

**From:** Overton Adrian: H&F <Adrian.Overton@lbhf.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 10 June 2025 14:38

**To:** Tucker Matt: H&F <Matt.Tucker@lbhf.gov.uk>

**Cc:** Simms Fabien: H&F <Fabien.Simms@lbhf.gov.uk>

**Subject:** Secrets - Licensing Authority Representation

**Importance:** High

Dear Matt,

Please find attached a full representation from the Licensing Authority in relation to the current renewal application for Secrets, 62 Glenthorne Road, W6 OLR

I would be grateful if this could be sent to committee services as a supplementary agenda item for the hearing tomorrow evening.

Kind regards

Adrian

**Adrian Overton**

Licensing Team Manager

Licensing

Place Department

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## LICENSING CONSULTATION INTERNAL MEMO

To : **Matt Tucker**

From : **Adrian Overton**

Date : **9<sup>th</sup> June 2025**

Premises : **Secrets, 62 Glenthorne Road, W6 OLR**

CAPS Ref : **2025/00386/SEV**

Application : **Sex Establishment Licence Renewal**

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I am the Licensing Team Manager for the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. I am also able to act as the responsible authority for the Licensing Authority of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham.

I have considered the above application and wish to make a representation on the basis of past enforcement history at this premises.

### **The Application**

On the 14<sup>th</sup> March 2025 a renewal application for a sexual entertainment venue licence was submitted by Secrets Hammersmith Ltd, for the premises known as Secrets Hammersmith, 62 Glenthorne Road, London, W6 OLR.

The following licensable activities were applied for:

### **Sexual Entertainment**

- Monday to Friday 21:00 to 04:00
- Saturday 18:00 to 04:00
- Sunday 18:00 to 00:00

### **Supporting Information - Enforcement Summary**

In January 2025 the Licensing Team were made aware of an anonymous complaint in relation to inappropriate practices at the premises. This complaint made allegations that the manager of the premises was selling drugs and that various licensing breaches were taking place. It was also alleged that the performers were engaging in sexual activity with customers, and that the management team at the premises were complicit in this activity.

The complainant could not be reached using the contact details they provided to

explore these concerns further, and as such a full licensing inspection of the premises was arranged.

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2025 a full licensing inspection took place at the premises with Caterina Gaimmarresi Castelan (the Council's VAWG lead). During the visit Ms Gaimmarresi spent time speaking to the performers at the venue (in the absence of the management team) and asked for their thoughts on their employment at the premises. In summary, the overall response from the performers was positive and seemed to show that they were happy to work there. An email from Ms Gaimmarresi, which has been attached to this representation, outlines her thoughts on the inspection of the premises.

During this inspection a breach of condition 28 was identified as the premises confirmed that they were using two external display cabinets, rather than one, as permitted by the condition. This was raised with the management team of the premises who explained that this was an oversight, and that they were happy to remove one of the display cabinets.

As part of the consultation period for the current renewal application a video has been provided by a local resident which shows a fight outside the premises in the early hours of the 6<sup>th</sup> November 2024. During this incident members of staff from Secrets can be seen trying to usher a group of customers away from the premises when a fight breaks out. The Police licensing team have confirmed that this incident was reported to them, and that it has been recorded as an assault on two members of staff members at the premises.

A further anonymous complaint was received by the Licensing Authority on the 17<sup>th</sup> May 2025. The team contacted the complainant, asking for more information on the allegations, and received a further follow up response to this complaint on the 7<sup>th</sup> June 2025. The complainant has suggested that they would be able to provide more information to substantiate their concerns, if a meeting could be arranged. Given the short timescale between receipt this information and the date of the renewal hearing, the Licensing Authority have currently been unable to investigate this matter.

## **Conclusion**

Whilst we appreciate the residents' concerns in relation to the locality of the premises, we are aware that the Council's current sex establishment policy allows for one sex establishment licence in this area. We are also mindful that the premises has been operating for over 20 years in this location, without any major concerns.

In terms of its day-to-day operation, this premises appears to be operating lawfully, and broadly in accordance with its licence (apart from a breach of condition 28). There also appears to be no obvious concerns from a welfare perspective for the performers at the venue, as confirmed by Ms Gaimmarresi's comments.

However, it is obvious from the representations made by local residents that the premises is causing some level of disturbance. This has been clearly evidenced in a video shared with the committee which shows a fight outside the premises. This footage highlights obvious management failings, in terms of how staff dealt with the incident in November 2024, by involving themselves in the altercation, rather than retreating into the safety of the premises. We have however noted that these failings

have been acknowledged by the licence holder, and directly addressed by terminating the employment of one member of staff.

The anonymous complaints recently received by the licensing team are also of concern, however at this stage the licensing authority has been unable to establish if there is any substance to the most recent complaint received in May 2025, which still requires investigation.

Given this outstanding investigation, the Licensing Authority is currently unable to reach a conclusion on the suitability of this premises to hold a sexual entertainment venue licence.

We would therefore respectfully suggest that the hearing scheduled for this premises is adjourned to a later date, whilst the latest complaint is fully investigated.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Overton', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**Adrian Overton**  
**Licensing Team Manager**  
**London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham**

Hi Adrian,

Please see below my comments/observations following our visit to Secrets:

- I attended Secrets for a joint welfare and licensing visit on the evening of Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2015
- I carried out the welfare element of the visit, in my capacity as the Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Programmes and Partnerships Lead at H&F Council
- I spoke with the women employed as dancers/entertainers at Secrets independently, away from other members of staff. The management were welcoming of this and did not seem to have any issues with the women being spoken to without them.
- The women appeared willing and comfortable to speak to me, and some expressed gratitude for the Local Authority taking the time to check in on their welfare and listen to their experiences
- I did not receive any concerning reports or disclosures of misconduct, nor anything which would indicate that any of the women were being exploited or encouraged/coerced to do anything against their will or in contradiction of the license conditions
- When I explicitly referenced the complaint received by the Council (which made reference to inappropriate conduct such as drug dealing, soliciting, and touching/fingering), multiple women stated that they did not believe it to be true, and had never witnessed or experienced anything as described in the complaint
- Instead, many women said they had the opposite experience and that staff were strict regarding the rules on no touching and were very supportive of the women and had a zero tolerance policy on this
- Many of the women stated that Secrets was the best and safest adult entertainment club that they have ever worked for, with many saying that they travel from across London despite having closer clubs where they could work
- Many of the women expressed appreciation for the management of the establishment in their flexibility, understanding, and support for their employees and noted that this work gave them the flexibility and economic compensation they needed in their lives as mothers, students, etc
- It's important to note that the nature of work in the sex industry is complex, and there are a number of reasons why some women would feel the need to paint a particular picture of their employment conditions. However, in my personal opinion, I did not observe anything to indicate that the experiences and views shared by the women were not genuine and given freely.
- I recommend the continuation of welfare visits with the licensing team to monitor the situation and encourage women to feel comfortable to disclose any issues, should they arise.

Best wishes,  
Caterina

**Caterina Giammarresi Castelán (she/her)**

VAWG Programmes and Partnerships Lead

Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Team  
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