

LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF A MEETING of the Licensing Sub-Committee held on Thursday, 27 June 2024 at 12.00 pm in the Council Chamber, the Guildhall, Portsmouth

Present

Councillors Raymond Dent
George Madgwick
Emily Strudwick

30. Appointment of Chair

Councillor Madgwick was elected as chair. He welcomed everyone and introductions were made by those present.

31. Declaration of interests

There were no declarations of members' interests.

32. Licensing Act 2003 - Section 20 - Mandatory Condition - Exhibition of Films - "Norwegian Democracy" - Portsmouth Film Society CIC, Palmerston Road. Southsea

Nickii Humphreys, Licensing Manager, introduced her report, explaining the need for the Sub-Committee to classify the film in the absence of a BBFC classification so that it could be shown at a screening at Southsea Cinema & Arts Centre on 30 June 2024. Therefore, an age appropriate condition needed to be considered and the panel had had the opportunity to view the film immediately prior to the public Sub-Committee meeting. Members had been provided with the BBFC classification guidelines.

Members felt the film should be classified as an "18".

The Sub-Committee approved the decision as outlined below, which would form part of the certificate provided to the Southsea Cinema & Arts Centre and Aysegul Epengin as the applicant.

Decision

The Sub-Committee has carefully considered the appropriate classification for "Norwegian Democracy", a film work proposed to be screened publicly at the Southsea Cinema & Arts Centre. In doing so it viewed the work and applied the BBFC Classification Guidelines. The Sub-Committee has attached an "18" classification rating.

Reasons

The Sub-Committee considered carefully whether the work fell within a particular classification according to the BBFC guidelines (as updated March 2024).

Whilst carefully considered, the Sub-Committee was not satisfied that the work could be assigned a "15" rating for two reasons:

- i. Dangerous and explicitly discriminatory behaviour, i.e. the repeated public burning of the Quran in sensitive places, without legal repercussion (the film endorsing the fact that this is legal in Norway) could lead to copycat behaviour by a younger person without the understanding of legal differences between nations.
- ii. The Sub-Committee was not satisfied that sufficient balance was presented by the documentary, the views of the main protagonist were not sufficiently addressed (it was clear that others did not agree and conflict / aggression resulted); however, assertions regarding empirical evidence were not sufficiently rebutted.

The meeting concluded at 12.27 pm.

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Chair