

**LICENSING APPLICATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
20 AUGUST 2026**

Present: Councillors Woodward (Chair), Dennis and Stevens.

15. APPLICATION FOR THE GRANT OF A PREMISES LICENCE - M & M FOODS AND WINE, 55 – 57 WOKINGHAM ROAD, READING, RG6 1LH

The Sub-Committee considered a report on an application for the grant of a premises licence in respect of M & M Food and Wine, 33-57 Wokingham Road, Reading, RG6 1LH submitted by Mr Manpreet S Kapoor of Personal Licence Courses UK Ltd, on behalf of Kulwant Singh Gaba of M & M Food and Wine, which was attached to the report at **Appendix MH001**.

The application stated that the premises would operate as an off-licence and convenience store and sought a premises licence authorising the following licensable activities and operating hours:

Sale by Retail of Alcohol (Off the Premises):

Monday to Sunday from 0700hrs until 0000hrs

Hours the Premises is Open to the Public:

Monday to Sunday from 0700hrs until 0000hrs

The report stated that there was currently no licence in force at the premises and the previous premises licence had been surrendered on 17 June 2026.

The report stated that the 28-day statutory consultation period for the application had closed on 15 June 2026. During that period, four valid representations had been received from the following responsible authorities:

1. Ben Williams – Licensing Enforcement Officer for Reading Borough Council;
2. Declan Smyth – Licensing Officer for Thames Valley Police;
3. Alec Coomber – Environmental Health Graduate;
4. Remya Ravindran – Trading Standards.

Copies of the representations were attached to the report at Appendices **MH002**, **MH003**, **MH004** and **MH005** respectively.

The report highlighted that, when considering any application, the Licensing Authority should be aware that Temporary Event Notices (TENs) might be used to authorise licensable activities and might enable a premises to extend the hours or scope of its operation.

The report set out the powers of the Licensing Authority when determining an application for the grant of a premises licence and explained that the Sub-Committee could:

- Grant the application as applied for;

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- Grant the application subject to modifications;
- Refuse the application.

The report stated that, when considering the representations received, the Licensing Authority had a duty to carry out its functions with a view to promoting the four licensing objectives:

- The prevention of crime and disorder;
- Public safety;
- The prevention of public nuisance;
- The protection of children from harm.

The report also stated that any conditions placed on a premises licence should be appropriate and proportionate with a view to promoting the licensing objectives and that the Licensing Authority could amend, alter or refuse an application where it considered it appropriate to do so. In determining the application, the Licensing Authority must also have regard to the representations received, the Licensing Authority's Statement of Licensing Policy and any relevant sections of the statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State under section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003.

The report set out paragraphs from the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy (specifically paragraphs: 1.6, 3.1, 3.2, 5.6, 5.7, 6.1, 6.2, 6.5, 6.11, 6.12, 6.13, 7.2, 7.6, 7.7, 7.12, 8.6, 10.1, and 10.3) and from the Secretary of State's Guidance issued under Section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003 (specifically paragraphs: 1.2 to 1.5, 8.41 to 8.49, 9.12, 9.38 to 9.40, 9.42 and 9.43). The report also highlighted Section 18(6) of the Licensing Act 2003, which required that any relevant representations be considered in the context of the likely effect of the grant of the premises licence would have on the promotion of the licensing objectives. Relevant case law examples were also provided for consideration by the Sub-Committee.

Mike Harding, Licensing Enforcement Officer, Reading Borough Council (RBC), attended the hearing, presented the report and addressed the Sub-Committee.

Ben Williams (Licensing Enforcement Officer, RBC), Declan Smyth (Licensing Officer, Thames Valley Police), Alec Coomber (Environmental Health Graduate, RBC) and Ian Savill (Principal Trading Standards Officer, RBC) attended the hearing on behalf of the Responsible Authorities, addressed the Sub-Committee on their respective representations and asked and responded to questions.

Kulwant Singh Gaba (the Applicant) attended the hearing accompanied by his representative, Surendra Panchal of Personal Licence Courses UK Ltd. The Applicant's representative addressed the Sub-Committee on behalf of the Applicant and responded to questions. The Applicants daughter and son also attended the meeting but did not speak or answer questions.

Resolved -

- (1) That, having reviewed the application for grant of a premises licence in respect of M & M Foods and Wine, 55-57 Wokingham Road, Reading RG6

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1LH, and having taken into consideration the Licensing Act 2003, the Secretary of State's Guidance issued under section 182 of that Act, the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy, and having considered the likely effect of imposing each of the options available to the Sub-Committee under the Secretary of State's Guidance upon the promotion of the four Licensing Objectives, and having read and considered the written reports and representations received from the Applicant, Reading Borough Council Licensing, Thames Valley Police, Environmental Health, Trading Standards and the Premises Licence Conditions proposed and having considered the oral representations made by those present at the meeting, the Sub-Committee concluded that it was appropriate and proportionate to refuse the application for a Premises Licence.

(2)

(3) That the Sub-Committee's reasons be noted as follows:

- (a) The Applicant's willingness to amend and/or add conditions to show, for example, a record of stock being purchased from verifiable outfits and to co-operate with unannounced visits by Trading Standards was accepted as genuine. However, no conditions were capable of addressing the concerns raised by this application.
- (b) It was accepted that Mr Gaba had not committed any offences for many years and that the serious regulatory offences had been committed some time ago.
- (c) It was accepted that Mr Gaba had been involved in other businesses for approximately five years without any issue.
- (d) However, it was noted that Mr Gaba had not registered himself as being responsible for food safety at the premises despite, presumably, knowing that he had to do so and also being put on notice during the course of the application that this needed to be done.
- (e) In addition to the significant concerns that were held about Mr Gaba's personal suitability to be granted a premises licence, there were other issues as set out below.
- (f) It was accepted that the history of the premises, generally, was irrelevant to Mr Gaba's application. However, it was relevant to look at whether Mr Manmeet Singh, who was clearly connected to illegal activity previously would continue to be linked with the premises if a premises licence would be granted.
- (g) It was found that there had been a close link between Mr Manmeet Singh and Mr Gaba previously.
- (h) Mr Manmeet Singh, the applicant's cousin, was working at the premises in July 2026. That was only a few weeks after the Management Agreement had come into force and there was no reason for Mr Manmeet Singh to be at the shop on that date.
- (i) Mr Manmeet Singh did not mention the management agreement when he was working at the shop in July 2026.
- (j) Mr Manmeet Singh had been working at the premises on a number of occasions since the licence was surrendered in June 2026 including after Mr Gaba took over responsibility for the premises.

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- (k) Mr Manmeet Singh had told licensing officers, in July 2026, after the management agreement was in place, that he and Mr Gaba were going to be running the premises together.
- (l) There was clearly, therefore, a link between Mr Gaba and an individual, Mr Manmeet Singh, who had shown an inability to run the same premises lawfully and an unacceptable approach towards complying with the law.
- (m) It was accepted by all parties, including Mr Gaba, that the way that the premises had been run previously was contrary to the licensing objectives in that serious criminal conduct had taken place.
- (n) That serious criminal conduct related to both employment practices and environmental health issues.
- (o) The likely effect of granting a licence would not promote the licensing objectives but would undermine them.

At the meeting the Chair advised the applicant and other parties present that they would be informed of their right of appeal when they were sent a written copy of the Sub-Committee's full decision.

(The meeting started at and closed at 11.55 am)