

**Minutes of a meeting of the
Licensing & Gambling Acts Casework Sub-
Committee
on Tuesday 17 February 2026**

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Committee members present:

Councillor Clarkson

Councillor Lygo (Chair)

Councillor Ottino

Officers present for all or part of the meeting:

Hannah Carmody-Brown, Committee and Member Services Officer

Alison Daly, Legal Advisor

Joshua Curnow, Supervising Senior Licensing Officer

102. Election of Chair for the hearings

Councillor Clarkson proposed, and Councillor Ottino seconded, Councillor Lygo as Chair.

Councillor Lygo was elected as Chair for the duration of the meeting.

103. Apologies for absence

None.

104. Declarations of Interest

None.

105. Procedure for the hearing

The Sub-Committee noted the relevant procedure.

106. Application for a variation to a Premises Licence – Angels, Unit 3 Dartington House, 55 Little Clarendon Street, Oxford, OX1 2HS

The Chair invited all attendees to introduce themselves.

Mr. Opher, the applicant, and Mr. Baylis, the applicant's legal advisor, were in attendance. Mr. Professor Richard Mayou was also in attendance as a representative of the St. John Street Area Residents' Association who had objected to this application.

The Chair outlined the procedure for the meeting.

The Chair invited the Supervising Senior Licensing Officer to present the report.

The Supervising Senior Licensing Officer provided a comprehensive oral summary of the written report.

Mr. Baylis informed the Sub-Committee that Mr. Opher wished to withdraw his application in respect of Angels' Bar; the Sub-Committee acknowledged this and agreed that no further discussion of this application was required since the application was withdrawn and did not call for their determination.

The Legal Advisor reminded attendees that each application must be considered individually and on their own merits. Therefore, the Sub-Committee would proceed to the next agenda item and consider the applicant's next application according to the required procedure.

107. Application for a variation to a Premises Licence – Raouls Bar, 32 Walton Street, Oxford, OX2 6AA

Mr. Opher, the applicant, and Mr. Baylis, the applicant's legal advisor, were in attendance. Mr. Professor Richard Mayou was also in attendance as a representative of the St. John Street Area Residents' Association who had objected to this application.

The Chair invited the Supervising Senior Licensing Officer to present the report.

The Supervising Senior Licensing Officer provided a comprehensive summary of the report. Members understood that matters for consideration included:

- Consideration of extension to the hours for licensable activities to 02.00 daily (currently 01.00 daily)

The Sub-Committee were informed of the conditions agreed with Thames Valley Police, the lack of representation from any other responsible authority, and the representation in opposition to the application from St. John Street Area Residents' Association.

The Sub-Committee was reminded of its responsibilities under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the Human Rights Act when considering the fair balance between the interests of the applicant and the rights of local residents. The Supervising Senior Licensing Officer emphasised that any decision must be necessary and proportionate to the objectives being pursued and must consider promotion of the licensing objectives. Finally, the options available to the Sub-Committee were outlined.

The Chair invited questions from the Sub-Committee.

Councillor Ottino sought to clarify the licence timings and how they would align with clear-out times at the premises. The Supervising Senior Licensing Officer explained that the Licensing Authority cannot restrict the hours of a business, only its licensable activities; for Raouls' the Licensing Authority could therefore only restrict the hours permitted for the sale of alcohol. The Sub-Committee was, however, reminded that Mr. Opher had agreed to additional conditions with Thames Valley Police which required the premises to stop admitting customers one hour before closure time.

Councillor Ottino requested information on the opening and closing times of nearby premises. The Supervising Senior Licensing Officer noted that the Oxford Wine Cafe is currently licensed until midnight on Fridays and Saturdays, and 11pm on weeknights. Additionally, Love Jericho is licensed until 2am on Fridays and Saturdays, and 1am on other nights.

Councillor Ottino sought to clarify that there had been no representations from other responsible authorities in relation to noise from Raouls'; the Supervising Senior Licensing Officer confirmed that there had not.

The Chair invited Mr. Opher and Mr. Baylis to address the Sub-Committee.

Mr. Baylis explained that they had decided to withdraw the application for Angels' considering representations from the residents' association, and due to the proximity of both premises to each other. As such, the Sub-Committee learned that the applicant was verbally amending the application for Raouls' by removing a request for an additional hour on Sundays; the application would only request one additional hour only between Mondays and Saturdays. Mr. Baylis asserted that this demonstrated the premises owner to be a responsible operator and considerate of residents' views.

Mr. Baylis also provided some contextual information about Raouls', including the refurbishment costs after it was bought in 2024. The Sub-Committee heard that Mr. Opher currently makes a loss of around £50,000 a year and explained that adding

one additional hour to trading from Monday to Saturdays could provide chances to improve this. Mr. Baylis noted that the amended application seemed an appropriate compromise, and reference was also made to the agreed conditions outlined by Thames Valley Police. Mr. Baylis emphasised the history of no complaints from residents in relation to Raouls' and offered an additional condition in relation to closing doors and windows to reduce noise in response to a letter from the residents' association. The Sub-Committee also understood that Mr. Opher would be content to offer an additional condition relating to the development of a dispersal policy.

Finally, Mr. Baylis reminded the Sub-Committee about relevant statutory guidance and the new national licensing policy framework, within which paragraph 1.18 refers to the need for licensing authorities to consider the need to promote growth and deliver economic benefits. Mr. Baylis noted the relevance of this to Mr. Opher's application given the financial context of the business at present. The Sub-Committee also heard a summary of the requirements to consider each application individually and to base any decision on clear evidence. Mr. Baylis summarised that there was no evidence within this application to suggest that Raouls' causes nuisance within the local area.

The Chair thanked Mr. Baylis and Mr. Opher and invited questions from the Sub-Committee.

Councillor Ottino queried the temporary events notices used in recent months and asked whether these were only at weekends; this was confirmed.

Councillor Ottino noted that residents may be more anxious about weekday hours and asked if more could be done to alleviate these concerns. Mr. Baylis explained that despite requesting an additional hour on weekdays, it will not always be used; it has been requested to provide more flexibility for the business. The Sub-Committee heard that other local bars owned by Mr. Opher, also including Raouls', have not recently been opening on weekdays due to cost pressures. Mr. Opher explained that he has been forced to consider opening hours in the context of fewer customers and cost pressures; a summary of contextual changes to the bar and hospitality sector over recent years in Oxford was offered.

Councillor Clarkson requested a comment on who their regular clientele is in demographic terms. Mr. Opher noted that it is a broad mixture, ranging from young students to those over 40. The Sub-Committee heard that fewer students are attending as time goes on due to cost pressures, but also that many residents within Jericho attend as they prefer not to travel into the city centre.

The Chair invited Professor Richard Mayou to summarise his objections to the application on behalf of St. John Street Area Residents' Association. Professor Mayou noted that the residents' central concern is the extension of the licence to 2am every night, noting that it seems too easy for the operator to extension for special events and

this would be inappropriate for the local area. The Sub-Committee heard that the area inhabited by the residents is geographically separate from the city center and is predominantly a residential community; the area also includes student accommodation blocks. As a result, many people are affected by local businesses and late-night activities. In relation to alcohol consumption, Professor Mayou noted his view that late night spirits bars are very new in the neighbourhood, and he noted that there are already two others in close proximity with late hours. Professor Mayou referenced the concerns noted by Oxford public health within the report, noting the need to protect urgent health care services and the associated pressures that late night alcohol sales can cause. Professor Mayou also noted the police's observation of an increased demand resulting from activities within the nighttime economy. The Sub-Committee heard of the concerns from the Residents' Association that this application could worsen possible noise and disturbance in the local area throughout the night and that there were fears this could change the feel of the community. Professor Mayou also informed Members that he believed it would be inappropriate to extend the licence again so soon, and that he had observed that the premises had already advertised opening hours until 2am on some Saturdays in recent months. In summary, the Sub-Committee heard that the existing licensing hours were very generous given the nature of the local community and that there was no compelling reason to extend the existing licence.

The Chair invited questions from the Sub-Committee to Professor Mayou; there were none.

Mr. Opher clarified that the previous advertisement of opening until 2am in December and November was conducted with the permission of temporary events notices.

The Chair invited all attendees to summarise their representations.

Mr. Baylis thanked the Sub-Committee and outlined that the application has agreed to all the conditions outlined by Thames Valley Police and that Mr. Opher had also offered extra conditions relating to closure of doors and windows and a dispersal policy. Mr. Baylis emphasised the new statutory guidance which considers promotion growth and economic benefits; he noted that this would support Mr. Opher's business.

The Supervising Senior Licensing Officer confirmed that Mr. Baylis' reference to section 1.18 of the statutory guidance was correct, noting it had been introduced in February. It was explained that the Sub-Committee should position this high on the list of factors to consider when reaching a decision. The Supervising Senior Licensing Officer also summarised the application, as amended verbally by the applicant during the meeting, and suggested that the offer of additional conditions could be incorporated into the existing agreed conditions.

Professor Richard Mayou emphasised that the extension to the premises licence would be inappropriate in a residential area.

The Supervising Senior Licensing Officer, Mr. Opher, Mr. Baylis, and Professor Mayou left the meeting to allow the Sub-Committee to reach a decision.

The Sub-Committee deliberated in private.

The Supervising Senior Licensing Officer, Mr. Opher, Mr. Baylis, and Professor Mayou rejoined the meeting.

The Chair delivered Sub-Committee's decision.

The Licensing and Gambling Act Sub-Committee resolved to:

- **Grant** the premises licence as amended verbally in the meeting by the applicant, with removal of the request for an additional hour of alcohol trading on Sundays. Therefore, the hours of licensable activities are extended to 02.00 from Mondays to Saturdays.

The Chair noted that any suggested additional conditions relating to closure of windows and doors and dispersal policies could be considered within the already agreed conditions.

The Chair encouraged Mr. Opher to regularly liaise with residents in order to support positive management of any future issues.

The Legal Advisor reminded Mr. Opher of his right to appeal the Sub-Committee's decision should he be dissatisfied.

Mr. Opher and Mr. Baylis thanked the Sub-Committee.

108. Dates of Future Meetings

The Sub-Committee noted the date of the next meeting.

The meeting started at 6.05 pm and ended at 7.00 pm