

London Borough of Barnet
2 Bristol Avenue,
Colindale,
London, NW9 4EW
13 December 2022
Our ref: 8670360

Thank you for your request received on 16 November 2022, for the following information:

I am disappointed to note that, under the attached Events in Parks Policy ('the Policy'), Copthall Playing fields has been allocated 20 points which allows for large festivals to be held, including music festivals, despite being surrounded by residential housing.

I note the Policy Consultation with residents is completely inadequate - there is no seeking of prior consent from a majority of local residents affected by the noise from the event, nor Councillors as their elected representatives, just a commitment to inform residents that an event is taking place after permission has already been granted. This is a total denial of local democracy and I intend to raise this with the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman.

I make the following further requests under the Freedom of Information Act:

1. The Policy is stated to be subject to review every 2 years, when is the next review due and who will undertake the review? In particular, will any Councillors be involved in the next review and, if so, please name them or the relevant Committee.

2. The Policy states:

'A public entertainment licence or a temporary events notice may be needed if the event consists of music, dancing, singing or similar. Please contact the Licensing Department on 020 8359 7471. A fee may be charged for a licence.'

Please provide details of the entertainment licences ('the Licences') granted for the 51st State Festival held on Sat 20 August 2022 and the Titan Festival held on Sun 21st August 2022 at Copthall Playing Fields and, without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, please specify:

2.1 Were Environmental Health consulted as to noise levels prior to the granting of the Licences?

2.2 What limitations (if any) were included in the conditions of the Licences regulating the maximum noise level permitted to be emitted from powered speakers at the Festivals?

2.3 Who granted the Licences?

2.4 Was there any consultation with local residents or their elected Councillors prior to the grant of the Licences?

We have processed this request under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

Response

The council holds the information requested and the answers to your questions are below.

I am disappointed to note that, under the attached Events in Parks Policy ('the Policy'), Copthall Playing fields has been allocated 20 points which allows for large festivals to be held, including music festivals, despite being surrounded by residential housing.

I note the Policy Consultation with residents is completely inadequate - there is no seeking of prior consent from a majority of local residents affected by the noise from the event, nor Councillors as their elected representatives, just a commitment to inform residents that an event is taking place after permission has already been granted. This is a total denial of local democracy and I intend to raise this with the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman.

I make the following further requests under the Freedom of Information Act:

1. The Policy is stated to be subject to review every 2 years, when is the next review due and who will undertake the review? In particular, will any Councillors be involved in the next review and, if so, please name them or the relevant Committee.

The Council's existing Events in Parks policy is currently under review. The Greenspaces and Leisure team are working alongside Members to present the updated policy to the Environment Committee in 2023.

2. The Policy states:

'A public entertainment licence or a temporary events notice may be needed if the event consists of music, dancing, singing or similar. Please contact the Licensing Department on 020 8359 7471. A fee may be charged for a licence.'

Please provide details of the entertainment licences ('the Licences') granted for the 51st State Festival held on Sat 20 August 2022 and the Titan Festival held on Sun 21st August 2022 at Copthall Playing Fields and, without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, please specify:

2.1 Were Environmental Health consulted as to noise levels prior to the granting of the Licences?

The Noise Nuisance department for the Council are a responsible authority as defined in the Licensing Act 2003. As a result they were consulted as part of the application process. The licensing team were not privy to the conversations that may have been had between the applicant and the Noise Nuisance department during the consultation period therefore we are unable to confirm if noise levels were

discussed. However our records do show that there was no representation made to this application by the Noise Nuisance department.

2.2 What limitations (if any) were included in the conditions of the Licences regulating the maximum noise level permitted to be emitted from powered speakers at the Festivals?

The following conditions relating to noise levels were attached to the granted premises licence. These conditions were volunteered by the applicant and formed part of their licence upon its grant:

1. Noise limits will be set in advance. These limits will be implemented throughout the course of the build, de-rig and live dates.
2. The organisers will monitor on-site dB noise levels and ensure that set noise limits will be adhered to, with regular reading to be taken and recorded.
3. A dedicated festival 'hotline' will be in place for local residents to contact the festival organisers, enabling them to respond to noise disturbance concerns and react accordingly.

2.3 Who granted the Licences?

The premises licence was granted by the Local Authority Licensing department.

2.4 Was there any consultation with local residents or their elected Councillors prior to the grant of the Licences?

As per the requirements of the Licensing Act 2003, a consultation was undertaken whereby notices were placed around the site and published in the local paper. Local ward Councillors are also consulted.

Further information

If you are interested in the data that the council holds you may wish to visit Open Barnet, the council's data portal. This brings together all our published datasets and other information of interest on one searchable database for anyone, anywhere to access. <http://open.barnet.gov.uk/>

Advice and Assistance : Direct Marketing

If you are a company that intends to use the names and contact details of council officers (or other officers) provided in this response for direct marketing, you need to be registered with the Information Commissioner to process personal data for this purpose. You must also check that the individual (whom you wish to contact for direct marketing purposes) is not registered with one of the Preference Services to prevent Direct Marketing. If they are you must adhere to this preference.

You must also ensure you comply with the Privacy Electronic and Communications Regulations (PECR). For more information follow this Link www.ico.org.uk

For the avoidance of doubt the provision of council (and other) officer names and contact details under FOI does not give consent to receive direct marketing via any media and expressly does not constitute a 'soft opt-in' under PECR.

Your rights

If you are unhappy with the way your request for information has been handled, you can request a review within the next 40 working days by writing to the Information Management Team at: foi@barnet.gov.uk. Or by post to Records & Information Management Service, Assurance Group, London Borough of Barnet, 2 Bristol Avenue, Colindale, NW9 4EW

If, having exhausted our review procedure, you remain dissatisfied with the handling of your request or complaint, you will have a right to appeal to the Information Commissioner at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF (telephone: 0303 123 1113; website www.ico.org.uk). There is no charge for making an appeal.