

Mr Percy Quarcoo  
Lounge Afrique  
25 Corporation Road  
Middlesbrough  
TS1 1LP

Date: 10 August 2026

Dear Sir

**LICENSING ACT 2003**

**Premises: Lounge Afrique, 25 Corporation Road, Middlesbrough, TS1 1LP**

I am writing to advise you that as the Responsible Authority for Public Health a representation has been made to the Licensing Authority in support of the review application made by Cleveland Police in respect of the above premises.

This representation is made in relation to the prevention of crime and disorder, public safety, and the protection of children from harm licensing objectives. Serious concerns have been identified regarding an allegation of rape and safeguarding concerns relating to underage access to your premises and the exposure of significant risks of physical and psychological harm to young people.

If you would like to discuss this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,



**Lindsay Clode**  
Senior Public Health Officer  
Licensing  
Middlesbrough Council

**Middlesbrough Council**  
**The Licensing Act 2003 - Responsible Authority (RA) Representation**

**Name of RA Representative: Lindsay Clode, Senior Public Health Officer**

**Address:** Public Health and Public Protection Service, Civic Centre, Middlesbrough.

**Email:** [lindsay.clode@middlesbrough.gov.uk](mailto:lindsay.clode@middlesbrough.gov.uk)

**Licence holder details**

Name and Address of Premises

**Lounge Afrique, 25 Corporation Road, Middlesbrough, TS1 1LP**

Name of licence holder or club holding club premises certificate (if known)

Mr Percy Quarcoo  
25 Corporation Road  
Middlesbrough  
TS1 1LP

Number of premises licence or club premise certificate (if known)

**MBRO/PR0086/083647**

**Representation**

It is my opinion that the application fails to adequately satisfy the following licensing objectives:

|                                     |                                  |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Prevention of Crime and Disorder |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Prevention of Public Nuisance    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Public Safety                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Protection of Children from Harm |

**Grounds for representation (including details of any previous representations)**

This representation is made by the Responsible Authority for Public Health in support of the application submitted by Cleveland Police to review the premises licence for Lounge Afrique. Public Health makes this representation on the grounds of the prevention of crime and disorder, public safety, and the protection of children from harm.

Lounge Afrique is a well-known nightclub located on Corporation Road, Middlesbrough. The current Premises Licence Holder is Mr Percy Quarcoo and the named Designated Premises

Supervisor is Mr Jerry Edward Quarcoo. A premises licence is in place permitting licensable activities, including the sale of alcohol, between 09:00 and 02:30 hours seven days a week.

The premises are situated within Middlesbrough Council's designated Cumulative Impact Policy Area (CIP1) for on-licensed premises. This area has been identified due to the concentration of licensed venues and the associated levels of alcohol-related crime and disorder, anti-social behaviour, violence and health harms. Premises operating within the CIP area have an important responsibility to promote the licensing objectives and minimise alcohol-related harm.

On 27 July 2026, Cleveland Police applied for an expedited review following a serious incident which occurred during the early hours of 18 July 2026. Police received a report from the parent of a female aged under 16 who had left home without permission and attended Lounge Afrique. Whilst at, or following her attendance at, the premises, the child is alleged to have become the victim of a serious sexual offence, namely rape. Significant safeguarding concerns arise from this incident, particularly given the age of the victim and the fact that accompanying witnesses were also under the age of 16.

The investigation identified that multiple children, including the victim, gained access to the licensed premises despite a licence condition prohibiting children from being present after 21:00 hours and a requirement to operate a Challenge 25 policy. The apparent failure of age-verification and safeguarding measures enabled underage individuals to enter an adult licensed environment and purchase and consume alcohol. These circumstances raise serious concerns regarding the adequacy of management oversight, compliance with licence conditions, and the effectiveness of controls intended to safeguard children and young people.

Alcohol consumption by children and young people is associated with increased risks of injury, violence, impaired judgement, vulnerability to exploitation and other alcohol-related harms. Alcohol may also reduce awareness of risk and increase susceptibility to unsafe situations. Effective age-verification measures are a critical safeguard for protecting children and young people, and their apparent failure in this case exposed children to avoidable risks within the night-time economy.

Data published by the Office for National Statistics demonstrates that sexual offending remains a significant issue across the Cleveland area. During 2024/25, Cleveland Police recorded 2,759 sexual offences, including 961 rape offences, with both categories increasing compared with the previous year. This broader picture is reflected within Middlesbrough town centre, where data presented to the Middlesbrough Town Centre Strategic Partnership recorded 21 sexual offences between July 2025 and June 2026, including five rape offences. Taken together, this evidence

demonstrates that sexual violence remains an ongoing local concern and reinforces the importance of effective safeguarding arrangements and measures to protect children from harm, particularly within the night-time economy.

Children and young people are a particularly vulnerable population, and child sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation and safeguarding remain key priorities across Middlesbrough. Dedicated multi-agency arrangements, including the Vulnerable, Exploited, Missing and Trafficked (VEMT) process, reflect the recognised risks faced by vulnerable children and young people locally.

Information provided by Cleveland Police indicates that this is not an isolated incident and that there have been previous reports involving serious crime and safeguarding concerns linked to the premises over the last two years. When considered alongside the current allegation involving a child, these matters raise significant concerns regarding the effectiveness of management oversight, compliance with licence conditions and the adequacy of measures in place to prevent crime and disorder, protect vulnerable persons and uphold the licensing objectives.

The allegations that staff and management have failed to fully cooperate with investigative enquiries are also concerning. Effective safeguarding relies upon partnership working, timely information sharing and full cooperation with responsible authorities. Any barriers to safeguarding investigations may undermine the ability of agencies to assess and manage risk, particularly where children and vulnerable individuals are involved.

The protection of children from harm is a fundamental licensing objective, serious sexual violence against a child can have devastating and lifelong consequences for health, wellbeing, education and future life opportunities. Such experiences are recognised as significant adverse childhood experiences and are associated with increased risks of poor physical and mental health, substance misuse, social isolation and future victimisation.

Given the seriousness of the allegation, the age of the victim, the apparent failure of measures intended to prevent underage access, and the wider pattern of crime and safeguarding concerns associated with the premises, Public Health supports Cleveland Police's application for a premises licence review. The available evidence raises significant concerns regarding the promotion of the licensing objectives of the prevention of crime and disorder, public safety and the protection of children from harm

Signed: 

Dated August 10<sup>th</sup> 2026

