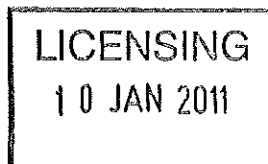


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The Licensing Officer
Northampton Borough Council
Borough Solicitors Division
The Guildhall
St Giles Square
Northampton
NN1 1DE



Dear Madam or Sir

I am writing to OBJECT to the application for a Sexual Entertainment Venue Licence for the Urban Tiger Lap Dancing Club, Wellingborough Road, Northampton, NN1 4AA.

My objections are on the following grounds:

1. Lap dancing clubs encourage their customers, and wider society to see women as sex objects. They reinforce the idea that women are always sexually available, as long as you've got a bit of cash to spare. This has to be seen in the wider context of a society in which men still dominate the positions of power and where violence against women is endemic, with 1 in 4 women facing rape in her lifetime and 1 in 2 women facing sexual harassment, stalking or domestic violence. Those working with female victims of male violence believe that the mainstreaming of the sex industries legitimises the attitudes that ultimately lead to violence against women.
2. The existence of lap dancing clubs effectively creates 'no-go' areas where women feel unsafe walking past the clubs because of the graphic advertising, and for fear of bumping into the punters from the club and being subjected to harassment and intimidation.
3. Lap dancing clubs are clearly linked to gender inequality – while women can be bought and sold we will never have equality between the genders. They are also linked to sexism in the workplace as many businesses may use such a club for finalising deals or entertaining clients – which necessarily would exclude the participation of women within those businesses. The council has a duty to consider gender equality in all its actions under its Gender Equality Duty arising from the Equality Act 2007.

I would urge the council, if it does allow lap dancing clubs to continue to exist in our town, to at the very least impose the following conditions on their licences:-

1. No full nudity
2. The 3 foot rule – dancers for their own safety should be 3 feet away from the customers at all times and no physical contact to be permitted between the dancers and the customers at any time.
3. No graphic advertising should be allowed – only subtle wording and silhouettes.
4. No mobile advertising allowed such as mobile ad-vans which could travel around inappropriate places such as past schools, religious establishments, women's refuges, causing great offence.
5. No daytime opening hours – evenings only.
6. Private booths to be prohibited.
7. CCTV monitoring to be used at all times.

These conditions would go some way to protecting women working in lap dancing clubs and women in the wider community. However, because of the negative impact that lap dancing clubs have on women's equality and women's safety, I call on Northampton Borough Council to reject this application for a Sexual Entertainment Licence by the Urban Tiger.

Yours faithfully