

Newmarket Town Council

Sexual Entertainment Venue Re-Licence

Name of applicant: Newmarket Entertainment Ltd

Name of premises: Heaven

Lap dancing clubs show women as commodities: men purchase the right to have women strip and dance for them. As such, they reinforce the degrading notion that women's function is only to serve and satisfy men sexually. This has an impact on how all women are perceived; the ever-increasing sexual objectification of women runs counter to efforts to achieve equality between women and men.

Lap dancing clubs also normalise the practice of men paying women for sexual services, which has an impact on demand for other aspects of the sex industry. Research shows that even if clubs enforce a "no touching" rule, and even if there is no sexual contact between dancers and customers, the presence of strip clubs increases demand for nearby prostitution services.

The location of the Heaven club is significantly inappropriate. It is in a prominent position on the High Street, in a conservation area and is next door to a building owned by West Suffolk Council to house vulnerable people. It should also be noted that the club is opposite a children's play area.

The Heaven Club in Newmarket promotes and profits from the sexist culture that underpins male violence. We cannot tackle male violence without addressing this culture. The club reinforces a dangerous, sexist message to all women and girls that their value lies in their bodies and how they perform for men.

Newmarket Town Council should lead the way in promoting mutual respect between men and women, and to help in educating young people on how to achieve healthy relationships, rather than licensing the objectification of women.

We must do everything to fight violence against women and girls and acknowledge that this club is about sexually arousing men.

We object to the granting of this licence, because there is sufficient evidence to suggest that the objectification of women leads to violence against women.

We therefore object for the following reasons: No incidents / crimes been reported.

1. Prevention of crime and disorder
2. Public safety

We would like the licence for the Heaven club to be considered by the Full Licencing Committee.

N.B. The owners of Heaven club also own a club in Colchester. We would ask that research is undertaken to see whether the club in Colchester has had any problems. Colchester is not our district and we must remain impartial.