

OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

LICENSING CASEWORK SUB-COMMITTEE PROCEDURES

House Keeping Matters

- Mobiles must be switched off
- No smoking throughout the building
- Consumption of food is not permitted

The Meeting

1. The Licensing Casework Sub-Committee shall consist of three members of the Council (councillors). At the start of each Sub-Committee meeting a Chair shall be elected from among the three members. The Sub-Committee is responsible for reaching a decision upon the application being heard by the Sub-Committee, having received addresses and representations from all parties.

The Paperwork

2. Officers of the licensing authority (the City Council) will prepare the paperwork for the application that is to be heard by the Sub-Committee. The paperwork will include;-
 - A summary of the application, the representations received and of any other relevant material.
 - The application and any other supporting material supplied by the applicant
 - Representations made by the responsible authorities.
 - Representations made by interested parties.

Introductions

3. The Chairman will commence the hearing by introducing her or himself and the other two Sub-Committee members. The Chair will then ask all of the other parties present to introduce themselves and explain in what capacity they are attending.

Conduct of Proceedings

4. The role of the Chair is control the proceedings. All questions must be put through the Chair.
5. The Chair will indicate that the members of the Sub-Committee have read and familiarised themselves with the papers and issues. The Chair will stress that the Sub-Committee does not therefore require points to be made or repeated at length.
6. The hearing shall take the form of a discussion. Formal cross-examination shall not be permitted unless the Chairman considers that cross-examination in a particular circumstance would assist. In exercising this discretion to permit cross-examination, the Chairman must have regard to the rules of natural justice and the right to a fair hearing.
7. Members of the Sub-Committee may ask questions to any party to elicit further information. The representative of the licensing authority may also ask questions of any party in order to clarify the evidence and any issues in the case.
8. The Sub-Committee will determine the application in accordance with the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy, the Licensing Act 2003 and Guidance and Regulations under the Act, taking into consideration the overriding need to promote the four Licensing Objectives.
9. In considering any representation or notice made by a party the Sub-Committee may take into account documentary or other information produced by a party in support of their application, representations or notice (as applicable) either before the hearing or, with the consent of all the other parties, at the hearing.
10. The Sub-Committee will generally not expect any of the parties to take more than 20 minutes to address it, to give further information or to call witnesses.
11. Where a person attending the hearing is acting in a manner that the Sub-Committee consider is disruptive, the Sub-Committee may require that the person leave the hearing and may:
 - (a) refuse to permit that person to return; or
 - (b) permit him / her to return only on such conditions as the authority may specify.

12. Before the end of the hearing any person who was required to leave the hearing under paragraph 11 may submit in writing any information which they would have been entitled to give orally had they not been required to leave.

Order of Proceedings

13. All parties have a right to attend the hearing and may be assisted or represented by any person whether or not that person is legally qualified.

The Licensing Authority

14. The representative of the licensing authority shall present the paperwork relating to the application to be heard by the Sub-Committee. The representative shall say who the applicant is, what the application is for and explain the paperwork before the Sub-Committee.

Applicant case

15. The applicant must fully outline their application and address the licensing objectives, and then may call witnesses if desired.
16. Where a responsible authority or interested party seeks to cross-examine the applicant or any of their witnesses, he / she must seek the permission of the Chair who will exercise his discretion as to whether to allow such questioning.

Responsible authorities case

17. Each responsible authority must fully outline the nature of their representation and address the licensing objectives, and then may call witnesses if desired.
18. Where the applicant or an interested party seeks to cross-examine the responsible authority or any of their witnesses, he / she must seek the permission of the Chair who will exercise his discretion as to whether to allow such questioning.

Interested parties case

19. Each interested party must fully outline the nature of their representation and address the licensing objectives, and then may call witnesses if desired.

20. Where there are a number of interested parties and the nature of the representations are similar, such parties may decide to appoint a spokesperson to represent the group.
21. Where a person is representing an interested party, the representative will be required to state the full name and address of the interested party.
22. Where the applicant or responsible authority seeks to cross-examine the interested party or any of their witnesses, he / she must seek the permission of the Chair who will exercise his discretion as to whether to allow such questioning.

Closing submissions

23. All parties will then be given the opportunity briefly to summarise their key points. The order shall be:-
 - Responsible authorities
 - Interested parties
 - Applicant
24. Interested parties may choose to appoint a spokesperson to briefly summarise the key points.

Determinations

25. At the end of a hearing, the Chair will announce that the hearing is adjourned while the Sub-Committee retire to deliberate in private.
26. The Sub-Committee must make its determination at the conclusion of the hearing in the following cases:
 - application for a variation and conversion of an "existing licence" ("existing licence" defined at paragraph 1 of Schedule 8);
 - application for variation and conversion of an existing club premises certificate;
 - counter notice following police objection to temporary event notice;
 - review of a premises licence following closure order;
 - determination of application for conversion of existing licence;
 - determination of application for conversion of existing club premises certificate;
 - determination of application by holder of a justices' licence for grant of a personal licence.

27. In other cases (not mentioned in paragraph 26), excluding where a hearing has been dispensed with, the Sub-Committee must make its determination within the period of five working days beginning with the day or the last day on which the hearing was held.
28. A written decision outlining the reasons for the decision will be sent to the parties forthwith on making its determinations.

Closed hearing

29. The hearing shall take place in public. However, the Sub-Committee may exclude the public from all or part of a hearing where it considers that the public interest in so doing outweighs the public interest in the hearing, or that part of the hearing, taking place in public.