

At a meeting of the Licensing Panel held in Council Chamber - Allerdale House, Workington on Friday 15 February 2019 at 3.30 pm

## **Members**

Councillor Tony Annison  
Councillor Christine Smith

Councillor Peter Kendall

Apologies for absence were received from

## **Staff Present**

C Fleming, D Fletcher and L Jardine

### **366. Election of Chair**

Councillor Peter Kendall was elected chair for the ensuing meeting

### **367. Declaration of Interests**

None declared

### **368. Questions**

None received

### **369. Application for Film Classification under the Licensing Act 2003**

The Licencing and Compliance Officer introduced the item which was to consider and determine an application to classify a film.

The film in question was Mary Queen of Scots. The title has been rated by the BBFC as a 15 certificate. The applicant was requesting that children under the age of 24 months be admitted to the screening with their parents at a special screening of the film.

The Licencing and Compliance Officer clarified to the panel the licencing objectives and debate ensued.

The panel were concerned that at 24 months old, a child may be receptive to the content of the film, and members considered whether the 24 months old age should be reduced.

Councillor Annison moved the motion to approve the application to classify the film but with the new condition that children were only admitted if they were under the age of 12 months.

This motion was seconded by Councillor Christine Smith.

A vote followed, 3 voted in favour of the motion, 0 against and 0 abstentions.

The motion was carried.

### **Decision**

'Mary Queen of Scots' certificate 15 as certified by the British Board of Film Classification – but allowing the admittance of children under the age of 12 months as accompanied by a parent or carer.

### **Reasons for the Decision**

In reaching its decision, the Licensing Panel considered the information outlined by the Licensing and Compliance Officer, the information laid out in the report and the BBFC Insight Publication dated 8 January 2019. The Panel also had regard to the British Board of Film Classification Guidelines, the guidance issued by the Secretary of State under section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003 and the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy. The Panel noted the guidelines, guidance and policy were silent on such a classification to allow such special screenings where babies and toddlers are present. Therefore the overriding objective of the protection of children from harm remained its principle consideration.

The Committee sought to balance the promotion of the licensing objectives while seeking to ensure the film reached the widest audience appropriate. The Panel's reason for the decision was that they found the film to contain scenes of violence, sexual violence and scenes of a sexual nature, such that it would be unsuitable for admittance for those between 13 and 24 months due to the receptive nature of children of this age.

**The meeting closed at 3.55 pm**