

Minutes of a meeting of the Licensing & Gambling Acts Casework Sub- Committee on Monday 30 June 2025

Committee members present:

Councillor Miles

Councillor Rehman

Councillor Ottino

Officers present for all or part of the meeting:

Uswah Khan, Committee and Member Services Officer

Alison Daly, Legal Advisor

John Ali, Licensing Compliance Officer

Emma Thompson, Senior Licensing Compliance Officer

61. Election of Chair for the hearings

Councillor Ottino proposed Councillor Miles as Chair for the meeting; Councillor Rehman seconded.

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

62. Apologies for Absence

None.

63. Declarations of Interest

None.

64. Procedure for the hearing

The Sub-Committee noted the relevant procedure for the hearing.

65. Application for a new Premises Licence – Love Jericho, 30 Walton Street, Oxford, OX2 6AA

Bill Donne (Applicant), Elvis Laci and Gledian Bushi joined the meeting.

The Chair welcomed all attendees. The Sub-Committee and officers introduced themselves.

The Chair outlined the procedure for the hearing.

The Senior Licensing Compliance Officer presented the report, noting the requirement for members to determine an application submitted by Jericho Hospitality Ltd for a New Premises Licence in respect of Love Jericho, 30 Walton Street, Oxford, OX2 6AA

The Senior Licensing Compliance Officer summarised the report, stating that applicant applied for the following:

- Retail Sale of Alcohol (on and off sales), Recorded Music (indoors only): Sunday to Saturday: 10:00 hours to 02:00 hours
- Late Night Refreshment (indoors only): Sunday to Saturday: 23:00 hours to 02:00 hours
- Live Music (indoors only): Sunday to Saturday: 10:00 hours to 01:00 hours

The Sub Committee were informed that the application sought to replace the existing license with the three aims:

- To extend the terminal hour for licensable activities by one hour until 02:00 hours each day
- To adopt new conditions that are robust and meet today's expected standards of operation
- To retrospectively amend the layout of the floor plans lodged with the Licensing Authority

The Sub-Committee understood that a copy of the application could be found in appendix one, with details of both the application and the steps that the applicant intended to take to promote licensing objectives.

The Senior Licensing Compliance Officer explained that there were no representations received by Responsible Authorities, and the applicant had agreed conditions with Thames Valley Police (TVP). The Sub-Committee were informed that during the consultation period, TVP liaised with the applicant to request amendments to the operating schedule to ensure that the licensing objectives were to be upheld. A number of conditions were amended and agreed upon, as found in appendix three of the report.

The Senior Licensing Compliance Officer further added that they had received representation from 12 Interested Parties which can be found in appendix four. Additionally, they received representation from 9 Interested Parties in support of the application which can be found in appendix five.

A map detailing the applicant's premises and the surrounding area, including its proximity to residential areas was enclosed in appendix six.

The Sub-Committee were reminded of its responsibilities under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (to co-operate in the reduction of crime and disorder in Oxford) and the Human Rights Act 1998 (which guarantees the right to a fair hearing for all parties in the determination of their civil rights, and also provides for the protection of property, which may include licences in existence, and the protection of private and family life) 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.

The Sub-Committee were also reminded that they must make one of the following decisions which they consider to be appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives:

- To grant the variation in accordance with the application.
- To modify the conditions of the operating schedule by altering or omitting or adding to them.
- To exclude or restrict a licensable activity from the scope of the licence
- Reject the whole of the application

The Sub-Committee may also grant the licence subject to different conditions for different parts of the premises or the different licensable activities.

The Chair welcomed the Panel to ask questions.

Councillor Ottino asked about the layout, and the Senior Licensing Compliance Officer confirmed that the plans provided were internal layouts. Mr Donne added that the plans reflected what had been applied for and noted that an existing license was already in place. A minor variation application had been submitted two weeks prior to amend the floor layout. That consultation period had concluded, and they were hoping the licensing authority would approve the changes, as they had no impact on fire escapes.

A resident enquired whether the doors should remain closed at all times. The Senior Licensing Compliance Officer confirmed that doors should be kept closed when regulated entertainment, such as a DJ or live band were taking place. This did not apply to background music as that music was not considered regulated entertainment.

The Chair invited the applicant to present to the Sub-Committee.

Mr Donne presented an application on behalf of Jericho Unlimited for a not tied to commercial obligations due to new premises license. Although an existing license was in place, authorising activities until 1am, and 2am on Sundays preceding bank holidays, the intention was to surrender the old license if the new one were granted.

The original application included the provision of live and recorded music, late night refreshment and the sale of alcohol. Live music was proposed until 2am. However, due to objections and resident concerns, the application was amended verbally as follows:

- Live music was removed as a licensable activity, meaning it would only be permitted under the Live Music Act until 11pm.
- Recorded music and alcohol sales to end at 2am on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights, with the venue closing at 1am from Sunday to Wednesday, thus reducing the originally proposed hours.

Mr Donne confirmed that the applicant consulted with TVP prior to submitting the application. TVP had provided a set of conditions during that consultation. These were incorporated into the application and were considered more comprehensive, enforceable and robust than those under the existing license, raising the overall standard. The only point of disagreement with TVP was around radio coverage and Pub Watch membership. Mr Donne stated that Pub Watch should be a voluntary scheme but was in fact a legal entity and as such membership of it gave rise to legal liability with potential legal implications arising if someone were barred. He noted that TVP did not submit a formal objection, nor did any other responsible authorities. Additionally, no objection had been received directly from residents regarding the bar. Mr Donne also suggested that many residents lived at a distance and may not be significantly affected by the premises operation. Mr Donne referenced Section 1a of the statutory guidance, stating that the committee should give weight to the views of enforcement authorities, who had not raised any issues.

Mr Donne emphasised that the applicants had taken residential concerns seriously and made substantial changes to the application, including removing live music and reducing operational hours to address those issues.

The Chair invited questions from the Sub-Committee.

Councillor Ottino asked the applicant about the need for off-sales until 2am. The applicant explained that the licence covered both on and off-sales and that all sales would be in sealed containers. They noted that until March, off-sales were automatically included in most license with on-sales.

Councillor Ottino also asked what the last admission time to the venue would be. The applicant said it would be 15 minutes before bar closing. When further asked if this could be earlier, the applicant maintained that 15 minutes was appropriate, as customers would have 30 minutes to finish their drinks.

Councillor Rehman expressed concern about the terrace being open until 1am, noting it wouldn't make a difference to residents if it remained open that late. He added that if the venue stayed open till 2am, there should be supervisors present at the time. The applicant confirmed there would be supervision on Fridays and Saturdays and agreed that the same would apply to Thursdays if they opened that late.

The Chair asked about participation in the Night Watch scheme. The applicant confirmed that it would cost £450 per year but noted that radio coverage didn't reach the venue. They were informed by a police officer that funding might be available. The Senior Licensing Compliance Officer confirmed that the system didn't cover Walton Street. The applicant commented that while Pub Watch was a good system, participation raised questions about legal liability.

Regarding staff training, the Chair asked if staff were trained. The applicant confirmed that they would implement the Ask Angela initiative and provide staff management training. If the license were granted, notices would be displayed on the back of toilet

doors. The Chair further asked about handling complaints, to which the applicant responded that there was no current system for residents to contact the premises directly but agreed to add a condition for a dedicated hotline managed by the duty manger.

The Legal Advisor asked the Senior Licensing Compliance Officer about the closing times of the nearby venues. The Senior Licensing Compliance Officer provided this information in relation to Raouls Bar, Oxford Wine Café, the Duke of Cambridge and Angels.

The Chair invited the Interested Parties to present.

Tinka Marquardt, a local resident, spoke against the application on behalf of her neighbourhood. She objected on the grounds of four key licensing objectives: the prevention of crime and disorder, the promotion of public safety, the prevention of public nuisance and the protection of children from harm.

Ms Marquardt expressed that the current operating hours of the premises had already led to recurring incidents of public disorder and criminal activity. She listed issues such as excessive noise, public vomiting and urination, overturned bins and rubbish in front gardens. Regarding public safety, she raised concerns about catcalling towards residents, particularly women, and the presence of broken glass posing a hazard to pedestrians and cyclists. Ms Marquardt stressed that extending the operating hours would only worsen the existing problems and make the area increasingly unpleasant and intolerable for residents.

Another resident noted that Walton Street was narrow, making it difficult to manage crowds. She highlighted the challenge of asking people to leave her garden and added that noise from shouting, especially during warm nights, made it impossible to sleep with windows open.

Councillor Pressel addressed the Sub-Committee, stating that Walton Street was a quiet residential street, not a high street, and noted that students living opposite the bar were often disturbed. She warned that later opening hours would attract more intoxicated individuals and set a precedent for other venues to follow. Councillor Pressel also observed that the balcony doors at the premises were never closed, contributing to noise issues, particularly at 2am on Thursday when children had school the next day.

In support of the application, a customer of Love Jericho stated that most of the noise at closing time came from other venues further down the street. She argued that with multiple venues closing at once, foot traffic was inevitable. She added that Oxford had few remaining nightlife venues, and that Love Jericho attracted a respectful, younger crowd with signage asking people to be mindful of neighbours. She also noted that the venue did not operate at all times, especially in colder months.

Another supporter, who lived on Clarendon Street, acknowledged the noise from crowds but stated that the clientele at Love Jericho were pleasant, and he had never witnessed any altercations. He said he believed the noise was due to people (possibly students and other groups) living further up in Jericho returning from late night out in the city centre and could not be attributed only to the venue itself. He appreciated having a local venue to attend, as many people preferred not to travel into the city centre.

The Chair welcomed final questions.

Councillor Rehman inquired about the venue's capacity. The applicant confirmed a fire risk capacity of 120 and a comfort capacity of approximately 95. The venue typically reached capacity on Fridays and Saturdays, while weekday attendance was significantly lower.

The Chair invited the Senior Licensing Compliance Officer, the Applicant and any Interested Parties to make any final comments

The Senior Licensing Compliance Officer clarified once individuals leave a premises, their behaviour becomes their own responsibility, not the venues. She advised that incidents involving university students should be directly reported to the relevant institutions. She also noted the importance of considering staggering closed times, across different venues may aid in customer dispersal which should be taken into account.

Mr Donne summarised by acknowledging the concerns raised by local residents. However, he stated that there was limited evidence to prove that the issues described were directly caused by customers of Love Jericho. He pointed out that TVP had raised no objections and that, since the current management had taken over there had been no recorded complaints. He requested a one-hour extension to the venues operating hours from Thursday to Saturday and indicated a willingness to negotiate on the last entry time if necessary. He also referred to an agreed dispersal policy condition, designed to ensure orderly customer departure and minimise nuisance. Mr Donne emphasised that the venues operators were experienced and respected by the local police.

Interested Parties reiterated their concern about the precedent that might be set if the application were approved, even if judged on a case-by-case basis. They also noted that like the operators, the residents were also respected individuals but lacked the time and financial resources to formally represent themselves.

Mr Donne, Mr Bushi, Mr Laci, the Senior Licensing Compliance Officer, the Licensing Compliance Officer and all Interested Parties left the meeting to allow the Sub-Committee to reach a decision.

The Sub-Committee debated and considered:

- That they acknowledged there were no objections from responsible authorities.
- That three residents attended to voice their objections and raising their concern that approval could set a precedent for future late-night applications, impacting residential amenity.
- However, two supporters had noted that the area is already generally noisy, and it is difficult to attribute specific complaints to the venue.
- That residents had requested no Thursday extension of hours due to nearby schools operating on Friday.

- That there was concern about the balcony and that the doors to it were habitually open and noise from inside the venue leaked out.
- However, that there had been no direct noise complaints associated with the use of the balcony which was a relatively small area.
- That antisocial behaviour was acknowledged in the area, but had not been directly attributed to the venue.

Mr Donne, Mr Bushi, Mr Laci, the Senior Licensing Compliance Officer, the Licensing Compliance Officer rejoined the meeting to hear the Sub-Committee's decision.

The Sub-Committee resolved to:

- **Grant** the application with some modifications, including terminal hours of 1am on Thursday and 2am on Fridays and Saturdays. Last entry was permitted one hour before closing on all nights. Conditions attached to the license include the incorporation of all the Thames Valley Police required conditions, the provision of a hotline phone number for resident groups to report complaints, the implementation of the Ask Angela scheme with appropriate staff training, and activation of the Night Safe radio system once a signal is established. Additionally, the provision for live music was removed from the application.

The Chair notified the applicant that they have 21 days to appeal the decision made during the hearing, via the Magistrates Court, from the date of receiving the decision notice.

Mr Donne, Mr Bushi, Mr Laci, and all Interested Parties thanked the Sub-Committee left the meeting.

66. Application for a New Premises Licence – Khalifa Super Store, 122 Cowley Road, Oxford, OX4 1JE

Mohammed Ali (Applicant) and Russel Sharland (Trading Standard Responsible Authority) joined the meeting.

The Chair welcomed all attendees. The Sub-Committee and officers introduced themselves.

The Chair outlined the procedure for the hearing.

The Senior Licensing Compliance Officer presented the report, noting the requirement for the Sub-Committee to determine an application submitted by Khalifa Super Store Ltd for a New Premises Licence in respect of Khalifa Super Store, 122 Cowley Road, Oxford, OX4 1JE

The Senior Licensing Compliance Officer summarised the report, stating that applicant applied for the following:

- Late Night Refreshment: Sunday to Saturday: 23:00 hours to 03:00 hour

The Sub-Committee understood that a copy of the application could be found in appendix one, with details of both the application and the steps that the applicant intended to take to promote licensing objectives.

The Senior Licensing Compliance Officer explained that during the consultation period, Thames Valley Police (TVP) liaised with the Applicant due to concerns with the terminal hour and shortcomings within the Applicant's operating schedule. TVP and the Applicant agreed on additional conditions to be added to any licence granted and a reduction of hours for licensable activities. The hours were amended to:

- Late Night Refreshment: Sunday to Saturday: 23:00 hours to 01:00 hours

A copy of the correspondence between TVP and the applicant, which included confirmation and agreement of the amended hours and additional conditions, could be found at appendix two.

A valid representation had been received from a Responsible Authority, Trading Standards, due to concerns in relation to the licensing objectives; crime and disorder and protection of children from harm, as detailed in the table below. A copy of the representation could be found at appendix three.

A map detailing the applicant's premises, and the surrounding area was enclosed in appendix four.

The Sub-Committee were reminded of its responsibilities under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the Human Rights Act to consider the fair balance between the interests of the applicant and the rights of local residents, and to ensure that any decision taken is necessary and proportionate to the objectives being pursued. The Senior Licensing Compliance Officer emphasised that any decision taken must promote the licensing objectives and provided procedural advice regarding the Sub-Committee's considerations.

The Sub-Committee were also reminded that they must make one of the following decisions which they consider to be appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives:

- To grant the variation in accordance with the application.
- To modify the conditions of the operating schedule by altering or omitting or adding to them.
- To exclude or restrict a licensable activity from the scope of the licence
- Reject the whole of the application

The Sub-Committee were reminded that they may grant the licence subject to different conditions for different parts of the premises or the different licensable activities.

The Chair welcomed the Panel to ask questions; no questions were raised.

The Chair invited the Applicant to present to the Sub-Committee.

Mr Ali explained that the only objection to the application came from Trading Standards and related to a period before the new owners took place on 1 April. He clarified that he had no involvement with the products or the supermarket, and his role was limited to catering, and he was asked to apply for the license. He stated that the food section occupied 25% of the premises. Mr Ali noted that TVP had agreed to a 1am closing time instead of 3am, hence the amended application.

The Chair invited questions from the Sub-Committee.

Councillor Ottino asked about the ownership. Mr Ali stated the current owner was Mr Hussain Aziz, who was in Iraq and unable to attend due to a lack of flights. He did not know the previous owner. Mr Ali confirmed he was retired and ran a food business. Councillor Ottino further asked if the business had changed to which Mr Ali responded the shop remained 75% supermarket and 25% food.

Councillor Rehman asked if the premises were still operating the same way under new ownership. Mr Ali confirmed they were and said Mr Aziz had taken over and continued operations. When asked about his role, Mr Ali clarified he was listed as the manager only for the application, acting as an agent, not for the shop itself.

There were concerns raised about ongoing court cases and whether the premises were still attracting problematic activity. Mr Ali said he knew Mr Aziz well and confirmed the food and shop sections were now physically separated. He considered them two separate businesses.

The Chair asked when the hot food section started and whether it had a license. Mr Ali said it began when Mr Aziz took over and admitted the food section operated past 11pm without a late-night license. He stated they intended to close at 11pm until they heard from licensing officers.

When asked about who managed the food section, Mr Ali said there was no designated manager and he wasn't involved in daily operations.

The Senior Licensing Officer asked how long Mr Aziz had been away; Mr Ali said four weeks. The Licensing Officer asked that on 15 May, Mr Aziz was informed of the 1am terminal hour condition Mr Ali confirmed he was aware of the changed terminal hour. The Senior Licensing Compliance Officer stated despite being warned via letters dated 24 March and 21 April, the premises operated without a required license, making the activity technically illegal. Mr Ali said he wasn't aware of any trading beyond 23:00 hours following these visits but could be possible.

When questioned about staff documentation and management responsibility, Mr Ali said if the license was granted, conditions would be provided in writing, and it would be up to those involved to comply.

The Chair asked if Mr Aziz owned any other businesses in Oxford and Mr Ali confirmed this was the only one.

The Chair invited the Trading Standards Responsible Authority to present.

Mr Sharland explained that Trading Standards objected to the application due to evidence linking the applicant to the sale of illegal vapes and smuggled tobacco. He emphasised that although ownership had changed, Khalifa Superstore Limited remained the same legal entity. The objection was based on continued activities aligned with criminal objectives. Mr Sharland stated a criminal investigation had resulted in guilty pleas from a former director, while the case against the company itself had been adjourned due to the owner's absence from the country. The business had evaded taxes through smuggled tobacco sales, which undercut legal prices and encouraged continued smoking. Vulnerable customers were particularly affected by the availability of cheaper, illegal products.

Mr Sharland stated that on 1 May of the previous year, illegal vapes were found in the store. Staff on site refused to cooperate and hidden products were discovered behind a magnetically sealed panel smuggled polish cigarettes, nicotine pouches lacking English safety instructions, and other unsafe products were found behind the counter. These items posed serious health risks and lacked age restrictions. The individuals involved were interviewed under caution and faced prosecution. Mr Sharland noted that shortly after the store was sold, a further investigation took place on 21 January this year and staff again refused to cooperate. Officers found 161 nicotine pouches and tobacco products displayed openly and another hidden compartment was discovered, containing large amounts of cash. On 21 February and 16 March, Trading Standards conducted test purchases and illegal vapes were sold both times by the same staff member and the money went directly into the stores till. Another hidden compartment was found behind an electromagnet.

Mr Sharland summarised by stating that Khalifa Superstore claimed the sale of the business took place on 20 March, but a seizure had already occurred on 16 March. Just three business days later, a sale involving a legal document had allegedly been finalised. When the previous owner was interviewed, he claimed no sale had yet been completed and that he had never met the new buyer Mr Hussain, despite records showing they exchanged a signed agreement. Mr Sharland stated that a license is a privilege, not a right and Khalifa Superstore Limited should not be granted one.

The Chair asked whether the current owner was the sole owner and the Mr Sharland confirmed this was the case. When asked how authorities would be notified of the owners return to the UK, it was confirmed that legal teams would communicate directly.

The Chair invited the Senior Licensing Compliance Officer, the Applicant and Trading Standards Responsible Authority to make any final comments

Mr Ali stated that he had advised the owners to keep proper documentation but noted that they preferred informal agreements. When asked about the ownership of the premises, he said the land had two different landlords. He admitted he had initially thought the application was straightforward, but it had escalated into a matter involving criminal activity.

Mr Sharland concluded by reiterating that holding a license is a privilege, and that Khalifa Superstore Limited should not be granted that privilege.

Mr Ali, Mr Sharland, the Senior Licensing Compliance Officer and the Licensing Compliance Officer left the meeting to allow the Sub-Committee to reach a decision.

The Sub-Committee deliberated and considered:

- The likelihood of criminality at the premises as presented by Trading Standards and although the sub-committee had no powers to judge the criminality (this would be for the Courts) they had a duty to ensure the licensing objectives were promoted and upheld.
- That it is for the sub-committee to determine whether the alleged crimes affected the promotion of prevention of crime and disorder.
- That Mr Ali was somewhat removed from the running of the business and that the sub-committee were not persuaded that the licence objectives would be upheld by the new owners of the premises who had not attended.

Mr Ali, Mr Sharland, the Senior Licensing Compliance Officer and the Licensing Compliance Officer rejoined the meeting to hear the Sub-Committee's decision.

The Sub-Committee resolved to:

- **Refuse** the application. The Panel had no confidence that Khalifa Superstores would uphold the licensing objectives. Due to ongoing criminal proceedings, the Panel placed significant weight on the objection from the Trading Standards, and they were not persuaded by representations from Mr Ali that Khalifa Superstore would uphold the licensing objectives. The Panel reiterated that holding a license is a privilege, not a right.

The Chair notified the Applicant that they would have 21 days to appeal the decision made during the hearing via the Magistrates Court from the date of receiving the decision notice.

Mr Ali and Mr Sharland thanked the Sub-Committee and left the meeting.

67. Minutes

The Sub-Committee approved the minutes of the meetings held on 31 March 2025, 12 May 2025, 19 May 2025 and 4 June 2025 as true and accurate records.

68. Dates of Future Meetings

The Sub-Committee noted the dates of the future meetings.

The meeting started at 6.12pm and ended at 9.15pm.

Chair

Date: Thursday 3 July 2025

When decisions take effect:

Cabinet: after the call-in and review period has expired

*Planning Committees: after the call-in and review period has expired and the formal
decision notice is issued*

All other committees: immediately.

Details are in the Council's Constitution.