

# Public Document Pack



## LICENSING COMMITTEE

**Date:** Thursday, 27 March 2025  
**Time:** 6.00pm,  
**Location:** Council Chamber  
**Contact:** Alex Marsh (01438) 242587  
**Committees@stevenage.gov.uk**

Members: Councillors: E Plater (Chair), S Barr (Vice-Chair), M Arceno, S Booth, R Boyle, P Clark, A Elekolusi, A Gordon, C DeFreitas, M Humberstone, L Martin-Haugh, C Parris, A Wells and T Wren

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## AGENDA

### PART 1

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Licensing Committee held on 19 December 2024 for signature by the Chair.

3 – 10

**3. LICENSING HEARINGS - PROCEDURE**

To note the procedure for the hearing of licensing applications and reviews.  
11 – 12

**4. APPLICATION TO VARY DPS ON PREMISES LICENCE - OVAL WINES, 9 THE OVAL, STEVENAGE, SG1 5RA**

To consider any Part 1 business accepted by the Chair as urgent.  
13 – 52

**5. URGENT PART 1 BUSINESS**

To consider any Part 1 business accepted by the Chair as urgent.

**6. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

To consider the following motions –

1. That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they

involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in paragraphs 1 – 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act as amended by Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

2. That Members consider the reasons for the following reports being in Part II and determine whether or not maintaining the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

## **7. URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

To consider any Part II business accepted by the Chair as urgent.

## STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

### LICENSING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Date: Thursday, 19 December 2024

Time: 10.00am

Place: Council Chamber, Daneshill House

**Present:** Councillors: Ellie Plater CC (Chair), Sandra Barr (Vice-Chair), Peter Clark, Alistair Gordon and Tom Wren

**Start / End Time:** Start Time: 10.00am  
End Time: 1.08pm

#### 1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Myla Arceno, Robert Boyle, Stephen Booth, Akin Elekolusi, Coleen Houlihan, Mason Humberstone, Lin Martin-Haugh, Claire Parris and Anne Wells.

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 2 **MINUTES - 28 MARCH 2024**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Licensing Committee held on 28 March 2024 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

#### 3 **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Terms of Reference be noted.

#### 4 **PREMISES LICENCE REVIEW HEARINGS - PROCEDURE**

All parties noted the procedure for the Hearing which had been circulated with the agenda.

#### 5 **APPLICATION TO REVIEW A PREMISES LICENCE - OVAL WINES, 9 THE OVAL, STEVENAGE, SG1 5RA**

The Committee considered an application for a review of the premises licence for Oval Wines, 9 The Oval, Stevenage, SG1 5RA made by Senior Licensing Officer Gill Ackroyd of Hertfordshire Constabulary.

The Council's Licensing Officer presented a report to the Committee outlining the facts of the application. The Licensing Officer advised that the grounds for the review

brought by the Police fell under all four of the Licensing Objectives, prevention of Crime and Disorder, Public Safety, Prevention of Public Nuisance and Protection of Children from Harm.

The application for review was accepted as valid and duly made by the Council on 29th October 2024.

Representations had been made by Hertfordshire Trading Standards, as a Responsible Authority, in support of the review application, based on the discovery on the premises of illegal tobacco products and a prescription-only medication.

No representations were made by other responsible authorities or by members of the public.

The Chair invited all parties to ask questions to the Licensing Officer regarding their report. There were none.

The Chair then invited the Police to state their case.

The Police representatives spoke to the basis of their application for review of the licence. They spoke of incidents connected with the premises and said that they had serious concerns about the management of the premises.

On 3 October 2024 Police had been present when illegal items had been seized. These were illegal tobacco products and cigarettes. A Viagra-type jelly was found in the shop which could only be sold with a prescription. There were items of drugs paraphernalia (a grinder and small bags). £4,000 in cash was found in a bag and was seized. No explanation had been offered for the presence of the cash.

Drugs wipes were used on the visit, which showed strong indications of cocaine use in the toilet, sink and kitchen area, as well as on both sides of the customer counter. However, no drugs were found on the premises.

The License Holder had failed to produce CCTV footage in breach of licence conditions. The request for CCTV footage was made in the light of a very serious incident on 30 August 2024 involving gang violence in the vicinity of the premises. CCTV footage was requested on a subsequent visit to the shop on 3 October 2024 but, again, was not available.

It was a licence condition that the Designated Premises Supervisor, Mr Polat, should be readily available but attempts by the Police to contact him had failed.

The Police were concerned that the "Oval Gang" was using the shop as a base and was dealing drugs either within the shop or in its close vicinity.

The Police believed that the Licence Holder supported customers against the Police and did not co-operate in supporting Police efforts to tackle crime and disorder in the area. On one occasion, gang members escaped through the shop. The Licence Holder had not contacted the Police to alert them to the incident on 30 August despite being present and did not volunteer witness information.

The Police showed CCTV footage of the incident on 30 August 2024. This showed a clash between members of rival gangs, some of whom were seen carrying machetes and knives. A group was shown congregating outside the premises in the lead-up to the incident. The Police believed that those involved had links to “County Lines” drug dealing operations.

The Chair invited the other parties to ask questions to the Police.

In response to questions from the Licence Holder and his representative, the Police confirmed that no drugs or weapons had been found on the premises and that they had not seen drug dealing taking place on the premises. The Police mentioned the absence of CCTV footage from the premises. The Licence Holder’s representative asked the Police why they had not arrested Mr Oruc. The Police said that they did not have evidence to support arrest and clarified that they were not suggesting that Mr Oruc was drug dealing.

The Chair then invited Trading Standards to state their case.

Hertfordshire County Council’s Trading Standards representative said that one of the Department’s roles was to deal with the sale of illegal tobacco. She had attended Oval Wines on two occasions and had seized illegal tobacco on both. She said that it was clear that the tobacco did not comply with packaging regulations which were compulsory for tobacco sold in the UK. It was illegal to sell tobacco which was non-compliant and duty would not have been paid on such tobacco.

It was possible that the tobacco was counterfeit and had been sent for tests. However, the results were not yet available. The representative said that the storage of the tobacco was suspicious, as it was concealed in drink pallets from which cans had been removed and was kept separate from legitimate tobacco which was on sale.

They explained the problems caused by illegal tobacco sales. Counterfeit tobacco infringed intellectual property rights and was often linked to other sorts of criminality such as money laundering and modern slavery. Not complying with packaging requirements undermined the health approach to the sale of tobacco, avoiding the health messages required by law. The non-payment of duty was also serious, as it deprived the Exchequer of revenue and allowed tobacco to be sold more cheaply, making it more attractive to children.

In addition to illegal tobacco, the inspections uncovered the concealed presence of five packets of "Kamagra Oral Jelly" which was believed to contain the same active ingredient as Viagra, which was a prescription-only medicine, and which could not lawfully be sold from the shop.

The Chair invited the other parties to ask questions of Trading Standards. There were none.

The Chair then invited the Licence Holder to state their case.

The Licence Holder, Mr Oruc, and his representative, Mr Hopkins, addressed the Committee. They had submitted a list of additional licence conditions which Mr Oruc would be happy to accept to address the issues raised by the review.

They placed much of the responsibility for issues with the premises on the failings of the Designated Premises Supervisor, Mr Polat. Mr Polat had recently been dismissed and Mr Oruc would personally take on the responsibilities of the DPS.

They stated that Mr Oruc had not worked for the previous owner and had no contact with him and had come to the premises with a clean record.

Mr Oruc's representative criticised the existing licence conditions, saying that they were out of date and the CCTV conditions were "sparse".

The Committee heard that the CCTV was now working satisfactorily. Initially, the hard disk for the system was too small to store CCTV images for the time period required by the licence. This was why the images were not available on the first visit by the Police. Mr Oruc was not aware of the small size of the hard drive and had subsequently replaced it. A failure by his CCTV provider in setting the system was responsible for the absence of images on the second visit.

The presence of illegal products was not disputed but Mr Oruc was unaware of this. The sales had been the responsibility of two members of staff who had been making sales "under the counter". They had since been dismissed. A proposed condition requiring the retention of receipts for tobacco and alcohol products would address the problem.

The £4,000 cash found on the premises had belonged to another member of staff, who had stored it there as it was a safer place to store the cash than the member of staff's shared accommodation.

Mr Oruc was as surprised as the Police about the positive results when the premises were swabbed for drug residue. He thought it was possible that staff may have used drugs in the toilets but he did not understand the results for the shop counter.

Mr Oruc, for the future, was happy not to sell drugs paraphernalia but pointed out that their sale was not unlawful and that the items found were sold in lots of shops. He stated this did not make him a drug dealer.

There was no evidence of weapons on the premises and it was not illegal for young people to visit the premises. However, Mr Oruc was happy for a condition to limit the number of under-18s in the shop to two at a time.

Mr Oruc had no links to the gang. He had no power to stop them congregating outside his shop. He was not acquainted with the alleged gang members. He did not know names but recognised some faces. He said that local traders had massive problems and had complained many times. They didn't call police to incidents as they were fearful. Mr Oruc did not want to be perceived as a "snitch". The Police suggestion that he was linked to drug dealing put him at risk as drug dealers might mistakenly think he was a rival. He said that there was no CCTV evidence of drug

sales to 11-year-olds. Tackling criminality by gangs was the responsibility of the Police, not him. Mr Oruc would welcome a much greater Police presence, including immediately outside his premises.

The Chair invited other parties to ask questions of the Licence Holder.

Mr Oruc was questioned by Police representatives at the hearing regarding CCTV footage of the incident on 30 August 2024. It had become apparent shortly before the hearing that Mr Oruc was visible in the CCTV footage obtained from other sources. He was asked why he had not identified himself as a witness when the Police had requested CCTV footage from him. Mr Oruc said that he had not been asked to make a statement. The Police said that, as Mr Oruc had not said that he was present, they had not known that he was a witness. Mr Oruc said that he didn't want to get involved with Police or gang matters.

Further questions sought to clarify issues around CCTV, the drugs residue found and whether Mr Oruc felt intimidated by the gang presence. Mr Oruc was afraid of being "labelled" by the gang but would welcome uniformed Police presence.

Councillor Barr asked Mr Oruc why he had not called the Police when he became aware of unlawful activities by members of staff. Mr Oruc's representative said that he had not wished to involve the Police.

Cllr Wren asked about the CCTV incident involving the machetes. Mr Oruc said that he had seen a machete and that his main objective was to get everyone away from his business. This explained the apparent gesturing to gang members. People had run into his shop and he had opened the rear door as he wanted to get them out. He did not want a physical confrontation. Mr Hopkins said that the installation of an electronic lock on the front door, along with a "two at a time" rule would tackle issues in the future. Mr Oruc said that he was completely happy to work with the Police.

Cllr Clark clarified how long Mr Oruc had been responsible for the premises and asked whether there had been other incidents. Mr Oruc said that there had been only minor incidents and confirmed that these had been recorded in the incident book.

The Chair invited all parties to sum up.

The Police referred to a meeting with Mr Oruc on 19 April 2023, notes of which were appended to the Licensing Committee report at page 39. (Item B1.) At the meeting Mr Oruc had seemed knowledgeable about licensing issues. At the meeting, the Police had offered help with issues of anti-social behaviour.

Mr Hopkins, for Mr Oruc, stated that they had said what they wanted to say. Mr Oruc deplored the sale of illegal tobacco and other unlawful activities. He had proposed an extensive list of additional conditions and asked that Mr Oruc be given another chance.

It was **RESOLVED** that the premises licence in respect of the premises should be revoked.

## REASON FOR DECISION

The Committee took careful account of all the material before it, including representations made by the Licensee.

The Committee also took account of the statutory guidance published under section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003. Of particular relevance was the guidance from paragraph 11.24 on “reviews arising in connection with crime.

The Committee was guided by paragraph 11.26, which stated:  
Where the licensing authority is conducting a review on the grounds that the premises have been used for criminal purposes, its role is solely to determine what steps should be taken in connection with the premises licence, for the promotion of the crime prevention objective. It is important to recognise that certain criminal activity or associated problems may be taking place or have taken place despite the best efforts of the licence holder and the staff working at the premises and despite full compliance with the conditions attached to the licence. In such circumstances, the licensing authority is still empowered to take any appropriate steps to remedy the problems. The licensing authority’s duty is to take steps with a view to the promotion of the licensing objectives and the prevention of illegal working in the interests of the wider community and not those of the individual licence holder.

Mr Oruc had not disputed incidents of illegality on the premises but denied personal responsibility. Whilst the Committee’s view was that Mr Oruc had done little, if anything, to tackle illegality, the guidance makes it clear that personal culpability is not the issue.

Paragraph 11.27 said that there is “certain criminal activity that may arise in connection with licensed premises which should be treated particularly seriously”. These included the use of licences premises “for the sale or storage of smuggled tobacco and alcohol”. It was not clear whether the illegal tobacco found at the premises was smuggled or counterfeit but in either case the Committee decided to treat this particularly seriously.

Paragraph 11.27 also referred to the use of licensed premises “as the base for the organisation of criminal activity, particularly by gangs”. The Committee accepted that the premises were a focus for gangs meeting in the vicinity, it did not find that the premises were used by gangs for the organisation of criminal activity. However, there was evidence of the premises being used for criminal activity, including the seizure of illicit tobacco and prescription-only medication, the significant amount of cash and the extensive cocaine residues found.

The breaches of the licence conditions relating to CCTV and the availability of the Designated Premises Supervisor were the personal responsibility of the licence holder, who could not avoid responsibility merely by saying that they were caused by members of staff. Similarly, the Licensee was responsible for ensuring that the premises were not used for unlawful purposes.

The Committee concluded that the incidents referred to above meant that the operation of the premises did not promote, and were to the detriment, of the



licensing objectives:

### **The prevention of crime and disorder**

The premises failed to promote this objective as a result of the incidents of breaches of licence including the failure to record CCTV properly and to ensure that the Designated Premises Supervisor was available.

The premises also failed to promote this objective as a result of multiple instances of illegality in the use of the premises, including the discovery of cocaine residue, and the finding of illegal tobacco products and prescription-only medication.

The licence holder failed to engage proactively with the Police in tackling issues of illegality and anti-social behaviour.

Whilst not in itself unlawful, the sale of drugs paraphernalia from the shop was not helpful in promoting this objective in a location which had clear problems with drug use and drug dealing.

### **Public Safety**

The premises failed to promote this objective by acting as a base for a local gang to congregate. The gang was associated with illegal activities and anti-social behaviour. The incident of 30 August 2024 involving the use of machetes, and the use of the premises as an escape route, was particularly serious.

The storage of illicit tobacco and prescription-only medication also posed a risk to public safety as did the use of the premises for the consumption of illegal drugs.

### **Prevention of Public Nuisance**

The focus of the premises as an area for congregation by a local gang contributed to public nuisance in the area, as illustrated by the CCTV footage from 30 August 2024.

The Committee also decided that the absence of pro-active engagement by the Licence Holder with the Police in tackling anti-social behaviour and illegality – in fact his admitted avoidance of engagement – was detrimental to the promotion of this activity.

### **Protection of Children from Harm**

The premises were accessible to children and the use of the premises for illegal drug use could place children at risk.

The premises acted as a focus for the congregation of gang members in the vicinity. Some, if not all, of the gang members were young persons. The focus given by the premises to gang congregation was detrimental to this objective.

The Committee decided that action beyond words of advice or a warning was called for. The premises were linked to serious illegality, breach of licence conditions and anti-social behaviour. The Committee therefore considered the other options available to it. These were:

- To modify the conditions of the licence.  
The Committee considered carefully the additional conditions proposed on behalf of Mr Oruc. However, it was clear that Mr Oruc was in significant breach of licence conditions and had, by his own account, exercised little effective management of the premises since becoming the licence holder. The Committee therefore had no confidence that the imposition of additional licence conditions would be an effective step in ensuring the proper promotion of the licensing objectives.
- To exclude a licensable activity from the licence.  
The Committee did not consider that this was a relevant option, given the limited scope of licensable activities covered by the licence.
- To remove the designated premises supervisor.  
The Committee concluded that this would not address the issues that had given rise to the review. In any case, the licence holder was proposing to become the designated premises supervisor and the Committee had little confidence in him exercising a satisfactory supervisory role.
- To suspend the licence for a period not exceeding three months.  
The Committee concluded that suspension would not adequately address the issues leading to the request for a review. There was nothing to suggest that suspension would be adequate in ensuring that the licensing objectives were met.
- To revoke the licence.  
The Committee concluded that this was the appropriate option, given the severity of the issues raised in this review, and taking account of the statutory guidance.

The Premises Licence Holder would be reminded in the decision letter sent to them that there was a right of appeal to the Magistrates Court against the above decision. Such an appeal would need to be submitted to the Magistrates Court within 21 days of receipt of the Committee's decision letter.

## 6 **URGENT PART I BUSINESS**

There was no Urgent Part I Business.

## 7 **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

Not required.

## 8 **URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

There was no Urgent Part II Business.

## **CHAIR**

## STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

### LICENSING COMMITTEE

#### HEARING OF LICENCE APPLICATIONS – PROCEDURE

The Committee will apply the following procedure when considering Premises Licence applications and Review applications to ensure adherence to the rules of natural justice.

1. The Chair will introduce himself/herself and invite the other Committee Members, the Licensing Officer(s), Legal Advisor, Committee Administrator, Responsible Authority representatives, interested parties and the Premises Licence Holder and any representative to introduce themselves.
2. The Licensing Officer will outline the reason for the hearing and report on the facts of the case. Members of the Committee, the Responsible Authority representatives, those who had submitted representations, and Premises Licence Holder (and/or representative) may ask questions of the Licensing Officer.
3. The Responsible Authority representatives may then state their case, calling any witnesses.
4. With the Chair's permission, Members of the Committee and the Premises Licence Holder (and/or representative) may then ask questions of the Responsible Authority representatives.
5. Those who have submitted representations may then state their case, calling any witnesses.
6. With the Chair's permission, Members of the Committee and the Premises Licence Holder (and/or representative) may then ask questions of those who have submitted representations.
7. The Premises Licence Holder (and/or representative) will state their case, calling any witnesses they wish.
8. With the Chair's permission, Members of the Committee, Responsible Authority Representatives and those who have submitted representations may then ask questions of the Premises Licence Holder (and/or representative).
9. The Responsible Authority representatives are then invited to sum up.
10. Those who have submitted representations are then invited to sum up.
11. The Premises Licence Holder (and/or representative) is then invited to sum up.
12. The Committee will retire to consider the matter and make its decision.
13. At the conclusion of its deliberations, the Committee will EITHER return to the meeting to deliver its decision OR inform all parties of its decision in writing as soon as possible after the meeting. In either event, reasons will be given for the Committee's decision.

**NOTES:**

- (1) EACH PARTY WILL BE AFFORDED A REASONABLE AMOUNT OF TIME TO PRESENT THEIR CASE.**
- (2) ALL PARTIES MAY ASK FOR CLARIFICATION OF ANY POINT AT ANY TIME IN THE PROCEEDINGS.**
- (3) THE COMMITTEE ADMINISTRATOR AND COUNCIL'S SOLICITOR WILL BE PRESENT THROUGHOUT THE MEETING AND MAY ASK QUESTIONS AT ANY TIME TO ASSIST THE COMMITTEE.**

Part 1 – Release to Press



Agenda item:

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**Meeting** Licensing Committee

**Portfolio Area** Communities, Community Safety and Equalities

**Date** 27th March 2025

**APPLICATION TO VARY THE SPECIFIED DESIGNATED PREMISES SUPERVISOR OF THE OVAL WINES, 9 THE OVAL, STEVENAGE, SG1 1HF**

**Authors** Mary O'Sullivan | Ext. 2724

**Lead Officers** Julie Dwan | Ext. 2493

**Contact Officer** Mary O'Sullivan | Ext. 2724

**1 PURPOSE**

1.1 To determine an application for the Variation of Specified Designated Premises Supervisor at The Oval Wines, 9 The Oval, Stevenage, SG1 1HF. Senior Licensing Officer Gillian Akroyd, on behalf of Hertfordshire Constabulary, has made representations.

**2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 That the Committee reviews the evidence presented by the responsible authority and the applicant. The licensing authority must restrict its consideration to the issue of crime and disorder and if it considers it necessary, reject the application for this variation, or grant the variation.

**3 SUMMARY OF APPLICATION**

3.1 The current premises licence holder of The Oval Wines, 9 The Oval, Stevenage SG1 1HF, Mr Emrah Oruc, submitted through a licensing agent, an

application to vary the Designated Premises Supervisor from Polat Hasan to Emrah Oruc on 28th February 2025. **A copy of the application is attached at Appendix A.**

- 3.2 On 28th February 2025 Senior Licensing Officer (SLO) Gillian Akroyd submitted a representation to this application stating that Mr E Oruc being the new proposed DPS would undermine the crime prevention objective Section 37 (5) Licensing Act 2003. **A copy of the Police Objection notice is attached at Appendix B**
- 3.3 This application to vary the DPS was accepted as valid and duly made by the Council on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2025.

#### **4 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 4.1 The Oval Wines is located in the shopping precinct at The Oval, Stevenage. It has a premises licence in place which authorises the sale of alcohol for consumption off the premises, Monday to Sunday between the hours of 07:00hrs and 23:00hrs. **A copy of the Premises Licence is attached at Appendix D**
- 4.2 The Police applied to the Council for the review of the Premises Licence for The Oval Wines on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2025 for failing to promote all four of the licence objectives. The application for review was heard by the licensing committee on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2024.
- 4.3 The committee during the review of the Premises licence accepted that there was evidence of multiple incidents of breaches of licence including supply/sales of illegal/illicit products, evidence of drugs paraphernalia and residue of cocaine in various public and private areas of the premises.
- 4.4 The premises have failed to observe their licensing conditions attached to the Premises Licence for The Oval Wines, predominantly Annex 2 Condition 1 which refers to the requirement for a digital CCTV system recording images which will be retained in an unedited form for up to 30 days and which shall be made available to any responsible authority upon request, however on multiple occasions when Police have requested CCTV footage it has been unavailable. The Designated Premises Supervisor at the time, Polat Hasan has also failed to make himself available to Police.
- 4.5 Trading Standards officers have recently seized illegal items from these premises. On two occasions Trading Standards Officer recovered illegal products from The Oval Wines including tobacco pouches, a number of cartons of cigarettes and a number of Viagra jellies, which can only be obtained following a consultation with a pharmacist.
- 4.6 The proposed DPS and Premises Licence holder Mr Oruc identified himself on CCTV footage as being present and gesturing known gang members who had been seen armed with machetes and knives however, he had not previously identified himself as being a witness when Police had approached him at the premises requesting CCTV footage as per the conditions of the premises licence, nor did he call the Police at the time of the incident.

- 4.7 The decision of the committee at the review hearing on 19<sup>th</sup> December was to revoke the premises licence in its entirety. **Notes and matters of fact relating to the hearing can be found in the decision notice which is attached at Appendix C**
- 4.8 The proposed Designated Premises Supervisor, Mr Oruc who is also the licence holder had applied to vary the DPS to himself with immediate effect on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2024. An objection was received by police on 23<sup>rd</sup> December as they believe the appointment of Mr Oruc as designated premises supervisor, would undermine the crime prevention objective. The matter was due to be heard by the licensing committee on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2025 however the application was withdrawn by the applicant on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2025.
- 4.9 A second identical application to vary the DPS to Mr Oruc was received on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2025. Again, an objection was received by police on 21<sup>st</sup> January as they believe the appointment of Mr Oruc as designated premises supervisor, would undermine the crime prevention objective. The matter was due to be heard by the licensing committee on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2025 however the application was withdrawn by the applicant on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2025.
- 4.10 This third identical application to vary the DPS to Mr Oruc was also received on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2025. Again, an objection was received by police on 14<sup>th</sup> February as they still believe that the appointment of Mr Oruc as designated premises supervisor, would undermine the crime prevention objective. The matter was due to be heard by the licensing committee on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2025 however the application was withdrawn by the applicant on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2025.
- 4.11 The fourth identical application to vary the DPS to Mr Oruc was also received on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2025. Again, an objection was received by Police on 29<sup>th</sup> February 2025 as they still believe that the appointment of Mr Oruc as designated premises supervisor, would undermine the crime prevention objective which is now brought before this committee for consideration.

## **5 RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITIES**

- 5.1 Representations to vary the Designated Premises Supervisor can only be made by the Police, who may object to the designation of the new DPS where in exceptional circumstances, they believe that the appointment would undermine the crime prevention objective.

## **6 IMPLICATIONS**

### **6.1 Financial Implications**

There are no financial or resource implications arising from the content of this report.

### **6.2 Legal Implications**

- 6.2.1 The Committee is advised that paragraphs 4.69 - 4.71 of Section 182 Guidance for the Licensing Act 2003 describe the powers of a Licensing

Authority on the determination of an application the decision of the committee is subject to appeal at Magistrates Court.

6.2.2 The committee under Section 39 (89) Licensing Act 2003, must if it considers necessary, reject the application.

6.2.3 The committee must under Section 39 (90) notify the applicant, police and new DPS and must give reasons for its decision.

### **6.3 Policy Implications**

There are no policy implications.

### **6.4 Equalities and Diversity Implications**

6.4.1 Any decision by the Committee is based on evidence before it at the meeting; there are no equalities and diversity implications.

## **7 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

**BD1** Licensing Act 2003 (Section 39 Determination of Section 37 Application)

**BD2** Guidance issued under section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003

## **8 SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**

8.1 On 12<sup>th</sup> February 2025, the Police forwarded an email from PC Steven Hill, who had taken a statement from an ex-employee of Oval Wines in relation to Mr Emrah Oruc, owner and premises licence holder of Oval Wines.

## **9 APPENDICES**

A Application to vary Designated Premises Supervisor

B Police Objection to Variation of Designated Premises Supervisor

C Decision Notice – Revocation of Premises Licences for Oval Wines

D Current Premises Licence and Plan

E Supplementary Information – Witness statement from ex-employee.



## Section 1 of 4

You can save the form at any time and resume it later. You do not need to be logged in when you resume.

System reference

Not Currently In Use

This is the unique reference for this application generated by the system.

Your reference

The Oval

You can put what you want here to help you track applications if you make lots of them. It is passed to the authority.

Are you an agent acting on behalf of the applicant?

- Yes  No

Put "no" if you are applying on your own behalf or on behalf of a business you own or work for.

### Applicant Details

\* First name

Emrah

\* Family name

Oruc

\* E-mail

[REDACTED]

Main telephone number

[REDACTED]

Include country code.

Other telephone number

- Indicate here if the applicant would prefer not to be contacted by telephone

Is the applicant:

- Applying as a business or organisation, including as a sole trader  
 Applying as an individual

A sole trader is a business owned by one person without any special legal structure. Applying as an individual means the applicant is applying so the applicant can be employed, or for some other personal reason, such as following a hobby.

Continued from previous page...

**Address**

\* Building number or name

\* Street

District

\* City or town

County or administrative area

\* Postcode

\* Country

**Agent Details**

\* First name

\* Family name

\* E-mail

Main telephone number  Include country code.

Other telephone number

Indicate here if you would prefer not to be contacted by telephone

Are you:

- An agent that is a business or organisation, including a sole trader
- A private individual acting as an agent

A sole trader is a business owned by one person without any special legal structure.

**Agent Business**

Is your business registered in the UK with Companies House?  Yes  No

Note: completing the Applicant Business section is optional in this form.

Registration number

Business name  If your business is registered, use its registered name.

VAT number   Put "none" if you are not registered for VAT.

Legal status

Your position in the business

Home country  The country where the headquarters of your business is located.

Continued from previous page...

**Agent Registered Address**

Address registered with Companies House.

Building number or name	68
Street	Stoke Newington High Street
District	Hackney
City or town	London
County or administrative area	
Postcode	N16 7PA
Country	United Kingdom

**Section 2 of 4**

**PREMISES DETAILS**

I/we apply to vary a premises licence to specify the individual named in this application as the premises supervisor under section 37 of the Licensing Act 2003.

\* Premises licence number

Are you able to provide a postal address, OS map reference or description of the premises?

- Address     OS map reference     Description

**Address**

* Building number or name	9 The Oval
* Street	Vardon Road
District	Stevenage
* City or town	Hertfordshire
County or administrative area	
Postcode	SG1 5RA
* Country	United Kingdom

**Contact Details**

E-mail	<input type="text" value="[REDACTED]"/>
Telephone number	<input type="text" value="[REDACTED]"/>
Other telephone number	<input type="text"/>

Describe the premises. For example, what type of premises it is

Food Store and Off Licence

Continued from previous page...

**Section 3 of 4**

**SUPERVISOR**

**Full Name Of Proposed Designated Premises Supervisor**

\* First name

\* Family name

\* Nationality

\* Place of birth

\* Date of birth  /  /   
dd mm yyyy

Personal licence number of proposed designated premises supervisor

Issuing authority of that licence

**Full Name Of Existing Designated Premises Supervisor**

First name

Family name

\* Would you like this application to have immediate effect under section 38 of the Licensing Act 2003?

Yes  No

I will notify the existing premises supervisor (if any) of this application

\* Will the premises licence or relevant part of it be submitted with this application?

Yes  No

How will the consent form of the proposed designated premises supervisor be supplied to the authority?

Electronically, by the proposed designated premises supervisor

As an attachment to this variation

Reference number for consent form (if known)

The premises licence holder can continue the supply of alcohol if, for example, the existing premises supervisor is suddenly indisposed or unable to work.

It is sufficient for the licensee to inform the existing premises supervisor in writing, without sharing the specific details of the application.

If the consent form is already submitted, ask the proposed designated premises supervisor for its 'system reference' or 'your reference'

**Section 4 of 4**

**PAYMENT DETAILS**

*Continued from previous page...*

This fee must be paid to the authority. If you complete the application online, you must pay it by debit or credit card.

This formality requires a fixed fee of £23

## DECLARATION

\* I/we understand it is an offence, liable on conviction to a fine up to level 5 on the standard scale, under section 158 of the licensing act 2003, to make a false statement in or in connection with this application.

Ticking this box indicates you have read and understood the above declaration

This section should be completed by the applicant, unless you answered "Yes" to the question "Are you an agent acting on behalf of the applicant?"

\* Full name

\* Capacity

\* Date  /  /   
dd mm yyyy

Full name

Capacity

\* Date  /  /   
dd mm yyyy

**OFFICE USE ONLY**

Applicant reference number	<input type="text" value="The Oval"/>
Fee paid	<input type="text"/>
Payment provider reference	<input type="text"/>
ELMS Payment Reference	<input type="text"/>
Payment status	<input type="text"/>
Payment authorisation code	<input type="text"/>
Payment authorisation date	<input type="text"/>
Date and time submitted	<input type="text"/>
Approval deadline	<input type="text"/>
Error message	<input type="text"/>
Is Digitally signed	<input type="checkbox"/>

[1](#) [2](#) [3](#) [4](#) [Next >](#)

# Consent of individual to being specified as premises supervisor

I **Mr Emrah Oruc** of [redacted] [home address of prospective premises supervisor]

hereby confirm that I give my consent to be specified as the designated premises supervisor in relation to the

application for **VARY DPS** [type of application] by **MR Emrah ORUC** [name of applicant] relating to a

Premises Licence **SBCL0167** [number of existing licence, if any]

for **The Wines, 9 The Oval, STEVENAGE SG1 5RA** [name and address of premises to which the application relates]

and any premises licence to be granted or varied in respect of this application made by **MR Emrah ORUC**

[name of applicant] concerning the supply of alcohol at **The Wines, 9 The Oval, STEVENAGE SG1 5RA**

[name and address of premises to which application relates]

I also confirm that I am entitled to work in the United Kingdom and am applying for, intend to apply for or currently hold a personal licence, details of which I set out below.

Personal licence number **PERS/2023/0476**  
[insert personal licence number, if any]

Personal licence issuing authority **L.B. of HACKNEY**  
[insert name and address and telephone number of  
personal licence issuing authority, if any]

Signed   
\_\_\_\_\_

Full Name **MR Emrah Oruc**  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date **14/02/2025**  
\_\_\_\_\_

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Licensing Act 2003

**REPRESENTATION FORM FROM RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITIES**  
**Stevenage Borough Council LICENSING AUTHORITY**

Responsible Authority: Hertfordshire Constabulary

<b>Your Name</b>	Gillian Akroyd
<b>Job Title</b>	Senior Licensing Officer
<b>Postal address</b>	Stevenage Police Station Lytton Way Stevenage Herts, SG1 1HF
<b>Email Address</b>	<a href="mailto:Gillian.akroyd@herts.police.uk">Gillian.akroyd@herts.police.uk</a>
<b>Contact telephone number</b>	077334496130

<b>Name of the premises you are making a representation about</b>	Oval Wines, application to vary DPS	
<b>Address of the premises you are making a representation about</b>	9 THE OVAL, VARDON ROAD STEVENAGE HERTFORDSHIRE SG1 5RA	
<b>Is this the first objection in respect of these premises</b>	No	Police applied for review of Oval Wines Premises licence on 29 <sup>th</sup> October ,2024. The licence was revoked at a Licensing Hearing at SBC on 19 <sup>th</sup> December 2024. They have been given 21 days right of appeal.

Hertfordshire Constabulary, being a nominated Responsible Authority under the Licensing Act 2003, wish to make representation to this application.

Our representation(s) are made in consideration to the below licensing objectives, as we believe the operating schedule does not adequately demonstrate how you, the applicant will best support this.

**Licensing Objections**

<b>YES</b>	Yes Or No	<b><i>Evidence supporting representation or reason for representation. Please use continuation sheet as required</i></b>
<b>To prevent crime and disorder</b>	YES	<p>The proposed DPS is Premises Licence Holder for Oval Wines.</p> <p>Evidence of multiple incidents of breaches of licence including sales of illegal/illicit products, evidence of drugs paraphernalia and residue of cocaine in various areas of premises.</p> <p>The proposed DPS has been made aware of these breaches, has been warned in writing by SLO Akroyd, and has been viewed on video footage at the scene of crime and disorder. Police have access to this video footage for evidence.</p> <p>Disruption and violent disorder by customers around the vicinity of Oval Wines, regarding activities, including gang related fights, and believed drug exchanges and dealings.</p> <p>Members of the ‘Oval gang’ use this as their hub, and constantly frequent the shop and gather in close proximity outside. Meeting in large numbers as many as 20 to 30 people, smoking and believed to be dealing drugs.</p> <p>There is evidence of drug use in the shop, due to residue being found within that shop, there is no chance of the prospective DPS/owner, who attends the shop on a daily basis, <b>not to being aware of this.</b></p> <p>There are various <b>Intelligence reports</b> which refer to drugs and young males attending the premises, some as young as 11 years of age and there is cause for concern. Knife carrying has also been mentioned. Local authority CCTV has shown recently suspects at the Oval in possession of large machetes chasing this group, (many of whom are children), and some have sought refuge in Oval Wines.</p>
<b>Public safety</b>	YES	<p>As above, the proposed DPS has been on scene when. disruption and violent disorder, by customers around the vicinity of Oval Wines, include gang related fights, and believed drug exchanges and dealings, causing distress and alarm to other businesses and their customers.</p>
<b>To prevent public nuisance</b>	YES	<p>As already stated, members of the ‘Oval gang’ use this as their hub, and constantly frequent the shop and gather in close proximity outside.</p> <p>These males have, and are, causing distress and anti-social behaviour in and around the Oval shopping precinct. Meeting in large numbers as many as 20 to 30 people, smoking and believed to be dealing drugs.</p> <p>Using foul and abusive language, intimidating people visiting the precinct and causing a nuisance to customers and other local businesses. Statement from Policed Sergeant Fathers, NPT, produced.</p> <p>The proposed DPS/owner is aware and there is video footage of him on scene when the gang have entered and exited the premises, during an incident.</p>
<b>To protect children</b>	YES	<p>With regard to the ‘protection of children from harm,’ as already stated. there is evidence of drug use in the</p>

<b>from harm</b>	<p>there are concerns and gang related ASB), there is <b>no chance of the prospective DPS/owner, who attends the shop on a daily basis, not to being aware of this.</b></p> <p>There are various <b>Intelligence reports</b> which refer to drugs and young males attending the premises, some as young as 11 years of age and there is cause for concern. Knife carrying has also been mentioned. Local authority CCTV has shown recently suspects at the Oval in possession of large machetes chasing this group, (many of whom are children), and some have sought refuge in Oval Wines. When requested the licensee and owner/applicant, have been unable to provide footage that shows this incident. This CCTV would be vital in the fight against knife and gang violence.</p> <p>It is also a condition of the premises licence, (Condition 1 of Annex 2) that The Oval Wines have CCTV in place which will record and retain unedited images for up to 30 days and which will be made available to any Responsible Authority on request.</p> <p><b>No calls to Police were received from the premises at the time of this incident.</b></p>
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The below additions to the Schedule as provided at Part 4 of the application, identifies those matters that we believe are necessary, to promote the licensing objectives.

<b>Suggested conditions that could be added to the licence to remedy your representation or other suggestions you would like the Licensing Sub Committee to take into account. Please use separate sheets where necessary and refer to checklist.</b>	<p>Hertfordshire Constabulary is of the view that the proposed DPS will not conform with the licence and has proven, by way of constant breaches to which he will not adhere to it. (</p> <p>Added to this, the use of these premises for the purpose of selling illegal vapes. tobacco/cigarettes, and the evidence of drugs within the shop, Police do not believe that the proposed DPS/Management of the premises can be trusted to adhere to the four Licensing Objectives.</p> <p><b><u>OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:</u></b></p> <p>Attitude of proposed DPS towards Police Officers and Police staff, on occasions, have been unacceptable.</p> <p>The proposed DPS/owner, and staff are believed to be aware of these incidents and behaviours and do nothing to stop this. The proposed DPS/PLH challenges police in support of the youths, indicating that the youths are not doing anything wrong.</p>
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Should you require clarification on any matter being made, please contact the named officer to discuss further.

Signed ...*Gillian Akroyd*.....

Date: ...28/02/2025.....

Note for Officers:

Please submit this form along with any additional sheets to: Licensing at Stevenage Borough Council or email to [licensing@stevenage.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@stevenage.gov.uk)

**This form must be returned within the Statutory Period,**  
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## **DECISION NOTICE**

### **LICENSING ACT 2003**

#### **REVIEW OF PREMISES LICENCE BY STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL LICENSING COMMITTEE**

**PREMISES ADDRESS:** The Oval Wines, 9 the Oval, Stevenage. SG1 5RA

**LICENCE HOLDER:** Emrah Oruc

**REVIEW APPLICANT:** Hertfordshire Constabulary

**DATE OF HEARING:** 19 December 2024

**DATE OF DECISION NOTICE:** 23 December 2024

**DECISION:** To revoke the premises licence

#### **PRESENT:**

- **Councillors**

Ellie Plater (Chair), Sandra Barr, Alistair Gordon, Tom Wren, Peter Clark

- **Council Officers**

Julie Dwan, Mary O'Sullivan Rory Cosgrove - Licensing; Simon Pugh, Legal Advisor; Alex Marsh – Democratic Services;

- **Responsible Authorities**

Police - Gillian Akroyd (Senior Licensing Officer), Sgt Matt Fathers, Sgt Karen Mellor, PC Courtney Kooistra, PC Steven Hill

Hertfordshire County Council Trading Standards - Elaine Knowles

- **Licence Holder - Oval Wines**

Emrah Oruc – Licence Holder; Graham Hopkins, Linda Potter – Licensing advisers.

#### **BACKGROUND:**

1. The Oval Wines is located in the shopping precinct at The Oval, Stevenage. It has a premises licence in place which authorises the sale of alcohol for consumption off the premises, Monday to Sunday between the hours of 07:00hrs and 23:00hrs.

#### **THE APPLICATION**

2. An application for a review of the premises licence for The Oval Wines, 9 the Oval, Stevenage. SG1 5RA had been made by Senior Licensing Officer Gill Akroyd of Hertfordshire Constabulary. Representations have been made by Hertfordshire Trading Standards as a Responsible Authority. No representations were made by other responsible authorities or by members of the public.

3. The basis for the review application is fully set out in the agenda for the Committee meeting. In summary the application for the review cites all four of the licensing objectives and are summarised in the report as follows:

**4. The prevention of crime and disorder**

- 4.1. *Evidence of multiple incidents of breaches of licence including supply/sales of illegal/illicit products, evidence of drugs paraphernalia and residue of cocaine in various public and private areas of the premises. Statements from Police Officers and supporting evidence is contained with this review application.*
- 4.2. *The premises have failed to observe their licensing conditions attached to the Premises Licence for The Oval Wines, predominantly Annex 2 Condition 1 which refers to the requirement for a digital CCTV system recording images which will be retained in an unedited form for up to 30 days and which shall be made available to any responsible authority upon request, however on multiple occasions when Police have requested CCTV footage it has been unavailable. The Designated Premises Supervisor has also failed to make himself available to Police.*
- 4.3. *Trading Standards officers have recently seized illegal items from these premises. On 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2024 Trading Standards Officer recovered illegal products from The Oval Wines including tobacco pouches, a number of cartons of cigarettes and a number of Viagra jellies, which can only be obtained following a consultation with a pharmacist. A witness statement and supporting documents from the Senior Trading Standards Officer have been provided by Police and is contained within this review application.*

**5. Public Safety**

- 5.1. *The Oval has a gang who are using the shop as their base, and are causing anti-social behaviour, and it is believed that they are dealing drugs from the shop. (See drug wipe results). There is evidence of knife related crime in the vicinity. On a daily basis known drug users, dealers and perceived gang members are both inside or just outside of the shop, and it is believed exchanges are being made and deals are taking place.*
- 5.2. *Evidence of multiple incidents of breaches of licence include sales of illegal/illicit products, evidence of drug paraphernalia and residue of cocaine in various areas of premises.*

**6. The Prevention of Public Nuisance**

- 6.1. *Members of the the 'Oval' gang appear to use Oval Wines as their hub, gathering in close proximity outside. Disruption and violent disorder by customers around the vicinity of Oval Wines, include gang related fights, and believed drug exchanges and dealings, causing distress and alarm to other businesses and their customers.*

**7. Protection of children from Harm/ Prevention of Public Nuisance**

- 7.1. *There was evidence throughout The Oval Wines off licence of drug use with the Police drugs wipes highlighting cocaine residue. There are various Intelligence reports which refer to drugs and young males attending the premises, (some as young as 11 years of age) which is a cause for concern. Knife carrying has been mentioned, CCTV shows suspects at The Oval were in possession of large machetes who were seen chasing a group of young people/children, some of whom sought refuge in The Oval Wines. No calls were made to Police regarding this incident from The Oval Wines at the time of the incident and CCTV was not available from the premises as required by the Premises Licence conditions.*

8. *Hertfordshire Police Constabulary are of the view that these premises will not conform, stating that this is evidenced by the sustained noncompliance with the Premises Licence and its conditions. In addition to this, the use of the premises for the purpose of selling illegal vapes, tobacco/cigarettes and evidence obtained of drugs (cocaine) within the shop. Police believe that the failure of the premises licence holder to adhere or promote the four licensing objectives coupled with the absence of the designated premises supervisor from the premises and that they are non-contactable suggests that neither are in a position to continue to manage the premises to meet their obligations under the Licensing Act 2003. It is the request of the Police that the premises licence be revoked in its entirety.*
9. The application for review was accepted as valid and duly made by the Council on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2024.
10. Subsequently Hertfordshire County Council Trading Standards made representations in support of the review application, based on the discovery on the premises of illegal tobacco products and a prescription-only medication.

## **The Hearing**

### **Police Evidence**

11. The Police representatives spoke to the basis of their application for review of the licence. They spoke of incidents connected with the premises and said that they had serious concerns about the management of the premises.
  - 11.1. On 3 October 2024 Police had been present when illegal items had been seized. These were illegal tobacco products and cigarettes. A Viagra-type jelly was found in the shop which could only be sold with a prescription. There were items of drugs paraphernalia ( a grinder and small bags). £4,000 in cash was found in a bag and was seized. No explanation was offered for the presence of the cash.
  - 11.2. Drugs wipes were used on the visit, which showed strong indications of cocaine use in the toilet, sink and kitchen area, as well as on both sides of the customer counter. However, no drugs were found on the premises.
  - 11.3. The License Holder had failed to produce CCTV footage in breach of licence conditions. The request for CCTV footage was made in the light of a very serious incident on 30 August 2024 involving gang violence in the vicinity of the premises. CCTV footage was requested on a subsequent visit to the shop on 3 October 2024 but, again, was not available.
  - 11.4. It was a licence condition that the Designated Premises Supervisor, Mr Polat, should be readily available but attempts by the Police to contact him had failed.
  - 11.5. The Police were concerned that the “Oval Gang” was using the shop as a base and was dealing drugs either within the shop or in its close vicinity.
  - 11.6. The Police believed that the Licence Holder supported customers against the Police and did not co-operate in supporting Police efforts to tackle crime and disorder in the area. On one occasion, gang members escaped through the shop. The Licence Holder had not contacted the Police to alert them to the incident on 30 August despite being present and did not volunteer witness information.

- 11.7. In response to questions from the Licence Holder and his representative, the Police confirmed that no drugs or weapons had been found on the premises and that they had not seen drug dealing taking place on the premises. The Police mentioned the absence of CCTV footage from the premises.
- 11.8. The Police showed CCTV footage of the incident on 30 August 2024. This showed a clash between members of rival gangs, some of whom were seen carrying machetes and knives. A group was shown congregating outside the premises in the lead-up to the incident. The Police believed that those involved had links to "County Lines" drug dealing operations.
- 11.9. In response to questions from the Licence Holder and his representative, the Police confirmed that no drugs or weapons had been found on the premises and that they had not seen drug dealing taking place on the premises. The Police mentioned the absence of CCTV footage from the premises. The Licence Holder's representative asked the Police why they had not arrested Mr Oruc. The Police said that they did not have evidence to support arrest and clarified that they were not suggesting that Mr Oruc was drug dealing.

### **Trading Standards Evidence**

12. Elaine Knowles from Hertfordshire County Council's Trading Standards Department said that one of the Department's roles was to deal with the sale of illegal tobacco.
- 12.1. She had attended Oval Wines on two occasions and had seized illegal tobacco on both. She said that it was clear that the tobacco did not comply with packaging regulations which were compulsory for tobacco sold in the UK. It was illegal to sell tobacco which was non-compliant and duty would not have been paid on such tobacco.
- 12.2. It was possible that the tobacco was counterfeit and had been sent for tests. However, the results were not yet available.
- 12.3. Ms Knowles said that the storage of the tobacco was suspicious, as it was concealed in drink pallets from which cans had been removed and was kept separate from legitimate tobacco which was on sale.
- 12.4. Ms Knowles explained the problems caused by illegal tobacco sales. Counterfeit tobacco infringed intellectual property rights and was often linked to other sorts of criminality such as money laundering and modern slavery. Not complying with packaging requirements undermined the health approach to the sale of tobacco, avoiding the health messages required by law. The non-payment of duty was also serious, as it deprived the Exchequer of revenue and allowed tobacco to be sold more cheaply, making it more attractive to children.
- 12.5. In addition to illegal tobacco, the inspections uncovered the concealed presence of five packets of "Kamagra Oral Jelly" which Ms Knowles believed contained the same active ingredient as Viagra, which was a prescription-only medicine, and which could not lawfully be sold from the shop.

### **The Licence Holder's Evidence**

13. The Licence Holder, Mr Oruc, and his representative, Mr Hopkins, addressed the Committee. They had submitted a list of additional licence conditions which Mr Oruc would be happy to accept to address the issues raised by the review.



- 13.1. They placed much of the responsibility for issues with the premises on the failings of the Designated Premises Supervisor, Mr Polat. Mr Polat had recently been dismissed and Mr Oruc would personally take on the responsibilities of the DPS.
- 13.2. Mr Oruc had not worked for the previous owner and had no contact with him. Mr Oruc had come to the premises with a clean record.
- 13.3. Mr Oruc's representative criticised the licence conditions, saying that they were out of date and the CCTV conditions were "sparse".
- 13.4. The CCTV was now working satisfactorily. Initially, the hard disk for the system was too small to store CCTV images for the time period required by the licence. This was why the images were not available on the first visit by the Police. Mr Oruc was not aware of the small size of the hard drive and had subsequently replaced it. A failure by his CCTV provider in setting the system was responsible for the absence of images on the second visit.
- 13.5. The presence of illegal products was not disputed but Mr Oruc was unaware of this. The sales had been the responsibility of two members of staff who had been making sales "under the counter". They had since been dismissed. A proposed condition requiring the retention of receipts for tobacco and alcohol products would address the problem.
- 13.6. The £4,000 cash found on the premises had belonged to another member of staff, who had stored it there as it was a safer place to store the cash than the member of staff's shared accommodation.
- 13.7. Mr Oruc was as surprised as the Police about the positive results when the premises were swabbed for drug residue. He thought it was possible that staff may have used drugs in the toilets but he did not understand the results for the shop counter.
- 13.8. Mr Oruc, for the future, was happy not to sell drugs paraphernalia but pointed out that their sale was not unlawful and that the items found were sold in lots of shops. This did not make him a drug dealer.
- 13.9. There was no evidence of weapons on the premises and it was not illegal for young people to visit the premises. However, Mr Oruc was happy for a condition to limit the number of under-18s in the shop to two at a time.
- 13.10. Mr Oruc had no links to the gang. He had no power to stop them congregating outside his shop. He was not acquainted with the alleged gang members. He did not know names but recognised some faces. He said that local traders had massive problems and had complained many times. They didn't call police to incidents as they were fearful. Mr Oruc did not want to be perceived as a "snitch". The Police suggestion that he was linked to drug dealing put him at risk as drug dealers might mistakenly think he was a rival. He said that there was no CCTV evidence of drug sales to 11-year-olds. Tackling criminality by gangs was the responsibility of the Police, not him. Mr Oruc would welcome a much greater Police presence, including immediately outside his premises.
- 13.11. Mr Oruc was questioned by Police representatives at the hearing regarding CCTV footage of the incident on 30 August 2024. It had become apparent shortly before the hearing that Mr Oruc was visible in the CCTV footage obtained from other sources. He was asked why he had not identified himself as a witness when the Police had requested CCTV footage from him. Mr Oruc said that he had not been asked to make a statement. The Police said that, as Mr Oruc had

not said that he was present, they had not known that he was a witness. Mr Oruc said that he didn't want to get involved with Police or gang matters.

13.12. Further questions sought to clarify issues around CCTV, the drugs residue found and whether Mr Oruc felt intimidated by the gang presence. Mr Oruc was afraid of being "labelled" by the gang but would welcome uniformed Police presence.

13.13. Councillor Barr asked Mr Oruc why he had not called the Police when he became aware of unlawful activities by members of staff. Mr Oruc's representative said that he had not wished to involve the Police.

13.14. Cllr Wren asked about the CCTV incident involving the machetes. Mr Oruc said that he had seen a machete and that his main objective was to get everyone away from his business. This explained the apparent gesturing to gang members. People had run into his shop and he had opened the rear door as he wanted to get them out. He did not want a physical confrontation. Mr Hopkins said that the installation of an electronic lock on the front door, along with a "two at a time" rule would tackle issues in the future. Mr Oruc said that he was completely happy to work with the Police.

13.15. Cllr Clark clarified how long Mr Oruc had been responsible for the premises and asked whether there had been other incidents. Mr Oruc said that there had been only minor incidents and confirmed that these had been recorded in the incident book.

### **Summing Up**

14. Opportunity was given for the parties to sum up.

14.1. The Police referred to a meeting with Mr Oruc on 19 April 2023, notes of which were appended to the Licensing Committee report at page 39. (Item B1.) At the meeting Mr Oruc had seemed knowledgeable about licensing issues. At the meeting, the Police had offered help with issues of anti-social behaviour.

14.2. Mr Hopkins, for Mr Oruc, stated that they had said what they wanted to say. Mr Oruc deplored the sale of illegal tobacco and other unlawful activities. He had proposed an extensive list of additional conditions and asked that Mr Oruc be given another chance.

### **Findings of fact**

15. The facts were, largely, not in dispute, although responsibility for the incidents that led to the review application was contested.

15.1. The Licensing Committee made the following findings of fact:

15.1.1. The Licensee had breached the licence condition requiring CCTV images to be available for inspection in an unedited form for up to 30 days.

15.1.2. The Designated Premises Supervisor had failed to make himself available to the Police, as required by the licence.

15.1.3. The premises were used for the storage of illicit/illegal tobacco products and prescription-only medicines.

15.1.4. The premises were used for the sale of drugs paraphernalia.

- 15.1.5. There was clear evidence of unlawful drug use within the premises, as shown by the positive results for cocaine shown by swabbing.
- 15.1.6. The premises acted as a focus for a local gang, which congregated in the vicinity of the shop. Gang activity was linked to incidents of violence and disorder, as shown in the CCTV footage from 30 August 202.
- 15.1.7.** Mr Oruc had not pro-actively co-operated with the Police in addressing incidents of illegality and anti-social behaviour.

### **Decision**

16. The Committee's decision is that the premises licence in respect of the premises should be revoked.

### **The Licensing Objectives**

17. The Committee took careful account of all the material before it, including representations made by the Licensee.

17.1. The Committee also took account of the statutory guidance published under section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003. Of particular relevance is the guidance from paragraph 11.24 on "reviews arising in connection with crime.

17.2. The Committee was guided by paragraph 11.26, which states:

*Where the licensing authority is conducting a review on the grounds that the premises have been used for criminal purposes, its role is solely to determine what steps should be taken in connection with the premises licence, for the promotion of the crime prevention objective. It is important to recognise that certain criminal activity or associated problems may be taking place or have taken place despite the best efforts of the licence holder and the staff working at the premises and despite full compliance with the conditions attached to the licence. In such circumstances, the licensing authority is still empowered to take any appropriate steps to remedy the problems. The licensing authority's duty is to take steps with a view to the promotion of the licensing objectives and the prevention of illegal working in the interests of the wider community and not those of the individual licence holder.*

- 17.3. Mr Oruc had not disputed incidents of illegality on the premises but denied personal responsibility. Whilst the Committee's view was that Mr Oruc had done little, if anything, to tackle illegality, the guidance makes it clear that personal culpability is not the issue.
- 17.4. Paragraph 11.27 says that there is "certain criminal activity that may arise in connection with licensed premises which should be treated particularly seriously". These include the use of licensed premises "for the sale or storage of smuggled tobacco and alcohol". It was not clear whether the illegal tobacco found at the premises was smuggled or counterfeit but in either case the Committee decided to treat this particularly seriously.
- 17.5. Paragraph 11.27 also refers to the use of licensed premises "as the base for the organisation of criminal activity, particularly by gangs". The Committee accepted that the premises were a focus for gangs meeting in the vicinity, it did not find that the premises were used by gangs for the organisation of criminal activity. However, there was evidence of the premises being used for criminal activity, including the seizure of illicit tobacco and prescription-only medication, the significant amount of cash and the extensive cocaine residues found.

17.6. The breaches of the licence conditions relating to CCTV and the availability of the Designated Premises Supervisor were the personal responsibility of the licence holder, who could not avoid responsibility merely by saying that they were caused by members of staff. Similarly, the Licensee was responsible for ensuring that the premises were not used for unlawful purposes.

17.7. The Committee concluded that the incidents referred to above meant that the operation of the premises did not promote, and were to the detriment, of the licensing objectives. Taking these in turn:

#### **The prevention of crime and disorder**

17.8. The premises failed to promote this objective as a result of the incidents of breaches of licence including the failure to record CCTV properly and to ensure that the Designated Premises Supervisor was available.

17.9. The premises also failed to promote this objective as a result of multiple instances of illegality in the use of the premises, including the discovery of cocaine residue, and the finding of illegal tobacco products and prescription-only medication.

17.10. The licence holder failed to engage proactively with the Police in tackling issues of illegality and anti-social behaviour.

17.11. Whilst not in itself unlawful, the sale of drugs paraphernalia from the shop was not helpful in promoting this objective in a location which had clear problems with drug use and drug dealing.

#### **Public Safety**

17.12. The premises failed to promote this objective by acting as a base for a local gang to congregate. The gang was associated with illegal activities and anti-social behaviour. The incident of 30 August 2024 involving the use of machetes, and the use of the premises as an escape route, was particularly serious.

17.13. The storage of illicit tobacco and prescription-only medication also posed a risk to public safety as did the use of the premises for the consumption of illegal drugs.

#### **Prevention of Public Nuisance**

17.14. The focus of the premises as an area for congregation by a local gang contributed to public nuisance in the area, as illustrated by the CCTV footage from 30 August 2024.

17.15. The Committee also decided that the absence of pro-active engagement by the Licence Holder with the Police in tackling anti-social behaviour and illegality – in fact his admitted avoidance of engagement – was detrimental to the promotion of this activity.

#### **Protection of Children from Harm**

17.16. The premises were accessible to children and the use of the premises for illegal drug use could place children at risk.

17.17. The premises acted as a focus for the congregation of gang members in the vicinity. Some, if not all, of the gang members were young persons. The focus given by the premises to gang congregation was detrimental to this objective.

### **Reasons for revoking the licence**

- 17.18. The Committee decided that action beyond words of advice or a warning was called for. The premises were linked to serious illegality, breach of licence conditions and anti-social behaviour. The Committee therefore considered the other options available to it. These are:
- 17.19. To modify the conditions of the licence. The Committee considered carefully the additional conditions proposed on behalf of Mr Oruc. However, it was clear that Mr Oruc was in significant breach of licence conditions and had, by his own account, exercised little effective management of the premises since becoming the licence holder. The Committee therefore had no confidence that the imposition of additional licence conditions would be an effective step in ensuring the proper promotion of the licensing objectives.
- 17.20. To exclude a licensable activity from the licence. The Committee did not consider that this was a relevant option, given the limited scope of licensable activities covered by the licence.
- 17.21. To remove the designated premises supervisor. The Committee concluded that this would not address the issues that had given rise to the review. In any case, the licence holder was proposing to become the designated premises supervisor and the Committee had little confidence in him exercising a satisfactory supervisory role.
- 17.22. To suspend the licence for a period not exceeding three months. The Committee concluded that suspension would not adequately address the issues leading to the request for a review. There was nothing to suggest that suspension would be adequate in ensuring that the licensing objectives were met.
- 17.23. To revoke the licence. The Committee concluded that this was the appropriate option, given the severity of the issues raised in this review, and taking account of the statutory guidance.

### **18. RIGHT OF APPEAL**

- 18.1. Any person who is aggrieved by the Committee's decision has the right to appeal to the Magistrates' Court. Any such appeal must be made within 21 days of the date of this notice. The Committee's decision will not come into effect until the end of the period for appealing the decision or until the conclusion of any appeal.

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LICENSING ACT 2003  
**PREMISES LICENCE**

**SBCL0167**

LICENSING AUTHORITY



**Daneshill House  
Danestrete  
Stevenage  
Herts  
SG1 1HN**

Part 1 – Premises Details

The Oval Wines  
9 The Oval  
Stevenage  
Herts  
SG1 5RA

Telephone Number:

Where the Licence is time limited the dates: - 31 December 9999

Licensable Activities authorised by the licence:

J - Sale of Alcohol

The times the licence authorises the carrying out of licensable activities:

**J - Sale of Alcohol** (Alcohol is supplied for consumption off the Premises)

	<b>From:</b>	<b>To:</b>
Monday-Sunday	07:00	23:00

The opening hours of the premises: **From:** **To:**

Monday - Sunday	07:00	23:00
-----------------	-------	-------

Where the licence authorises supplies of alcohol whether these are on and /or off supplies:

Alcohol is supplied for consumption off the Premises

Part 2

Name, (registered) address, telephone number and email (where relevant) of holder of premises licence:

Emrah Oruc  
90 Colthurst Crescent, London, N4 2FD, ,

**Registered number of holder, for example company number, charity number (where applicable)**

Emrah Oruc

**Name address and telephone number of designated premises supervisor where the premises licence authorises the supply of alcohol:**

Emrah Oruc  
90 Colthurst Crescent  
London  
N4 2FD

**Personal Licence number and issuing authority of Personal Licence held by Designated Premises Supervisor (where the premises authorises for the supply of alcohol):**

**Personal Licence Number:** PERS/2023/0476  
**Licensing Authority:** London Borough Of Hackney



## ANNEX 1 – MANDATORY CONDITIONS

1. No supply of alcohol may be made under the premises licence –
  - (a) at a time when there is no designated premises supervisor in respect of the premises licence, or
  - (b) at a time when the designated premises supervisor does not hold a personal licence or his personal licence is suspended.
2. Every supply of alcohol under the premises licence must be made or authorised by a person who holds a personal licence.
3. (1) The premises licence holder or club premises certificate holder must ensure that an age verification policy is adopted in respect of the premises in relation to the sale or supply of alcohol.  
  
(2) The designated premises supervisor in relation to the premises licence must ensure that the supply of alcohol at the premises is carried on in accordance with the age verification policy.  
  
(3) The policy must require individuals who appear to the responsible person to be under 18 years of age (or such older age as may be specified in the policy) to produce on request, before being served alcohol, identification bearing their photograph, date of birth and either—
  - (a) a holographic mark, or
  - (b) an ultraviolet feature.
4. A relevant person shall ensure that no alcohol is sold or supplied for consumption on or off the premises for a price which is less than the permitted price.

For the purposes of this condition -

- (a) “duty” is to be construed in accordance with the Alcoholic Liquor Duties Act 1979;
- (b) “permitted price” is the price found by applying the formula –

$$P = D + (D \times V)$$

where -

- (i) P is the permitted price,
  - (ii) D is the amount of duty chargeable in relation to the alcohol as if the duty were charged on the date of the sale or supply of the alcohol, and
  - (iii) V is the rate of value added tax chargeable in relation to the alcohol as if the value added tax were charged on the date of the sale or supply of the alcohol;
- (c) “relevant person” means, in relation to premises in respect of which there is in force a premises licence -
    - (i) the holder of the premises licence,
    - (ii) the designated premises supervisor (if any) in respect of such a licence, or
    - (iii) the personal licence holder who makes or authorises a supply of alcohol under such a licence;
  - (d) “relevant person” means, in relation to premises in respect of which there is in force a club premises certificate, any member or officer of the club present on the premises in a capacity which enables the member or officer to prevent the supply in question; and
  - (e) “value added tax” means value added tax charged in accordance with the Value Added Tax Act 1994.
5. Where the permitted price would (apart from this paragraph) not be a whole number of pennies, the price given by that sub-paragraph shall be taken to be the price actually given by that sub-paragraph rounded up to the nearest penny.
  6. (1) Sub-paragraph (2) applies where the permitted price on a day (“the first day”) would be different from the permitted price on the next day (“the second day”) as a result of a change to the rate of duty or value added tax.  
  
(2) The permitted price which would apply on the first day applies to sales or supplies of alcohol which take place before the expiry of the period of 14 days beginning on the second day. .

**ANNEX 2 – CONDITIONS CONSISTENT WITH THE OPERATING SCHEDULE**

- 1)The premises will have CCTV in place. The digital CCTV system shall record images which will be retained in unedited form for up to 30 days and which shall be made available for any Responsible Authority on request.
- 2)A notice shall be displayed requesting that customers respect the rights of local residents by not causing noise or nuisance outside of the premises.
- 3)The Challenge 25 Scheme will operate. Accepted forms of ID (passport, driving licence, PASS cards) will be requested by staff. Notices will be displayed to support.
- 4)A refusals book shall be kept and shall be made available for inspection on request by officers from the Police, Trading Standards or the Licensing Authority.

**ANNEX 3 – CONDITIONS ATTACHED AFTER A HEARING**

**ANNEX 4 – AUTHORISED PLANS**

See one attached plan: Dwg by OZ @NARTS Licensing, Ground Floor Plan. Control by MHR. Dated: 06.01.25



**James Chettleburgh**  
Assistant Director, Planning & Regulation

**Date: 25<sup>th</sup> January 2025**

# PREMISES LICENCE SUMMARY



**Daneshill House  
Danestrete  
Stevenage  
Herts  
SG1 1HN**

## Part 1 – Premises Details

The Oval Wines  
9 The Oval  
Stevenage  
Herts  
SG1 5RA

**Telephone Number:**

**Where the Licence is time limited the dates: - 31 December 9999**

**Licensable Activities authorised by the licence:**

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	<b>From:</b>	<b>To:</b>
Monday-Sunday	07:00	23:00

**The opening hours of the premises: From: To:**

Monday - Sunday	07:00	23:00
-----------------	-------	-------

**Where the licence authorises supplies of alcohol whether these are on and/or off supplies:**

Alcohol is supplied for consumption off the Premises

## Part 2

**Name, (registered) address, telephone number and email (where relevant) of holder of premises licence:**

Emrah Oruc

Registered number of holder, for example company number, charity number (where applicable)

Emrah Oruc

Name of designated premises supervisor where the premises licence authorises the supply of alcohol:

Emrah Oruc

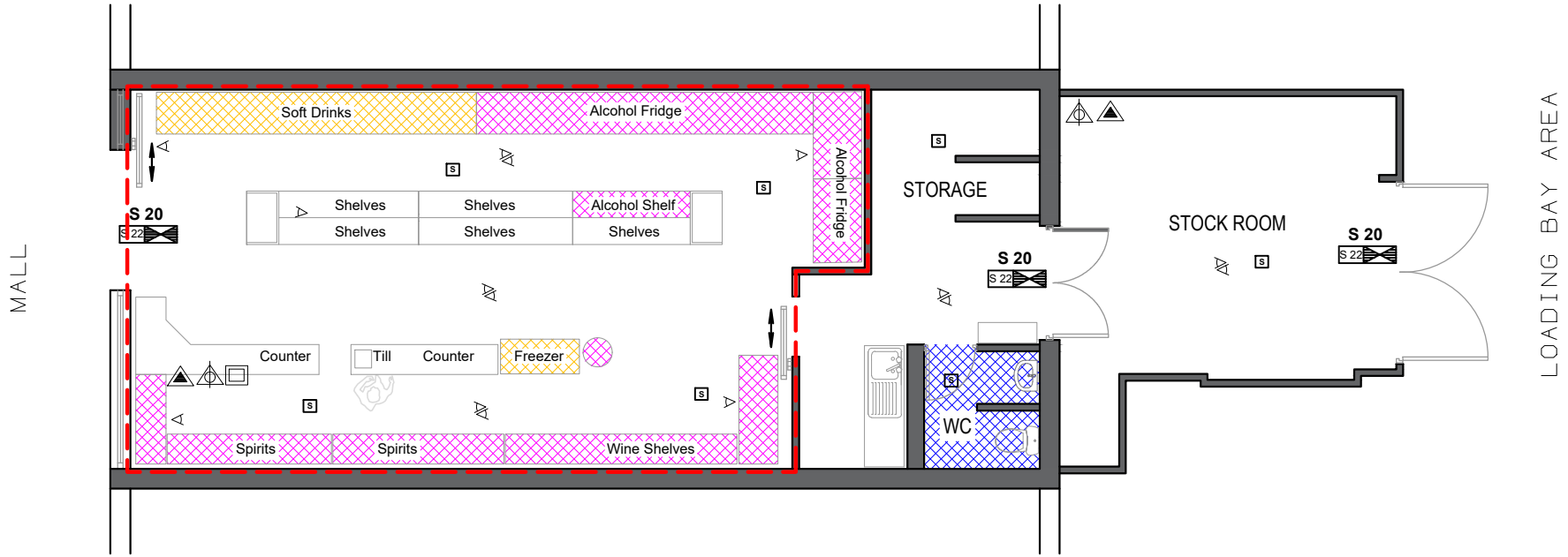
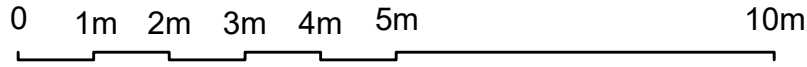
State whether access to the premises by children is restricted or prohibited:

Restricted by virtue of the Licensing Act 2003



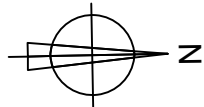
**James Chettleburgh**  
Assistant Director, Planning & Regulation

**Date: 25<sup>th</sup> January 2025**



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LEGEND



- ALCOHOL
- WC AREA
- FRIDGES
- AMBIT OF LICENSED PREMISES
- SMOKE DETECTOR
- S 20 FIRE ESCAPE KEEP CLEAR
- S 22 INTERNALLY ILLUMINATED FIRE ESCAPE SIGN (BS5266)
- S CCTV
- CARBON DIOXIDE FIRE EXTINGUISHER
- WATER FIRE EXTINGUISHER
- FIRE BLANKET

GENERAL NOTES:

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ADDRESS

9 The Oval, Vardon Road STEVENAGE SG1 5RA

DRAWING NAME:

Ground Floor Plan

DRAWING DATE

06/01/2025

SCALE: 1:100 @A4

DRAWN BY: OZ

TOTAL AREA

ADD

SHEET: 1

CONTROL BY: MHR

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**Julie Dwan**

---

**From:** AKROYD, Gillian 7779 <Gillian.Akroyd@herts.police.uk>  
**Sent:** 12 February 2025 13:32  
**To:** Julie Dwan  
**Cc:** FATHERS, Matthew 2332; HILL, Steven 1628  
**Subject:** [External] Statement - [REDACTED]  
**Attachments:** MG11 [REDACTED] 11.02.25.docx

OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE

Good afternoon Julie,

I forward an E mail from Pc Steve Hill, who has taken a statement from the above named, in relation to Mr Emrah Oruc, owner Of Oval Wines.

I also attach the statement from [REDACTED] to be included in both the Review for DPS application for Mr Oruc, and the Appeal Application to be heard at Stevenage Magistrates Court.

Many thanks and kindest regards,

Gill

**Gillian Akroyd 7779**  
**Community Safety Unit**  
**Senior Licensing Officer Stevenage**

**Office:** 01438 757370

**Mobile:** 07734496130

[Gillian.akroyd@herts.police.uk](mailto:Gillian.akroyd@herts.police.uk)



**Prevention First**



In a non-emergency, [report information online](#), [speak to us via web chat](#) or call via 101 (in an emergency, always dial 999).

**From:** HILL, Steven 1628 <[Steven.Hill@Herts.police.uk](mailto:Steven.Hill@Herts.police.uk)>  
**Sent:** 12 February 2025 13:09  
**To:** AKROYD, Gillian 7779 <[Gillian.Akroyd@herts.police.uk](mailto:Gillian.Akroyd@herts.police.uk)>  
**Subject:** RE: Statement - [REDACTED]

Hi Gill,

Just to confirm how we came into this information, we needed to further speak to these former staff members due to seizing some items from the location with trading standards that actually ended up belonging to them and they have since been ruled out of any further action. As part of our further engagement and the fact they both work at another local business on my ward and as part of the follow up they raised they were unhappy with what they had read and being blamed and wanted to provide part of side.

Thanks

**PC Steven Hill 1628**  
**Neighbourhood Team PC**  
SNT Stevenage North

**Office:** Stevenage SNT

[herts.police.uk](http://herts.police.uk)  
Follow us [@hertspolice](#)



**From:** HILL, Steven 1628 <[Steven.Hill@Herts.police.uk](mailto:Steven.Hill@Herts.police.uk)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 11, 2025 4:27:01 PM



To: AKROYD, Gillian 7779 <[Gillian.Akroyd@herts.police.uk](mailto:Gillian.Akroyd@herts.police.uk)>

Subject: Statement - [REDACTED]

**PC Steven Hill 1628**  
**Neighbourhood Team PC**  
SNT Stevenage North

**Office:** Stevenage SNT

[herts.police.uk](http://herts.police.uk)

Follow us [@hertspolice](https://twitter.com/hertspolice)



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Witness Statement

Criminal Procedure Rules, r 27. 2; Criminal Justice Act 1967, s. 9; Magistrates' Courts Act 1980, s.5B

[Empty grid boxes]

Statement of:



Age if under 18 (if over insert "over 18"):

Occupation: Ex Employee

This statement (consisting of .....2... Pages(s) each signed by me) is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it, anything which I know to be false, or do not believe to be true.

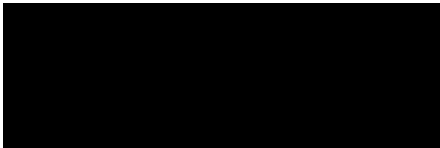
I can confirm that the Victim Personal Statement (VPS) has been explained and offered to me  tick box

I do wish to make a VPS at this time

I understand that I can make a VPS at any time before a sentencing hearing  tick box

\*delete as applicable

Signature:



Date: 11/02/2025

I am the named-above person, and this statement relates to incidents I was witness to in my former employment at OVAL WINES under the management of EMRAH ORUC.

The persons I shall mention in this statement are:

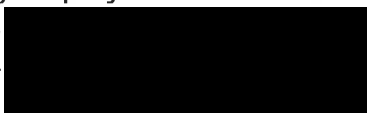
Emrah ORUC, my former manager and owner of OVAL WINES. I know him from my time over 16 months of employment at the location. I shall refer to him as ORUC throughout my statement.

I am making this statement following the local news of the ongoing issues surrounding this premises. I initially worked there doing general day to day duties such as filling shelves with stock and serving customers. I was aware ORUC was the store owner and would cross over with ORUC doing the later shift in the store with myself working mostly in the day time.

Throughout my time there was some clear issues in regards to the legality of some of the stock we were asked to sell. That being in reference to Cigarettes – usually packs of MARLBORO, being asked to sell those for £8 per pack, PACKETS OF TOBACCO for around £20 and VIAGRA JELLIES for £5. We were asked to sell these by ORUC.

The items above, which I suspected were illegal and which was confirmed from the trading standards visit, were stashed into the bottom of other stock by ORUC. He would arrive in his work van at the rear of the store and bring the items in as well as legitimate stock and he himself would place those illegal items in their hidden locations. I am fully aware due to regular customers that this is the same stock the previous owner had been selling as it seemed to be purposely ordered in for these exact people. I do not know them other than they would always attend and ask for these items. This evidently continued throughout my substantial period of time being employed at this location.

Signature:



Signature Witnessed by:

Witness Statement

Continuation of Statement of [Redacted]

I was shocked to read that ORUC was blaming us for this in the recent information in the media and also the other, what I can only describe as a lie about us being sacked by him. Myself and my colleague were not sacked. Following the trading standards visit, I decided I wanted nothing more to do with his store and served my 2 weeks resignation notice. I left of my own accord and seek employment elsewhere. I am offended that ORUC would even consider shouldering the blame onto us when all I did was exactly what he asked me to do every day at work.

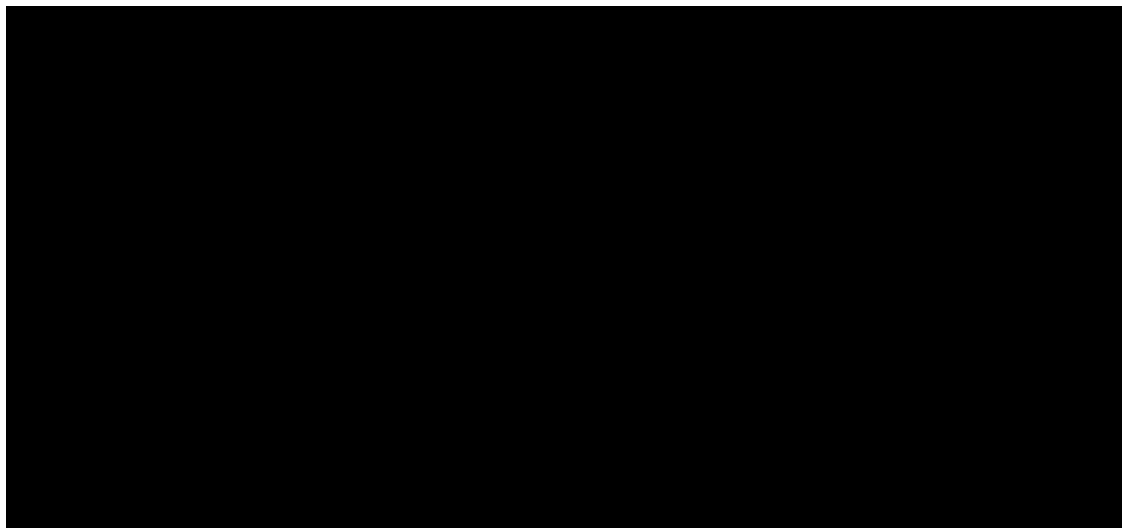
I would sell per shift around £100 of the illegal items. As asked directly to do so by ORUC.

I was also aware that the licence holder was a MR POLLAT, however in the 16 months I never met him at any point throughout to the point.

I have no knowledge of ay drugs involvement from my time working at the store, I do not know what took place after I left work for the day.

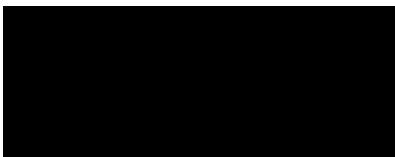
I also want to raise an issue about the CCTV, which I never had access to and could not provide police evidence when asked, is that it clearly worked and whenever I would pass a message to ORUC he would state he would deal with it, but clearly that has not happened. Had we had the appropriate training I would of happily provided whatever footage the Police requested.

I am shocked about the way the blame seems to of been passed onto myself and this has upset me to some degree as I do not want my reputation destroyed by malicious statements. I am a young man with a whole career ahead of me and it is not right to be put in this position. As such this is my statement.



/

Signature:



Signature Witnessed by:

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