMENT OF MARK PICKERING

This is a report for the Bar "Dice" establishment in Croydon.

I, Mark Pickering am employed by Abal security, official title Business Development Director, who has been brought in to develop the business plus develop the service Abal offer. I have 26 years' experience in the security industry.

Abal have been trading for 20 years; we currently manage 180 venues, bars, clubs and public houses. We are an ACS registered company and have a score of 99 (high score).

I understand Dice is under review with their licence.

Dice is multicultural and currently a popular venue in Croydon. Abal has built and continues to build the security team around the venue's requirements.

We have the use of manned CCTV in operation, and a strong front door presence. We liaise with the Dice staff and have a " picker " ( person who selects ). This person works at the front door with the Head Doorman, and the Assistant Manager. We also have a designated person on the scanner. We search all of the males, instructing them to empty out their pockets. They are scanned with a hand held metal detector, and then searched by hand. 1 in 5 females who enter the premises are searched, and every female's hand bag is thoroughly searched. In addition to the searches, the picker and the scanner, we test for levels of intoxication by using a breathalyzer.

Every person entering the venue must produce a valid form of identification, which includes and is limited to Passport, Driving License, PASS identification. So there is a strong ethos concerning people entering the establishment, especially towards the safety of the patrons. The philosophy embedded is to have a great time and experience, whilst being SAFE.

I have evaluated the security arrangements at the front door and consider that the systems, processes and procedures in place are excellent. There is nothing more that can be done in this respect.

Dice has had a few incidents, and where alcohol is served there can always be the potential for problems, which unfortunately is unavoidable at times.

What we provide as a security company is a safety net for when issues occur, how we handle them and record them. We consider this on a regular basis and look for any areas of improvement, and implement training for all our door staff.

The question that will always be asked: " Is the venue adequately staffed " ? Roy ( venue owner ) continually liaises with myself and has employed the services of an independent security adviser who I believe used to work for the local police as the licensing officer ( Geoff Cooper ). Based on Geoff's findings and requests, Roy has worked tirelessly to adhere to these requests and continues to do so. I believe this shows his commitment to running his business properly and responsibly.

At Abal we have a process of continual professional development, so we approach our ongoing training catering again specifically for the venue. We have already carried out two professional development courses at Dice with the core team. We do employ a softer approach as we genuinely care for the patrons and do not inflame situations when they do arise. We assess continually and communicate with each other. We attempt to be pro active, to avoid problems arising in the first place, and not so much re active.

There is an inherent problem in Croydon itself, so much so it is deemed necessary for the police to be lined up outside the clubs presumably to have a show of force, so we know that there are problems. There are incidents in all venues in Croydon.

It becomes extremely difficult when we have all these preventative measures in place, especially for intoxication, where one minute everything is fine the next they have popped a pill ( drugs ) and 20 minutes later we have a raging bull on our hands. It is then essential how we handle the problem, and we handle the problems faced professionally. We cannot be held solely responsible for the actions of others, we can but create a safe environment from which people can come and enjoy themselves. The consequence has to be placed upon the person causing the trouble and not on the venue, as we are all responsible for our actions. Every incident should be viewed and assessed, used as feedback, and measures put in place so changes are made.



Training is key, working together and finding solutions are key. This way we are moving forward.

I personally enjoy working with Roy: he has an open mind and is certainly not adverse to change, he strives to protect his business whilst employing a flexible mindset. If we identify an area of improvement, such as: "Let's get better radios", or: "Let's get another doorman to be in a certain position", Roy will say "Yes".

Croydon needs businesses; it needs diversity especially with the frustration today's society brings. People need a release, and need to let their hair down so to speak, so tensions do not overflow, and Dice offers this. The vast majority of customers at Dice do behave.



## STATEMENT OF MARTYN BARRETT

I, Martyn Barrett have work at Dice Bar Croydon for over a year as the Head Doorman through Abal Security.

I have been a Doorman for over 15 years. Dice Bar has a relaxed and good atmosphere, and in my experience and opinion Dice Bar is run very well in a way that the management take it very seriously in fulfilling all the Licensing Objectives, and to run the business in accordance with the Premises Licence.

The security is one of the best teams in Croydon, and work very well with management. The members of Security like working at Dice, because of the team ethos that Roy, Geoff Cooper, and I have built. Such team effort is not to be found on some other doors.

I feel that over the last year Dice has been targeted by police making it very hard to run a business. They stand right outside the venue which makes customers not want to come in.

Dice has a Door Policy which customers have to pass, but when we refuse entry the police are asking: "Why are you not letting them in?", which sometimes can be quite off-putting for door staff on the front door. The door team and I have always assisted the police in every manner. We have tried to build a good partnership with the police, but this has been to no avail as they are trying to close Dice Bar.

On 26/2/16, Inspector Mockett wanted to come into Dice with a drug detecting sniffer dog. He came up to the front door and said: "I am coming in with the dog", in a very rude way. I asked whether it would be okay for me just to get management first, but his words were: "Get them if you want, but I am coming in anyway", which to me showed that he was using his power to bully people which is not right. The Inspector came in with 10 police officers, and a police dog, which alarmed customers, and the dog was taken over to each customer. Two girls after being checked just left the venue.

Inspector McGarry doesn't even stop at the front door, he just walks in and pushes past the door team. This does not help relations with the Police and Security Staff.

Other times when we have walked people out of the venue the police are standing right outside waiting for them. The people that we are walking out are okay with us, but then the police want to know what they did wrong, and start putting pressure on the customers to get a reaction from them, so they can either disperse them or arrest them for no reason.

I recall another time when Licensing Police closed Dice Bar, saying that a knife had been inside the venue. No knife has ever been inside the venue. Dice has a very tough policy on the front door and later we found out the male did not have a knife when he was arrested by police on Surrey Street hours after we had closed. I don't see why Dice is held responsible for that.

We are the only venue in Croydon that goes out of our way to assist the police with the dispersal of customers at the end of the night. Once we see that everything is fine we return to our venue. What a customer may do after we have returned to our venue, from a Security point of view, we cannot control as we are not there. Inside of Dice there is more than enough Security Staff who are vigilant and handle any situations that arise to the highest degree of professionalism.

At Dice Bar we never walk anyone out the back door, every one goes out the front door. This shows that we don't hide anything from the police, unlike some other venues that do walk people out the back. We do everything by the book, and then we are penalised for it.

Since Dice Bar has been issued with a review of the licence, the police have completely stopped standing outside of the venue.

I have noted that the Bar Staff do practise the responsible service of alcohol: they do not serve customers who become drunk.

The management has worked very hard with the police over the last year and have done everything in their power to do everything properly. I have worked on many doors all across London and the North East and I have never seen management work as hard as I have with Dice Bar Management.

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A variation to the licensing hours would be a great shame to Croydon, as Dice is a very popular venue for people from all across the board.



Exclusive: Questions over police accounts of knife incident that led to Croydon club closure

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Exclusive: Questions over police accounts of knife incident that led to Croydon club closure

By Gareth\_Davies ([http://www.croydonadvertiser.co.uk/people/Gareth\\_Davies/profile.html](http://www.croydonadvertiser.co.uk/people/Gareth_Davies/profile.html)) | Posted: April 13, 2016

A. ▶  
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B.  
**JSP I can be seen leaving a crowd of people whilst**  
**his sleeve. You cannot see what he is concealing on his**  
**of the footage believes that it may have been a knife but**  
**the scene and wasn't found at the time of his arrest either.**  
**Footage.**

Chief Inspector Peter McGarry said the CCTV showed man had 'large knife' (a) but a detective later said a knife could not be seen (b)

Comments (1)

SERIOUS discrepancies with the evidence police used to close a nightclub have been uncovered by the Advertiser.

Police used emergency powers to temporarily shut Dice Bar, in Croydon High Street, last June after linking the venue to a serious incident they said involved a knife.



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Chief Inspector Peter McGarry and Sgt Michael Emery repeatedly told owner Roy Seda that a customer had been spotted on camera with the weapon in a nearby street and, were it not for the intervention of two other officers, someone would have been stabbed.

As a result, they issued Dice Bar with a closure notice under antisocial behaviour legislation, which shut the venue for 24 hours on June 27, costing Mr Seda tens of thousands of pounds.

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In his formal statement, Chief Insp McGarry, part of Croydon Police's senior leadership team, said the man had a "large knife" and that CCTV footage showed him "pulling the knife from the sleeve of his right arm".

But official police documents reveal that a detective later reviewed the footage and found it did not show the man had a knife.

The Metropolitan Police has applied to review Dice Bar's licence and the incident is a key part of its case, which is due to be heard by the council's licensing committee on Friday. The club made national headlines in March when the Advertiser revealed it had been told by Sgt Emery not to play a form of Jamaican music because it was "unacceptable" in Croydon (<http://www.croydonadvertiser.co.uk/Exclusive-Police-Croydon-accused-racial-profiling/story-28898260-detail/story.html>).

The police have submitted a 346-page dossier of evidence, published on Croydon Council's website, to support its assertion that the club's licence should be amended so it closes at midnight.

Police allege officers, customers and members of the public are regularly being put at risk of harm because Mr Seda has "systematically failed to promote the licensing objectives", a claim he denies.



Police claim Dice Bar is the main drain on their resources

But the documents submitted to the committee, including formal witness statements and official reports from CRIS, the police's Crime Reporting Information System, inadvertently raise questions about the evidence given by two officers at the heart of the Met's application.

At around 3am on June 21, 2015, police were alerted to an argument between a group of men on Surrey Street, around the corner from Dice Bar. While making their way to the scene, officers PC Salmon and PC Kleis spotted two men walking away from the crowd.

After following the men, PC Kleis asked one of them to stop. He refused so the officer grabbed hold of his arm to prevent him from walking away. There was a scuffle and PC Kleis and the man fell to the floor. PC Salmon ran to assist her colleague and was bitten on her wrist, requiring hospital treatment. The man was then arrested on suspicion of assaulting the officers.



Police told Mr Seda the suspect had earlier been spotted in the smoking area of the Dice Bar (Mr Seda checked the club's CCTV footage and found he had left the venue without incident at about 2am). Most seriously, they said he had a knife.

Records show that, over the days that followed, Chief Insp McGarry, head of Croydon's neighbourhood policing teams, and Sgt Emery, the borough's licensing officer, repeatedly told Mr Seda a stabbing had been narrowly avoided and that, as a result, his club would be temporarily shut, using emergency powers, to prevent further disorder the following weekend.

Minutes from a meeting at Croydon police station on June 22 show that Chief Insp McGarry told Mr Seda that CCTV footage showed a "group of males on the corner of Surrey Street involved in a confrontation" and that "as two police officer [sic] walked around the corner approaching the group one of the males is seen walking away from the crowd hiding a large knife.

"Mr McGarry explains that had it not of been [sic] for his officers intervention there would have been a stabbing involving males that he had previously seen in his venue that evening."

A day later, Sgt Emery sent Mr Seda a letter in which he said a "male walks off in company with another unidentified man who can be seen to be carrying a knife. But for the timely intervention of two uniformed police officers I am quite sure that a stabbing would have taken place."

Identified in Surrey Street being involved in further disorder. This same male walks off in company with another unidentified male who can be seen to be carrying a knife. But for the timely intervention of two uniformed police officers I am quite sure that a stabbing would have taken place.

Sgt Emery's letter to Mr Seda on June 23

Mr Seda met with the two officers again on June 25 and minutes show he was told by Sgt Emery "there was a male in the premises" who was "involved in an incident with a knife" and who "later went on to bite a police officer causing GBH this is enough to take the premises to review."

On July 1 - four days after the closure notice had been issued - Chief Insp McGarry gave a formal statement in which he said that Sgt Emery had shown him the CCTV and the man "had a large knife in his possession" and that "footage shows him pulling the knife from the sleeve of his right arm".

He added: "On viewing the CCTV footage it was clear to me that if two police officers had not happen [sic] to have walked into this group of males there was a strong possibility that a stabbing would have occurred."

8 On Monday 29th June 2015 Ps Emery showed me CCTV footage of the incident in Surrey Street highlighting the fact that one of the males who walks out of the crowd on approach of police and had been a DICE customer had a large knife in his possession. The CCTV footage shows him pulling the knife from the sleeve of his right arm. The male in question was stopped by officers approximately ten minutes after the Surrey Street incident for an unrelated matter. As they attempted to arrest him he bit one of the officers on the hand causing an injury which required hospital treatment. On viewing the CCTV footage it was clear to me that if two police officers had not happen to have walked into this group of males there was a strong possibility that a stabbing would have occurred.

In his witness statement Chief Inspector Peter McGarry said the CCTV showed the knife

It is a criminal offence to state something you know or suspect to be false in a witness statement.

CRIS reports about the incident, included in the bundle of evidence, appear to contradict the two officers' claims. Firstly, the man was walking away from the confrontation in Surrey Street when approached by the two officers so, if he had a knife, he had not used it.

Secondly, the officers who arrested him made no mention of the "large" weapon in their official accounts of what had happened. No knife was found when he was searched or recovered from the scene.

Significantly, the CCTV footage from Surrey Street was later viewed by Detective Constable Saqib Ali - leading the investigation into the assaults - who said it showed the man was "fidgeting or possibly putting something up his sleeve" but that "you cannot see what he is concealing on his person".

TDC 215913 S Ali

I have viewed the CCTV and at 03:07 hrs (SUSP) can be seen leaving a crowd of people whilst fidgeting or possibly putting something up his sleeve. You cannot see what he is concealing on his person. The officer who has made me aware of the footage believes that it may have been a knife but this has not been recovered from (SUSP) at the scene and wasn't found at the time of his arrest either. The assault on police is not covered by the footage.

A detective said the CCTV did not show what the man may have been concealing

Despite the knife being central to the closure notice, the first reference to the footage in the published CRIS reports is on July 8 - more than two weeks after the incident in question and 11 days after the notice had been issued.

Det Con Ali wrote: "CCTV has been located from Surrey Street which shows the suspect above involved in an incident 11 mins before his arrest. He is seen walking away from the scene hiding a knife. PC Zoe Garrod [a member of the licensing team] has emailed me with the details of the CCTV and I will arrange collection with her."

On July 24 - more than two weeks later - Det Con Ali updated the report to say he was in possession of the recording.

Then, on July 30, Det Con Ali posted an update having viewed the footage. His interpretation is markedly different from what Mr Seda has been told by Chief Insp McGarry and Sgt Emery.

"I have viewed the CCTV and at 3.07am [the suspect] can be seen leaving a crowd of people whilst fidgeting or possibly putting something up his sleeve. You cannot see what he is concealing on his person.

"The officer who has made me aware of the footage believes it may have been a knife but this has not been recovered [from the suspect] at the scene and wasn't found at the time of his arrest either."

The man was later charged with two counts of assault on a police officer but was at no stage arrested, or it would appear from the evidence published this week even questioned, on suspicion of possessing a knife.

Despite this, police have included the supposed weapon in its case against the Dice Bar.

In his written statement alongside the licensing review application, Sgt Emery says: "CCTV of this incident shows that two males walk off together who were both customers in the DICE Bar that evening. As they walk away from the group one of the males is seen to hide what we believe to be a knife in his jumper sleeve".

Mr Seda said: "The issues raised by the Advertiser are hugely concerning and I will be raising them at the licensing hearing. Until then it would not be appropriate for me to comment further."

Borough Commander Andy Tarrant said: "It would be inappropriate for me to comment pending the licensing hearing on Friday, as this is the forum where evidence must be considered in its right and proper context."

Questions about police conduct surrounding the incident that led to the closure of Dice Bar were first raised by the Advertiser in March.

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The documents published this week show the police's case related to the incident in Surrey Street and the allegation that a man, who had been at Dice Bar earlier in the evening, had a knife.

A week after the club was closed, Mark Watson, cabinet member for safety and justice, told Mr Seda had given the council a different version of what had happened.

Mr Seda said: "I explained what we had been told and his face dropped. He said that wasn't what the police had told the council.

"The information they were given was that police had to enter the venue to remove a man who had a machete. I couldn't understand it."

When asked about the conversation, Cllr Watson said last month (<http://www.croydonadvertiser.co.uk/Bashment-ban-bar-Croydon-Police-trying-business/story-28904488-detail/story.html>): "I was originally told there was an incident in involving a knife in the Dice Bar. I got that through [council] officers here who I believe had spoken to the police."

This week, Cllr Watson told the Advertiser he had been passed the information by Andy Opie, the council's director of safety. Cllr Watson declined to comment on the new issues raised by the Advertiser until after the licensing review.

#### Closure notice was 'unlawful'

THE emergency closure of Dice Bar by the police last year appears to have been unlawful.

The nightclub was served with a closure notice, which gives police the power to shut a premises for up to 48 hours, after the incident in Surrey Street.

Closure notices are issued under the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014 (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/12/contents/enacted>), which states that whenever such a notice is issued an application must be made to a magistrates' court (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/12/section/80/enacted>) for a closure order within 48 hours, unless the notice has been cancelled.

But details of the court, date and time are missing from the closure notice served on Dice Bar (<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/2800597-Dice-Bar-closure-notice.html>) by Chief Inspector Peter McGarry.

Instead it reads: "To be heard at N/A Court on N/A at N/A hours, when evidence for the issue of a Closure Order will be considered."

An application for a Closure Order will be made under Part 4, Chapter 3, section 80 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 for the closure of the Premises specified above.

To be heard at N/A Court on N/A at N/A hours, when evidence for the issue of a Closure Order will be considered.

The closure notice did not include details of the required court hearing

At Friday's licensing review Mr Seda is expected to make the legality of the closure notice a key part of his response to the allegations levelled at him by the police.

"The police did not issue a cancellation notice for the closure notice and neither did they apply to the magistrates' court within 48 hours, in accordance with the Act," he said.

"In other words they just closed me down, and that was the end of it. I have since been told that this was an unlawful action by the police and they had no power to do it"

Mr Seda, a former solicitor and special constable, lost an estimated £50,000 as a result of the closure notice.

He claims a police officer later told him the closure was a "shot across the bow".

"It was them using their power to demonstrate they could close us down at any time," he said.

The closure notice is not among the 346 pages of evidence submitted to the council's licensing

committee ahead of the review.