

**LICENSING APPLICATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
25 APRIL 2025**

Present: Councillors Dennis (Chair), Asare and Keane.

48. ELECTION OF A CHAIR

Resolved –

That Councillor Dennis be elected as Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

(Councillor Dennis in the Chair)

**49. APPLICATION FOR THE SUMMARY REVIEW OF A PREMISES LICENCE
(INTERIM STEPS PENDING REVIEW HEARING) - GUN STREET GARDEN**

A special meeting of the Licensing Applications Sub-Committee was convened, in accordance with Sections 53A and 53B of the Licensing Act 2003, following an application made by Thames Valley Police on 25 April 2025 requiring the licensing authority (Reading Borough Council), to carry out a summary review of the premises licence in respect of Gun Street Garden, 5 Gun Street, Reading, RG1 2JR.

The application to conduct a summary review had been submitted due to the premises being associated with serious crime and serious disorder following a series of alleged incidents that had taken place during the early hours of Sunday, 20 April 2025.

The application sought the immediate suspension of the premises licence to prevent further serious disorder and to provide a suitable period of time for the premises licence holder to ensure that suitable steps were taken to investigate and respond to the alleged serious failings at the premises.

The Sub-Committee was asked to consider whether interim steps were necessary to either suspend or to modify the premises licence pending the determination of a full review of the licence that would take place within 28 days after the day of receipt of the summary review application.

The Sub-Committee was provided with copies of the following documents via email:

- a copy of the application for the review of the premises licence under section 53A of the Licensing Act 2003 (premises associated with serious crime or disorder) made by Chief Inspector Felicity Parker, Berkshire West LCU Commander, on behalf of the Chief Officer of Police for the Local Command Unit for Berkshire West police area;
- a copy of the certificate under section 53A(1)(b) of the Licensing Act 2003 issued by Chief Superintendent Felicity Parker dated 25 April 2025;
- a copy of the premises licence (LP2003160) dated 16 August 2024;
- an updated version of the premises licence (LMV000493) dated 25 April 2025.

In coming to its decision, the Sub-Committee considered the written material that had been circulated by email for the meeting, the four Licensing Objectives (the prevention of crime and disorder, public safety, the prevention of public nuisance, and the protection of children

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from harm) as well as relevant legislation, guidance and the policies of Reading Borough Council, in particular:

- The Licensing Act 2003 (in particular sections 53A to 53C)
- The Secretary of State's Guidance issued under section 182 of the Act
- Reading Borough Council's Statement of Licensing Policy

Resolved –

- (1) That the urgent nature of the application required the Sub-Committee to make a decision on whether or not to implement interim steps without the premises licence holder being given the opportunity to make representations be noted;
- (2) That it be noted that the Sub-Committee considered it necessary to take interim steps due to the premises being associated with serious crime and disorder;
- (3) That the premises licence in respect of Gun Street Garden be suspended with immediate effect;
- (4) That the Sub-Committee's reasons for suspending the premises licence be noted as follows:
 - a) That on Sunday 20 April 2025 at 02:00 am a serious assault took place on the premises whereby a male threw a hard plastic glass and threw a punch at the face of a female, requiring the female to attend hospital, security staff had allowed the male to freely leave the premises without apprehending him or calling for assistance from the police;
 - b) That on Sunday 20 April 2025 at approximately 03:37 am a report of public disorder was made, the police response to the incident caused the majority of Reading's police resources to be tied up for over one and a half hours;
 - c) That about 200 people were gathered outside the premises, and some security staff had been antagonistic to the police and appeared to be associated with problematic individuals in the crowd;
 - d) That the suspension of the licence was proportionate to the serious criminality and public disorder, furthermore there were other potentially high-risk events planned, and persons turning up to attend those events would be more liable to cause serious public disorder if the premises remained open;
 - e) The police did not have confidence in the Security Industry Authority (SIA) licenced staff employed by the premises;

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- f) That, if required, an appeal against the interim steps imposed on the business could be considered at the meeting of the Licensing Applications Sub-Committee scheduled on 29 April 2025.

(The meeting was conducted remotely via Microsoft Teams)

(The meeting started at 4.00 pm and closed at 4.18 pm)