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MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of the meeting of Licensing and Regulatory Sub Committee held
at The Council Chamber, County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA with remote
attendance on Thursday, 2nd January, 2025 at 10.00 am**

PRESENT: County Councillor Tudor Thomas (Chair)

County Councillors: Dale Rooke and Jackie Strong

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Linda O'Gorman	Principal Licensing Officer
Taylor Watts	Licensing Officer
Julian Sanders	Solicitor
Richard Williams	Democratic Services Officer

Also in attendance:

PC Mark Williams and PC Luke Dakin

Applicants' representatives: Mr Mohammed Musthakeem Mohammed Ismail and Ms. Michelle Frost

APOLOGIES:

None.

1. Declarations of Interest

None received.

2. Application to vary a Premises Licence – Welsh Street Stores.

We considered an application to vary the premises licence under the Licensing Act 2003 for Welsh Street Stores, 21 Welsh Street, Chepstow for the following:

- Supply of Alcohol (Off sales): Monday to Sunday 06:00hrs – 03:00hrs.
- Open Hours (Standard timings): Monday to Sunday 06:00hrs – 03:00hrs.

However, the applicant had stated that they would make the following amendment:

- Supply of Alcohol (Off sales): Monday to Sunday 06:00hrs – 02:30hrs.
- Open Hours (Standard timings): Monday to Sunday 06:00hrs – 02:30hrs.

https://www.youtube.com/live/UfQONySWA_U?si=CuZc3XIRywkuEMVJ&t=208

The Chair welcomed the applicant's representatives to the meeting and introduced Members of the Sub Committee and the attending Officers and explained the protocol for the meeting.

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The applicant's representatives confirmed their name and address to the Sub Committee. The applicant's representatives confirmed receipt of the report and hearing procedure and acknowledged that they would proceed without legal representation.

The key issues and details were read out to the Sub Committee.

Representatives from Gwent Police presented their objections to the application.

Representation from a local resident objecting to the application was highlighted to the Sub Committee and outlined in the report.

The applicant's representatives were then given the opportunity to address the Sub Committee, to put forward any relevant explanations. Following this, Members of the Sub Committee and representatives from Gwent Police put forward questions to the applicant's representatives and discussion ensued. The applicant's representatives were then given the opportunity to sum up.

Following questioning, the Licensing Sub Committee Members and the Monmouthshire County Council Solicitor left the meeting to deliberate and discuss the findings.

Upon re-commencement, the Solicitor advised that the Sub Committee had considered the issues and had resolved that it was a unanimous decision not to allow the variation to the application until 2.30am for the following reasons:

- Very strong arguments were put forward by Gwent Police with supporting criminal statistics on Antisocial behaviour / Criminality in Chepstow and in Welsh Street.
- There is supporting evidence of an objector who references an instance of someone urinating on her doorstep.
- The sealed bag which has been proposed by the Applicant can be opened using a key and therefore there is no guarantee the bag will not be opened following purchase and before arriving at their home.
- There are vulnerable people who live near the shop who may have addictions and there is a concern of an increase of nuisance behaviour to the residents of Chepstow.
- It would be unreasonable to allow the application in light of the evidence put forward by Gwent Police.
- The Sub Committee is sympathetic towards the financial position of the Applicant.
- The Sub Committee balanced the position of the Applicant, but the evidence of Gwent Police and the objector outweighed the financial reasons put forward by the Applicant.

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3. Application to vary a Premises Licence – Chepstow Store.

We considered an application to vary the premises licence under the Licensing Act 2003 for Chepstow Store, 4-5 Beaufort Square, Chepstow for the following:

- Supply of Alcohol (Off sales): Friday to Saturday 06:00hrs – 03:00hrs.
- Open Hours (Standard timings): Friday to Saturday 06:00hrs – 03:00hrs.

However, the applicant had stated that they would make the following amendment:

- Supply of Alcohol (Off sales): Friday to Saturday 06:00hrs – 02:00hrs.
- Open Hours (Standard timings): Friday to Saturday 06:00hrs – 02:00hrs.

https://www.youtube.com/live/UfQONySWA_U?si=A7ZjlvbgVbRRfcmD&t=4870

The applicant's representatives confirmed their name and address to the Committee. The applicant's representatives confirmed receipt of the report and hearing procedure and acknowledged that they would proceed without legal representation.

The key issues and details were read out to the Sub Committee.

Representatives from Gwent Police presented their objections to the application.

The applicant's representatives were then given the opportunity to address the Committee, to put forward any relevant explanations. Following this, Members of the Sub Committee and representatives from Gwent Police put forward questions to the applicant's representatives and discussion ensued. The applicant's representatives were then given the opportunity to sum up.

Following questioning, the Licensing Sub Committee Members and the Monmouthshire County Council Solicitor left the meeting to deliberate and discuss the findings.

Upon re-commencement, the Solicitor advised that the Sub Committee had considered the issues and had resolved that it was a unanimous decision not to allow the variation to the application until 2.00am for the following reasons:

- The Sub Committee balanced the financial reasons given by the Applicant against the evidence given by Gwent Police supporting their objection to the application.
- The Sub Committee was of the view that the evidence given by the Police that selling alcohol from the premises until 2.00am would increase public nuisance, antisocial behaviour and criminality in Chepstow.
- The Sub Committee was sympathetic towards the financial position of the Applicant.

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- The Sub Committee noted that the premises would close at 2.00am which is before the closure time of one of the nearby night clubs in Chepstow. The Sub Committee was of the view that this alone was not sufficient to allow the application.
- The Sub Committee noted the concerns regarding the potential impact on the vulnerably housed and the impact on the general residents of Chepstow and the Sub Committee referred to the crime statistics provided by Gwent Police.
- The Sub Committee was of the view that allowing the application was likely to increase antisocial behaviour and criminality in Chepstow and the priority was to safeguard the public. Allowing the application would provide those with addiction issues with an increased opportunity to purchase alcohol.

The meeting ended at 12.12 pm.