

Edinburgh strip club granted permission to have dancing until 3am

An Edinburgh strip club has been granted permission to have dancing run later in the night during the Summer and winter festivals.

The No1 Showbar on Lauriston Street will now be able to have dancing until 3am during those times, bringing it in line with the two other strip clubs in the city.

Last year, Edinburgh Council introduced a new licensing scheme for strip clubs in the city, placing a limit of three venues in the capital – the total number open at that time.

It came after a 2023 attempt by the council to ban strip clubs failed, being struck down in the courts at a cost of over £200,000 to the city.

The venue went to the Licensing Sub-Committee on Monday to ask for the changes to their licence that would enable dancing to take place at later hours.

One public objection was lodged from the Equally Safe Edinburgh Committee, a group which lobbies against gender-based violence.

Lesley Johnson, the vice chair of the group, told councillors: “We would like to submit an objection on the basis of preventing public nuisance, crime, disorder, securing public safety, protecting children and young people from harm and

reducing violence against women.

“[The area] is one of the most densely populated areas of the city, and it’s already vulnerable to noise disturbances and anti-social behaviour.

“We consider the extension of the operating hours of these venues during these times of the year sends an inconsistent message about the safe, welcoming, family friendly, tourist friendly culture that Edinburgh is actively working to promote across the world.”

Johnson also mentioned academic research which states that strip clubs harm the women working there, and said that the later opening hours would disrupt nearby hospitality sites and places of worship.

Archie Mackay, a lawyer representing the strip club, told councillors: “Since the premises has been traded, I’m not aware of any matters adverse to the application being brought to the authorities’ attention.

“Other premises trading in a similar fashion have already been through the process with your good selves, you’ve come to the decision to grant those applications.

“I submit to you, respectfully, that there is no reason to refuse this particular application.”

Liberal Democrat councillor Neil Ross asked a representative from Police Scotland present if there had been any reports of incidents at the premises in recent months.

He replied that the policing response there was in line with “any licensed premises”.

Conservative councillor Jo Mowat, the convener of the Licensing Sub-Committee, spoke to the committee after the objection and the statement from Mackay were heard.

She said: "I have slight concerns about this objection. It's quite generic, and when we're dealing with an individual licence, we really need to be dealing with individual licences and items.

"So the relevance of academic research probably takes slightly less weight than it would. And your net has been cast very wide in this objection, I'm not sure of the relevance of places [that could be disrupted] that are point eight of a mile away.

"And I think that does cause me to give less weight to the objection."

The committee then continued to approve the amendment to the strip club's license.

By Joseph Sullivan Local Democracy Reporter