

Statutory Licensing Sub Committee

A meeting of Statutory Licensing Sub Committee was held on Thursday 23rd October 2025.

Present: Cllr Eileen Johnson (Chair), Cllr Marc Besford and Cllr Elsi Hampton

Officers: Adam Bateman, Michael Fearman, Leanne Maloney-Kelly, Ellie Russell, Natalie Hodgson and Sarah Whaley

Also in attendance: Cllr Shakeel Hussain (Ward Councillor), Alaimagan Thangarajah (Applicant Richardson Road), Mike Thorpe (Agent Richardson Road), Mark Gallant (Applicant McDonalds), Richard Wormald (Legal Rep McDonalds) and Members of the public

Apologies:

SLS/15/25 Evacuation Procedure

The evacuation procedure was noted.

SLS/16/25 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

SLS/17/25 Licensing Act 2003 Application For A Premises Licence Richardson Road Convenience Store – 10 Richardson Road, Stockton-On-Tees, TS18 3LH

Members of the Statutory Licensing Sub Committee of the Council's Statutory Licensing Committee were asked to consider an application for grant of a premises licence under the Licensing Act 2003 for 10 Richardson Road, Stockton-on-Tees TS18 3LH to which there had been representations from responsible authorities, local Ward Councillor and residents.

The application was for the supply of alcohol, off sales:

- Monday to Sunday 06:00 – 23:00
- opening times of Monday to Sunday 06:00 – 23:00.

Representation had been received from the Licensing Authority, Cleveland Police, Environmental Health, Public Health and Community Safety all details of which were contained within the main report.

Representations had also been received from local residents and Ward Councillor Shakeel Hussain, all details of which were contained within the main report.

Since the original report Members were presented with additional information from the applicants representative JL Licensing, in response to representations made, and agreed to reduce the alcohol supply hours as follows:

Monday to Friday 09:00 – 22:00.

In addition, an updated operating schedule was submitted which included the licence conditions proposed by the police. A copy of the updated operating schedule was contained within the additional information document.

Based on the reduction in hours and the updated operating schedule the police, licensing authority, public health, and environmental health formally withdrew their representations against the application.

Following the submission of the reduced hours of alcohol sales and updated operating schedule further supporting information for the hearing was received from JL Licensing, consisting of “examples/samples of the types of due diligence records that would be used at the premises”.

Copies of letters sent to “Community Safety, Councillor Hussain and an open letter to residents were received from JL Licensing which were accessible via the Councils website .

There were also copies of email exchanges between Community Safety and the applicant via his representative full details of which were contained within additional documentation.

The Applicant, Alaimagan Thangarajah and his representative Mike Thorpe were in attendance and were given the opportunity to make representation.

Members of the public and Ward Councillor Shakeel Hussain were in attendance and were given the opportunity to make representation.

The Chair introduced all persons who were present and explained the procedure to be followed during the hearing.

A copy of the report and supporting documents had been provided to Members of the Committee and to all persons that had made representation including the additional information prior to the meeting.

The Licensing Team Leader presented the report and the additional information to the Statutory Licensing Sub-Committee.

Mike Thorpe on behalf of the applicant for 10 Richardson Road, Stockton on Tees presented the application to the Statutory Licensing Sub-Committee.

The main topics discussed were as follows:

- It was explained that the applicant wished to bring an empty commercial shop into use as a general store with the possibility of a Post-Office.
- The premises would not be an off-licence as had been suggested by some of the objectors as an off-licence would be considered a specialised shop and this was a convenience store.
- Most convenience stores sold alcohol.

- The application had been amended to adhere to Stockton Licensing Authorities policy framework.
- The applicant was an experienced retailer with over 21 years' experience in retail management across 10 shops around the country.
- The applicant currently had 2 shops, located in Milton Keynes and South Shields. The applicant had recently relocated to South Shields.
- The applicant had purchased the freehold of the property at Richardson Road showing his commitment to the area.
- The applicant had been a Premise Licence Holder(PLH) and Designated Premises Supervisor(DPS) since 2011 and had a clean record.
- The application included a comprehensive operating schedule following mediation with Cleveland Police, full details of which were contained within the additional information. The amended operating schedule was evidence that the applicant would withhold the licensing objectives and if ignored the agreed conditions would be enforceable, and the applicant could find himself back at Committee with his licence under review.
- Following the submission of the amended operating schedule the Licensing Authority, Cleveland Police, Environmental Health and Public Health withdrew their objections
- The applicants agent expressed that following the resubmission of the operating schedule objectors' concerns should have been addressed. Many of the objectors' concerns related to planning considerations and therefore were not relevant at the hearing.
- The applicant was concerned about future customer concerns, which had been taken seriously and which he felt he could satisfy hence the amended application.
- There were no grounds for refusal, and the application should be granted.

Members were given the opportunity to ask questions of the applicant which could be summarised as follows:

- Questions were raised relating to whether the applicant was a trained postmaster. The applicant confirmed that his sister in-law was already trained, and they were currently in the process of completing the application for a Post-Office to operate in the premises with his sister in-law as postmaster.
- The applicant was asked how hands on he would be at the application site, Richardson Road. The applicant confirmed that he would be the PLH and DPS. The applicant had already identified a proposed manager who was at the hearing observing and once the shop was established and operating well the applicant would transfer the DPS to the Manager, however the applicant would remain the PLH.

- Brief discussion was had around current local issues such as Anti-Social Behaviour, crime etc and whether the applicant would understand them as he had not lived in the area. The applicant's agent explained that the current issues in the area were not unique to Stockton, however the applicant would assist in any way he could to help the situation improve which he had already proven with his set of robust conditions should the application be granted. If there were to be any problems linked to the premises, then the application would be open for review.

Ward Councillor Shakeel Hussain and Members of the public were in attendance and were given the opportunity to make representation / ask questions.

The main topics discussed were as follows:

- Clarity was sought in terms of the transfer of the DPS licence once the shop was established. The applicant's agent explained that although the DPS licence would be transferred the applicant would remain as the PLH, and he would therefore still be legally responsible for the premises, and should any conditions be breached, there would be a risk to losing their licence to sell alcohol.

- It was felt that there had been a lack of consultation with residents, however the Licensing Team Leader explained to the Committee that the correct legal procedure had been carried out, and the application had been made properly.

- Concerns were raised relating to the sale of alcohol near a children's nursery.

- Residents highlighted issues they faced from Anti-Social Behaviour and explained that sex workers and alcoholics were prevalent in the area.

A representative from Stockton Councils Community Safety team submitted his representation to the Statutory Licensing Sub Committee in support of the Licensing Authority's original application. Additional information was also submitted following the submission of the applicants updated application / operating schedule, which, with the agreement of the Chair was read out at the hearing. Full details of both statements could be found on the Councils website.

- The applicant's representative from JL Licensing informed the Committee that he had visited the application site on the previous evening and was surprised how nice the area looked. He explained that he did not encounter many people and neither did he encounter any sex workers. The applicant's representative also pointed out that he could not see how the opening of a shop could create an issue with sex workers and that he had not come across this issue before at a licensing meeting. The applicant's representative also did not think it was fair that the Community Safety representative would be happy if the sale of alcohol finished at 19:00 hours when other convenience stores could sell alcohol until 22:00 hours, in addition the Statutory Licensing Sub Committee had recently approved a variation for a store on Yarm Lane from 22:00 hours to 23:00 hours which was outside of the Councils licensing policy.

- The Councils Community Safety representative highlighted that a lot of work had been undertaken in the area where the application site was to safeguard local residents from the issues that had been highlighted relating to Anti-Social Behaviour, sex workers and alcoholics and therefore did not want anything to undermine that. In terms of the variation application on Yarm Lane this shop was not part of the operation the Community Safety team were involved in.

- Ward Councillor Shakeel Hussain felt that another convenience store selling alcohol within the vicinity of the application site would increase the opportunity for public drinking and Anti-Social Behaviour, as well as encouraging late night activity, noise, and littering. Concerns were also highlighted relating to public risk to young and vulnerable people and that there would be a risk to the protection of children from harm as the application site was close to a children's nursery and school.

- Councillor Hussain also questioned the applicant's knowledge of the area and its problems without having lived there. Should the application gain approval this would impact negatively on residents' lives. One night walking along Yarm Road and Yarm Lane did not allow someone to know the area. Some of the residents at the hearing today had lived close to the application site for more than 40 years and as a community were trying to lift themselves up. Another shop selling alcohol was not needed or wanted. The area was improving, and residents did not want anything to undermine the good work that had been undertaken so far.

- Discussion was had relating to the fact that the shop would not sell high strength single beers and ciders and whether this would ease residents' concerns. Councillor Hussain's mind was not put at rest, he felt that although many conditions had been included in the operating schedule, it would come down to enforcement and there was no guarantee this would happen.

- Attention was drawn to the fact that the applicant was now proposing the possibility of a Post Office which had not been mentioned before and was not guaranteed.

- A local landlord, who spoke on behalf of a local resident stated that the application site was an area of selective licensing. One ground that led to the designation was low housing demand, because of crime, public nuisance, and all the problems highlighted today. What was the point in the Council going to all that trouble, with associated costs and expense, then grant a further licence for alcohol. The application site would become a hub of activity, disorder, nuisance and noise, drawing people to that particular location.

- Brief discussion was had around the refusals policy and whether this included refusing to serve anyone under the influence of drugs.

The applicant's representative was given the opportunity to make a closing statement.

The Sub-Committee considered all the papers before them and listened carefully to everything that had been said. The Statutory Licensing Sub Committee expressed they had a lot of sympathy for the residents and understood their concerns.

The Sub-Committee determined that the premises licence should be granted with all the proposed conditions in place, which they believed would uphold the licensing objectives. Members assured residents that any breaches of the conditions would be dealt with in the appropriate way.

RESOLVED that the application for grant of a Premises Licence for Richardson Road Convenience Store – 10 Richardson Road, Stockton-On-Tees, TS18 3LH with all proposed conditions be granted for the reasons as detailed above.

SLS/18/25 Licensing Act 2003 Application For A Premises Licence Richardson Road Convenience Store – 10 Richardson Road, Stockton-On-Tees, TS18 3LH

Please find the minutes relating to this item detailed at minute number SLS/17/25.

SLS/19/25 Licensing Act 2003 Application For A Premises Licence Mcdonald's Restaurant – Yarm Road, Stockton-On-Tees, TS18 3RU

Members of the Statutory Licensing Sub Committee of the Council's Statutory Licensing Committee were asked to consider an application for grant of a premises licence under the Licensing Act 2003 for McDonald's Restaurant – Yarm Road Stockton-on-Tees TS18 3RU to which there had been representations from residents.

The application was for the late night refreshment:

- Monday to Sunday 23:00 – 00:00

A copy of the full application details and the proposed plan was included the officers main report.

In terms of responsible authorities, licensing conditions had been agreed during the consultation process between the applicant, Cleveland Police and Environmental Health

Representations had been received from local residents, full details of which were contained within the report.

Mark Gallant on behalf of McDonald's and legal representative Richard Wormald were in attendance and were given the opportunity to make representation.

A resident who had made representation was also in attendance and given the opportunity to make representation.

The Chair introduced all persons who were present and explained the procedure to be followed during the hearing.

A copy of the report and supporting documents had been provided to Members of the Committee and to all persons that had made representation prior to the meeting.

The Licensing Officer presented the report to the Statutory Licensing Sub-Committee.

Richard Wormald on behalf of the applicant for McDonald's Restaurant, Stockton on Tees presented the application to the Statutory Licensing Sub-Committee.

The main topics discussed were as follows:

- This was a new McDonalds site and was due to open on 5 November 2025.
- The Sub Committee were informed that the applicant had been employed by McDonalds for many years and had worked his way from the shop floor up.

- The licensing application was to extend the serving of hot food and hot drinks for 1 additional hour from 23:00 hours to 24:00 hours which was within the Councils licensing policy.
- The applicant appreciated resident's concerns however there was a railway line and mature trees creating a division between the application site and residential properties.
- The applicant had given a lot of thought to licensing policy and in the interest of amenity a decision was made for the operational hours to be between 06:00 hours and 24:00 hours.
- There was to be a fence constructed to the rear of the site and lights on the site would be shielded and monitored to ensure minimal, if any, impact on neighbouring residents as well as a traffic management plan, all of which had been considered by the Planning Committee in October 2024.
- Brief discussion was had relating to public nuisance. Environmental Health had proposed conditions which had addressed residents' concerns and there had been no objections by Cleveland Police.
- A brief explanation was given of how a new McDonald's franchise was generally set up.
- The franchisee successfully ran 5 other McDonald's locally, had invested in the new restaurant, had knowledge of the local area and had a commercial desire to make the restaurant work. They also sponsored local football and charities. The franchisee was also committed to addressing any issues from residents should there be any.

Members were given the opportunity to ask questions of the applicant which could be summarised as follows:

- Questions were raised relating to how long after closing the external lights would remain on during cleaning up time and the impact that light pollution may have on neighbouring residents. Brief discussion was also had relating to Anti-Social Behaviour.
- The applicant's legal representative explained that the lighting was low level in the car park and would not affect the neighbourhood. Police had also been involved, and it was not believed that Anti-Social Behaviour would be an issue. Outside seating had been removed and it was expected that there would only be the occasional foot persons and drive through during the requested additional hour. If patrons were to slam car doors when using the drive through, then there was signage asking customers to be respectful of the local area.
- The applicant was asked if the last hour from 23:00 hours and 24:00 hours could be limited to drive through and delivery only
- The applicant confirmed that the request for delivery and drive through only between the 23:00 hours and 24:00 hours could be a possibility, however they would like the licence to be granted as asked.

A resident who had made representation was in attendance and given the opportunity to make representation. Their comments could be summarised as follows:

- Concerns relating to noise were highlighted as well as the 5 conditions which had been proposed by Environmental Health which the resident felt were open to interpretation and therefore needed clarifying.
- Could use of the external area be limited to 19:00 hours?
- Although the external seating had been removed which was appreciated, there were concerns that people would use the car park to sit and eat food in their cars possibly playing music, which, if loud enough would still be heard in resident's homes through the fencing and the trees which separated McDonalds from those properties.
- How would people be stopped from using the car park when the restaurant was closed?
- Would the notices in and around McDonalds asking patrons to leave quietly be enough?
- Questions were raised relating to the music played during operational hours in McDonalds and if this would also be played through the serving hatch?
- Clarity was sought as to the times deliveries would be made and food waste bins collected.
- Would the clearing of litter and food waste on the application site extend to the residential area?

The representative for McDonald's and his legal representative were given the opportunity to respond to the residents' concerns, these could be summarised as follows:

- The applicant explained that McDonalds management were trained in dealing with certain behaviour, such as, if people were using the car park with doors and windows open, they would be asked to be respectful otherwise they would get in touch with the relevant responsible authorities. Residents could also contact the restaurant should they hear noise in their homes coming from the application site. McDonald's as a brand did not tolerate Anti-Social Behaviour and it would be stamped out as quickly as possible.
- It was highlighted by the applicant that the Lidl car park which was the adjacent site could be used by people parking overnight, however no one did. Worst case scenario, a gate could be put in place but was unlikely.
- It was confirmed that music would only be played in the dining area and not be played through the serving hatch.
- It was a customer's responsibility to be a good neighbour and signs would remind them of this, however if there was continued nuisance this would be taken further by management.

- There would be no deliveries or food waste collections between the hours of 23:00 hours and 07:00 hours, and should this be breached then it would be investigated by Environmental Health
- There would be 3 collections of waste from the site per day and those would take place at sunrise, midday and sunset. The areas covered would be the car park and nearest streets. If a hot spot was identified, then the franchisee would look at focusing on that area once a day. Other rubbish would also be collected not just McDonald's rubbish.

The applicant's representative was given the opportunity to make a closing statement.

The Sub-Committee, had considered all of the papers before them and listened carefully to everything that had been said, including the representation made by the resident concerns.

The Sub-Committee had determined that the application should be granted.

RESOLVED that the application for grant of a Premises Licence for For A Premises Licence McDonald's Restaurant – Yarm Road, Stockton-On-Tees, TS18 3RU be granted for the reasons as detailed above.

SLS/20/25 Licensing Act 2003 Application For A Premises Licence Mcdonald's Restaurant – Yarm Road, Stockton-On-Tees, TS18 3RU

Please find the minutes relating to this item detailed at minute number SLS/19/25 .

Chair: