

Minutes of a meeting of the Licensing & Gambling Acts Casework Sub- Committee on Monday 27 July 2026

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Committee members present:

Councillor Ottino

Councillor Muddiman

Councillor Taylor

Officers present for all or part of the meeting:

Hannah Carmody-Brown, Committee and Member Services Officer

Mark Smith, Legal Advisor

Emma Thompson, Senior Licensing Compliance Officer

John Ali, Licensing Compliance Officer

6. Election of Chair for the hearings

Councillor Ottino proposed, and Councillor Muddiman seconded, Councillor Taylor as Chair.

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

7. Apologies for absence

None.

8. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Taylor stated that he works in a licensed premises but confirmed that it is unrelated to either of the applications on this agenda.

9. Procedure for the hearing

The Sub-Committee noted the relevant procedure.

10. Application for a New Premises Licence: Express Mart Retail Ltd, 284 Cowley Road, Oxford, OX4 1UR

Alex Bloomfield, Thames Valley Police representative, Thiviyan Chandrakumar, applicant, and Gill Sherratt, the applicant's legal advisor, joined the meeting.

The Chair invited all attendees to introduce themselves.

The Senior Licensing Compliance Officer presented a summary of the report in relation to an application submitted by Express Mart Retail Ltd for the grant of a Premises Licence in respect of 284 Cowley, Oxford.

The Senior Licensing Compliance Officer provided the Sub-Committee a summary of the report, the context surrounding the application, and relevant matters for consideration, including representations submitted from Thames Valley Police, Public Health and 1 interested party. The Sub-Committee were also informed that since the publication of the report, Public Health had confirmed that they were content with the reduction of licensable activity hours as proposed by the applicant, and the agreed conditions as follows:

- No super-strength beer, lager or cider above 6.5% ABV shall be sold from the premises, with the exception of premium and craft products.
- Multipacks of alcohol shall not be broken down into single units for individual sale.

The Sub-Committee was then 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. Any decision taken by the Sub-Committee must be necessary and proportionate to the objectives being pursued. Members were reminded that whenever they make a decision under the Licensing Act 2003, they have a duty to act with a view to promoting the licensing objectives, and when considering any representations, only those issues relating to the four licensing objectives should be considered and appropriate weight given to the importance and relevance of each representation. In making its decision, the Sub-Committee must also have regard to the Home Office statutory guidance issued under section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003 and the Council's own Statement of Licensing Policy.

The Senior Licensing Compliance Officer also summarised the options available to the Sub-Committee when reaching a decision on this application.

Finally, Members were reminded that the applicant or persons making representations hold the right of appeal against the decision made.

The Chair invited questions from the Sub-Committee to the Senior Licensing Compliance Officer; there were none.

The Chair invited the applicant to make representations.

Ms. Sherratt spoke on behalf of Ms. Chandrakumar and introduced the applicant as the director of the company, noting that another person is listed as the DPS. The Sub-Committee were reminded that the amended conditions had been agreed with Thames Valley Police in advance of the meeting.

The Committee and Member Services Officer left and rejoined the meeting in order to provide printed copies of the amended conditions; this document was circulated to all attendees.

The amended conditions were provided as follows and summarised verbally by Ms. Sherratt:

Hours

- 1) Opening hours 06:00 to 23:00 Monday to Sunday
- 2) Off sales of alcohol: 08:00 to 23:00 Monday to Sunday

CONDITIONS

Staff Training

1. *The Premises Licence Holder shall ensure that all staff employed at the premises whose duties include the sale or supply of alcohol shall undertake and complete a relevant programme of training prior to them being authorised to sell or supply alcohol. Such training shall consist of providing staff with an understanding of:*
 - *The need to ensure the responsible sale and supply of alcohol*
 - *The need to refuse the sale and supply of alcohol to persons who are intoxicated or underage*
 - *The need to seek credible age verification from persons seeking to be sold or supplied alcohol who may appear under the age of 25 years old*

Such training shall be recorded, and these records shall be kept on the premises and shall, on request, be made available on request to the Police and / or an Authorised Officer of the Licensing Authority (as defined by Section 13 of the Licensing Act 2003):

- a) in the case of on-line training: within 48 hours.*
- b) in all other cases: immediately upon request.*

The Premises Licence holder shall provide a “refresher” training session to all relevant staff members as and when deemed necessary on a case-by-case evaluation, but as a minimum requirement the refresher training session shall be provided to all staff on at least one occasion every 12 months.

Refusals & Incident Registers

- 2. A Refusals Register will be in operation that the premises in either electronic or written format, recording all refusals of alcohol sales on the grounds of age or intoxication.*

An incident Register will be in operation that the premises in either electronic or written format and will record the following:

- Incidents of ASB, crime and disorder*
- any significant licensing-related incidents occurring on or in the immediate vicinity of the premises*
- Contact with the premises, complaints made by a resident or neighbours*
- Any safeguarding/vulnerability occurrences*
- Weekly checks of the CCTV, to ensure it is fully operational and any faults are dealt with including the time of the check and the person that carried it out.*
- Any calls to or visits by Thames Valley Police.*

This shall record the details of the caller, the time and date of the call and the time and date of the incident about which the call is made and any actions taken to deal with the call.

Both registers shall be retained for a minimum period of 12 months and made available for inspection by an authorised officer of the Licensing Authority or Thames Valley Police upon request.

- 3. The premises shall implement documented policies. Such policies shall include, but not be limited to, the following:*

- Safeguarding & Vulnerable Person*
- Customer Management of the Immediate External Vicinity*
- Responsible Remote Ordering and Delivery of Alcohol*
- Crime Reduction (I.E Theft, security, violence)*

4. *Copies of the most up to date policy/procedures will be kept on the premises. They shall be readily accessible to staff for their own reference whilst working and shall be made available to any of the authorities upon request to check for compliance.*
5. *A CCTV system shall be installed and maintained. The CCTV system shall incorporate the following basic requirements:*
 - *Be switched on and fully operational when the licensable activities are being carried out.*
 - *Record for a minimum rolling period of 31 days*
 - *The system shall accurately denote the date and time.*
 - *Have a camera covering any entrance which will provide a facial shot of identification quality.*
 - *Have cameras covering any pertinent public areas (internally and externally) and alterations shall be made to address any subsequent concerns made by the police and / or an Authorised Officer of the Licensing Authority (as defined by Section 13 of the Licensing Act 2003) regarding coverage. Quality of which shall be of identification standard.*
 - *Have a means of copying any footage to another medium as evidence if requested by the Police and / or an Authorised Officer of the Licensing Authority (as defined by Section 13 of the Licensing Act 2003) in accordance with the provisions of the DPA.*
 - *Have a member of staff working at the site at all times whilst the licence is in operation that is able to operate the system and able to facilitate viewing of CCTV footage upon the demand by the Police and / or an Authorised Officer of the Licensing Authority (as defined by Section 13, Licensing Act 2003) in accordance with the provisions of the DPA.*
 - *A system shall be in place to maintain the quality of the recorded image and a complete audit trail maintained. The system shall comply with other essential legislation, and all signs as required will be clearly displayed.*
6. *All members of staff at the premises shall seek "credible photographic proof of age evidence" from any person who appears to be under the age of 25 years and who is seeking to purchase alcohol on the premises. Such credible evidence, which shall include a photograph of the customer, shall include a passport, photographic driving licence, or Proof of Age card carrying a "PASS" logo or other method of accredited identification that complies with any mandatory condition that may apply to this licence.*
7. *Prominent, clear notices shall be displayed at all exit points to advise customers to respect the needs of the local community and of acceptable behaviour in public spaces.*

8. *Alcohol shall only be displayed in areas that are directly and comprehensively covered by CCTV.*
9. *Spirits shall only be displayed behind the point-of-sale counter, and these items shall only be accessible to the public via request to a member of staff.*
10. *No super-strength beer, lagers, or ciders of 6.5%ABV (alcohol by volume) or above shall be sold from the premises, with the exception of premium and craft products.*
11. *Clear and prominent signage shall be displayed at the point of sale as well as in any area where alcohol is merchandise advising customers of the shop's policy of challenge 25 and that failure to produce acceptable forms of ID shall result in the sale being refused.*
12. *Clear and prominent signage shall be displayed at the point of sale as well as in any area where alcohol is displayed advising customers that it is a criminal offence to buy alcohol on behalf of someone that is drunk or to sell to someone that is drunk and that where such a suspicion arises that sale will be refused by staff.*
13. *Multipacks of alcohol shall not be broken down into single units for individual sale.*
14. *No drugs paraphernalia, such as grinders, bongs, pipes, NoS refills will be sold at the premises.*

Ms. Sherratt clarified that the amended conditions would not permit the sale of late-night refreshment and that Thames Valley Police and Public Health, as responsible authorities, were content with this.

Ms. Sherratt notified the Sub-Committee that she no longer required them to consider the additional documentation provided to them before the meeting.

Ms. Sherratt summarised the Ms. Chandrakumar as a responsible licence holder and noted that she is currently completing a business degree and operates with the full support and experience of parents. Members heard that the business would be built on experience as Ms. Chandrakumar's father has shop in Ealing and her mother will be working at this new premises. It was also clarified that the DPS listed on the application also holds a personal licence and is a family member. Ms. Sherratt explained that the location for the premises was determined by

the applicant as it is seen to provide good opportunity for a feasible business. Members also heard that around £100,000, will be invested to fit it out the shop with required equipment and that the premises would provide a convenience offering, facilities to pay bills and to send packages, and stock of food and drink. It was further noted that Ms. Chandrakumar had decided to remain as an independent company at this stage and will therefore manage the purchase of good herself.

In respect of alcohol, Ms. Sherratt outlined that the premises will have only a limited impact as it will mainly focus on the sale of other items and will be monitored by a new CCTV digital system operated via 20 cameras, 2 of which will be outside. The Sub-Committee were informed that this will allow Ms. Chandrakumar to monitor the shop remotely and she will ensure that all staff are trained. Furthermore, Members were assured that all existing and new staff will be trained and refreshed annually as Ms. Chandrakumar will be investing in e-learning facilities which will allow full record of completion to be maintained. Additionally, Ms. Chandrakumar will maintain incident and refusals registers, impose the challenge 25 policy, and back these up in the formal licence conditions. Ms. Sherratt emphasised that the listed steps will uphold the licensing objectives and that the business will be sufficiently manned at all necessary times by family members.

In response to concerns raised by Thames Valley Police regarding the location of the premises, Ms. Sherratt explained that it is a busy commercial street with a wide range of existing businesses which face the same inherent challenges. Ms. Sherratt emphasised that Ms. Chandrakumar is aware and alert to the local matters and will still ensure the business operates in a well-managed manner.

The Chair invited questions from the Sub-Committee to Ms. Chandrakumar.

Councillor Muddiman sought to clarify which conditions had been amended and which had remained the same. Ms. Sherratt provided a summary of this in response, also noting that condition 14 had been voluntarily added in relation to drugs. The Sub-Committee heard that some amendments had only reworded conditions for clarity, or in response to incoming legislation, such as the anticipated Digital ID scheme.

Councillor Muddiman queried the definition of premium and craft products, to which Ms. Sherratt explained that there is no common definition, the lack of which being a national issue.

The Senior Licensing Compliance Officer noted that from a licensing perspective, this is classed as premium lagers or ciders, such as Henry Westons, however 2 litre bottles of strong cider, such as White Lightning, would not be a premium and craft product and would therefore breach this condition. The Sub-Committee were informed that these drinks have a higher price tag meaning they are less desirable to street drinkers or those who have a problem with alcohol.

Councillor Ottino asked whether Ms. Chandrakumar could comment on how she would handle the refusal of alcohol sales to those customers who may already be intoxicated, noting the context of the area the premises would be in. Councillor Ottino asked if she was aware of issues in the nearby cemetery and whether she would be ready to engage with this.

Ms. Chandrakumar confirmed her awareness of alcohol related issues in the area and noted that if intoxicated customers came into her shop, they would be refused the sale of further alcohol.

Councillor Ottino asked Ms. Chandrakumar whether she was confident that she could manage the potentially forceful demands of these customers; Ms. Chandrakumar noted that she was confident of this.

Ms. Sherratt also emphasised that other staff would be present and that the shop would have procedures in place in line with legislation to handle such scenarios.

The Chair invited Mr. Bloomfield from Thames Valley Police to make representations as a responsible authority.

Mr. Bloomfield recognised the challenging context of the area and confirmed it is of concern to Thames Valley Police. However, the Sub-Committee heard that the police hope that with robust conditions, such as those set out in this amended application, the premises will have a sufficient operating framework to meet the challenges. Mr. Bloomfield confirmed that Thames Valley Police agreed with the spirit of the amendments to conditions, noting that they would support the business and its methods of trading and operating. Mr. Bloomfield noted challenges with determining alcohol strength and enforcing the relevant requirements on this; it is a national issue and hard to condition on a licence. On this basis, the Sub-Committee were assured that the conditions as amended were considered by Thames Valley Police to be as best as possible given the context of the premises' location and in order to support a viable business.

The Chair invited questions from the Sub-Committee to Mr. Bloomfield.

Councillor Ottino asked how an investigation into illegal sales would be approached by Thames Valley Police in the Cowley Road area. Mr. Bloomfield explained that officers would seek to identify which premises had sold the products by speaking to individuals and using CCTV. It was noted that the sale of illegal products can be challenging investigations to solve.

Councillor Ottino queried how the police would approach the premises if they were proven to have sold illegal products. Mr. Bloomfield explained a three-tiered approach which would be followed in cooperation with the Licensing Authority,

including advising the premises to stop selling the products, escalating to formal warnings, and potential requirements to attend a Sub-Committee for a review of the premises licence. Members heard that this process allows the police to demonstrate efforts to enforce the law but also support the business where possible. This was emphasised as a long-term process.

The Chair asked how the police would respond if the presence of illegal alcohol products was a result of theft as opposed to sale. Mr. Bloomfield explained that the police would approach the relevant premises to notify them of the crime hot spot and require them to install crime reduction policies to address the shoplifting.

The Chair asked Mr. Bloomfield whether he believed the conditions as amended undermined the licensing objectives and whether the police held any concerns. Mr. Bloomfield noted no concerns.

The Chair asked whether edits to condition 3 had weakened it. Mr. Bloomfield noted that the condition had been minimised following extensive conversations with the premises holder, however explained that Thames Valley Police see that it still addresses the issues they had raised. Mr. Bloomfield reminded the Sub-Committee that should any issues arise, then the matter could still be engaged with in the future and conditions could be updated as required via a sub-committee through a review application. Mr. Bloomfield emphasised that the conditions as amended still cover Thames Valley Police's concerns and they are reassured by their conversations with the premises holder.

The Chair queried the impact of the removed condition in relation to security measures. Mr. Bloomfield noted that this did not concern Thames Valley Police as the conditions still referenced crime reduction policies which is a broad enough umbrella to cover the relevant issues to the local area.

Councillor Muddiman asked Ms. Chandrakumar what proportion of sales she expected to make from premium higher strength alcohol. Ms. Sherratt noted that this would be impossible to predict or comment on.

The Chair invited summaries.

Ms. Sherratt, on behalf of Ms. Chandrakumar, explained that the amended conditions incorporated the original conditions proposed by Thames Valley Police as much as reasonably possible in order to still support the retailer. On condition 3, the Sub-Committee heard that minimal changes had been made and it still encompasses the same guidance. Ms. Sherratt emphasised that the application is robust and that the premises will be supported by family members with extensive experience in order to uphold the licensing objectives. It was requested that the application be granted with the amended conditions as provided.

Mr. Bloomfield had no further comments.

The Senior Licensing Compliance Officer reminded the Sub-Committee of its responsibilities when determining the application.

The Senior Licensing Compliance Officer, the Licensing Compliance Officer, Mr. Bloomfield, Ms. Sherrat, and Ms. Chandrakumar left the meeting to allow the sub-committee to reach a decision.

The Sub-Committee deliberated in private.

The Senior Licensing Compliance Officer, the Licensing Compliance Officer, Mr. Bloomfield, Ms. Sherrat, and Ms. Chandrakumar rejoined the meeting.

The Licensing and Gambling Acts Sub-Committee resolved to:

- **Grant** the application as amended by the applicant in discussion with Thames Valley Police, and as set out in the additional paperwork provided to the Sub-Committee but also subject to one additional amendment to condition 3: the final bullet point would read: 'Crime Reduction, including but not limited to, theft, security, and violence against shop workers'.

Mr. Bloomfield, Ms. Sherrat, and Ms. Chandrakumar left the meeting and did not return.

11. Exempt Matters and Confidential Session

The Sub-Committee resolved that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining items of business on the grounds that their presence would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

12. Application to Review a Premises Licence: Trading Standards, Oxfordshire County Council – Baweja Superstore, 334-336 Abingdon Road, Oxford, OX1 4TQ

The Licensing and Gambling Acts Sub-Committee resolved to:

- **Revoke** the licence.

13. Dates of Future Meetings

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

The meeting started at 6.05 pm and ended at 9.00 pm