

THAMES VALLEY POLICE

Division/Station : Reading Police Station Licensing Dept

From : C2107 Declan Smyth

To : Reading Borough Council

Ref : SMARTTECH READING LTD, Reading Local, 88 Broad Street, Reading, RG1 2AP

Date : 11th December 2025

Subject :

Objection

To whom it may concern

I C2107 Declan Smyth on behalf of the Chief Officer of Thames Valley Police wish to formally object to the proposed applications for an Application for a premises licence and to specify an individual as designated premises supervisor submitted in relation SMARTTECH READING LTD, Reading Local, 88 Broad Street, Reading, RG1 2AP as it is believed that the application in its current format will undermine the four licensing objectives with specific regard to that of the prevention of crime & disorder, public safety, public nuisance and protecting children from harm.

Prior to this application Thames Valley Police can confirm that no contact has been received from the applicant in relation to this application in order to discuss any concerns which we may have had in relation to this and to determine any information that could have been supplied relating to our advice on local issues.

Paragraph 8.46 of the Secretary of States Guidance issued under Sec 182 Licensing Act 2003 states "While applicants are not required to seek the views of responsible authorities before formally submitting their application, they may find them to be a useful source of expert advice on local issues that should be take into consideration when making an application."

Thames Valley Police believe that due to the exceptional circumstances in this case we are satisfied that the designation of Jalinder Singh Ahuja as the premises supervisor under the premises licence would undermine the crime prevention objective. We also believe that in its current format that this application including the proposed operating schedule and hours of operation regarding the sale of alcohol will undermine the four licensing objectives. The applicant has not sufficiently taken into account concerns relating to public nuisance, crime and disorder within the local area and in our opinion not therefore provided sufficient steps to promote the licensing objectives.

In January 2020 a premises owned and operated by the applicant was inspected by Trading Standards. The officers' uncovered 111.7 litres of non-duty paid spirits and 23.8 litres of counterfeit vodka. The spirits were immediately seized.

Mr Ahuja's company (CM Phones and Foods Limited) was prosecuted after pleading guilty to violations of the Licensing Act, the Trade Marks Act and The Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations.

Appendix: TVP-DS1 AHUJA Disclosure (OFFICIAL SENSITIVE - NOT TO BE SHARED WITH THE PUBLIC)

The current Section 182 Secretary of States guidance states at para 4.69

The police may object to the designation of a new DPS where, in exceptional circumstances, they believe that the appointment would undermine the crime prevention

objective. The police can object where, for example, a DPS is first specified in relation to particular premises and the specification of that DPS in relation to the particular premises gives rise to exceptional concerns. For example, where a personal licence holder has been allowed by the courts to retain their licence despite convictions for selling alcohol to children (a relevant offence) and then transfers into premises known for underage drinking.

Due to its serious nature we believe it represents “exceptional circumstances” as set out above and that his appointment as DPS and Premises Licence Holder of the business would therefore undermine the crime prevention objective.

The current Section 182 Secretary of States guidance states:

10.35 It must be remembered that while the designated premises supervisor or a personal licence holder may authorise other individuals to sell alcohol in their absence, they are responsible for any sales that may be made. Similarly, the premises licence holder remains responsible for ensuring that licensing law and licence conditions are observed at the premises.

Due to the applicant’s history and nature of the previous incidents, it is imperative that the criminal activities and wholesale failures are not repeated.

The applicant has repeatedly fallen short of what Thames Valley Police would expect off of a premises licence holder and or DPS.

Case law within the East Lindsey District Council v Abu Hanif establishes:-

“Importantly the prevention of crime and disorder requires a prospective consideration of what is warranted in the public interest, having regard to the twin considerations of the prevention and deterrence”

Therefor in this situation we would state our opinion that the licensing objectives are prospective and can be preventative and would urge the Licensing Sub-Committee to refuse this application for a premises licence in order to prevent the licensing objectives from being undermined.