

Press release: Bankrupt nightclub boss sentenced for acting as company director

Matthew Daniel John Sellars (40), from Bristol, received a nine month prison sentence at Bristol Crown Court on Thursday 7 February after he pled guilty to three counts of acting in the management or as director of a company while an undischarged bankrupt.

On passing sentence, HHJ Hart also disqualified Matthew Sellars from acting as a director of a company for four years from the date of sentence. This is a separate order in addition to any continuing bankruptcy prohibitions and prevents Matthew Sellars from directly or indirectly becoming involved, without the permission of the court, in the promotion, formation or management of a company

The court heard that Matthew Sellars was made bankrupt at Bristol County Court in August 2016. Being made bankrupt comes with certain prohibitions usually lasting for 12 months, including acting as a director of a company without the court's permission.

However he ignored these restrictions when he continued to act as a director of two companies.

Incorporated in June 2009, Norcrown was the company that acted as the trading vehicle for a nightclub called 'Chasers', as well as a bar called 'Chase Inn', both located in the same building on Regent Street in Kingswood, Bristol.

Matthew Sellars had been a director of Norcrown since it was incorporated and despite his bankruptcy prohibitions, continued to manage the company until it was wound-up in November 2017.

The court heard that in meetings with the Insolvency Practitioner charged with winding up the company, Matthew Sellars falsely maintained that he had been given relief to act as a director despite being bankrupt.

Members of staff also reported that Matthew Sellars continued to have the last say on everything, he had control of the safe and was always at the premises.

At the same time as Matthew Sellars was illegally acting as the director of Norcrown, he was also breaching his bankruptcy prohibitions in that he continued to be a registered director of another company called Combine Leisure Limited.

Arwel Jones, Director of Legal Services, from the Insolvency Service, said:

Matthew Sellars completely disregarded his bankruptcy restrictions and continued to run companies as though nothing had changed. This is simply not acceptable, something the court has made clear in passing a sentence of imprisonment.

Matthew Sellars appeared at Bristol Crown Court via video link as he is currently serving a 6-year prison sentence in connection with drug offences.

He received 9-months' imprisonment for each offence and these are to be served concurrently.

Matthew Sellars is from Bristol and his date of birth is March 1978.

NORCROWN LIMITED (Company number 06929769)

CONBINE LEISURE LIMITED (Company number 07957101)

A disqualification order has the effect that without specific permission of a court, a person with a disqualification cannot:

- act as a director of a company
- take part, directly or indirectly, in the promotion, formation or management of a company or limited liability partnership
- be a receiver of a company's property

Disqualification undertakings are the administrative equivalent of a disqualification order but do not involve court proceedings.

Persons subject to a disqualification order are bound by a [range of other restrictions](#).

The Insolvency Service administers the insolvency regime, investigating all compulsory liquidations and individual insolvencies (bankruptcies) through the Official Receiver to establish why they became insolvent. It may also use powers under the Companies Act 1985 to conduct confidential fact-finding investigations into the activities of live limited companies in the UK. In addition, the agency deals with disqualification of directors in corporate failures, assesses and pays statutory entitlement to redundancy payments when an employer cannot or will not pay employees, provides banking and investment services for bankruptcy and liquidation estate funds and advises ministers and other government departments on insolvency law and practice.

Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct, is [available](#).

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