

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL
LICENSING PANEL (LICENSING ACT 2003 FUNCTIONS)

10.00am 25 JUNE 2025

VIRTUAL

MINUTES

Present: Councillors: Lyons, Nann and Pickett

Officers: Rebecca Siddell, Helen Wilson, Emily Fountain, Emma Grant and Shaun Hughes

PART ONE

1 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

a) Declaration of Substitutes

There were none.

b) Declarations of Interest

There were none.

c) Exclusion of the Press and Public

In accordance with section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 ('the Act'), the Licensing Panel considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during an item of business on the grounds that it was likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press or public were present during that item, there would be disclosure to them of confidential information (as defined in section 100A(3) of the Act) or exempt information (as defined in section 100I of the Act).

RESOLVED - That the press and public would not be excluded from the meeting.

2 TO APPOINT A CHAIR FOR THE MEETING

2.1 Councillor Pickett was appointed Chair for the meeting.

3 COOKES NEWS LICENSING PANEL (LICENSING ACT 2003 FUNCTIONS)

3.1 Emily Fountain introduced the application to the panel.

3.2 The agent acting on behalf of the applicant stated at the start of the hearing that the applicant was willing to reduce opening hours to 23.00 on Friday and Saturday, and 22.30 on Sunday.

3.3 Emma Grant addressed the panel and stated they objected to the application as it ran against the licensing matrix and exceptional circumstances would need to be proved.

Answers to questions for Emma Grant.

3.4 Councillor Lyons was informed that the other off-licences nearby were open from 10.00 to 23.00 and 08.00 to 23.00.

3.5 Ward Councillor O'Quinn addressed the panel and stated that they objected to the application. There were already two off-licences in the road and a third should be refused. The shops are very near each other in a small area in this heavily residential area with a hospital opposite. There is already noise in the road and other issues, leading to lots of objections from residents. The application is not needed or required. The panel were asked to refuse the application.

Answers to questions for the ward councillor

3.6 Councillor Lyons was informed that the Police are aware of anti-social behaviour in the road.

3.7 Harry Young addressed the panel as a local resident and stated that they considered there were too many places selling alcohol already and adding another would create more noise. The shop is also close to a bus stop.

3.8 Nic Roe addressed the panel as a local resident and stated that they considered a third off-licence overkill. The shops in the Montefiore area are changing for the worse, forming a vape shop and alcohol ghetto. Possibly inducing an alcohol war between shops. The application would increase noise and waste in the street. It was noted that there were queues at the existing stores.

3.9 Luke Stanger addressed the panel as a local resident and stated that they considered the application would increase anti-social behaviour. A third off-licence was not required in the family friendly area.

3.10 Nural Islam addressed the panel as a local resident and stated that they objected to the application which was opposite a hospital, and there were other locations offering alcohol including a café and shops nearby.

3.11 Surendra Panchal addressed the panel as the agent acting on behalf of the applicant and stated that the hospital opposite was notified of the application as a responsible authority. The convenience store has been in business for 42 years and had no problems. To help the shop survive they need to sell alcohol. The new owners have 16 years' experience, with no breaches in that time. They also run Wilsons News, and know to request ID cards, following the 'Challenge 25' policy. The shop will display a poster asking customers to leave quietly. CCTV will be in operation with 31 days of recordings for review at any time. All staff will be trained and a manual of training kept, with a right-to-work checklist. The

applicant is happy to abide by the Police conditions, no alcohol above 6%, no promotions, no adverts outside and no deliveries. As stated at the beginning of the meeting, the applicant is happy to reduce opening hours to 22.30 if required.

Answers to questions asked of the agent and applicant

- 3.12 Councillor Lyons was informed that the two extra members of staff will be employed alongside the husband and wife owners, who live above the shop. The applicant confirmed that they have owned the shop since April 2025.
- 3.13 Councillor Nann was informed that the applicant would agree a closing time of 22.00.
- 3.14 Councillor Pickett was informed that the blue areas on the application map were beer shelves in the shop, which sells a wide range of products, as well as lottery tickets and cigarettes. It was noted that the owners were members of the Business Crime Reduction scheme and there have been no noise complaints. It was noted that stats for anti-social behaviour would be held by Sussex Police.
- 3.15 Ward Councillor O'Quinn considered was informed that the Montefiore Hospital was not a NHS hospital, however, the staff do visit the shop where a notice of the application has been displayed. It was noted that no beaches have occurred at the shop, which did not lie within the cumulative impact zone. The applicant stated that they lived in the area and therefore understood the issues with noise and anti-social behaviour. It was stated that the alcohol licence was being requested as earnings have reduced due to the demise of the newspaper trade. The sale of alcohol would hopefully cover the lost revenue. The agent confirmed there would be no proxy sales.
- 3.16 Nic Roe was informed that the responsible authorities were contacted by email. Spire Health Care at Montefiore Hospital would have been contacted by Environmental Health.
- 3.17 Luke Stanger was informed that the no underage sales have taken place at Wilson News and Challenge 25 policy will be used at the new shop.

Summing Up

- 3.18 Emil Fountain summed up the case for the licensing authority.
- 3.19 Ward Councillor O'Quinn summed up and stated that two shops selling alcohol was sufficient and a third was unnecessary.
- 3.20 Emma Grant summed up.
- 3.21 Nic Roe summed up stating that three off licences were unacceptable.
- 3.22 Luke Stanger summed up stating that three off licences was excessive and requested that the application be refused.
- 3.23 Surendra Panchal summed up stating the applicant had a robust operating schedule and the previous owners had been running at a loss.

