

Minutes of a Meeting of the Licensing Sub-Committee held in the Sedgemoor Room, Bridgwater House, King Square, Bridgwater, TA6 3AR, on Tuesday, 4 March 2025 at 10.00 am

Present:

Cllr Simon Carswell (Chair)
Cllr Marcus Kravis (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Simon Coles

13 Appointment of Chair for the Sub-Committee - Agenda Item 1

Councillor Simon Carswell was appointed as the Chair for this meeting of the Sub Committee.

14 Apologies for Absence - Agenda Item 2

None.

15 Declarations of Interest - Agenda Item 3

None.

16 Minutes of the Sub-Committee - Agenda Item 4

The Sub Committee agreed to authorise the Chair of the meeting to agree the accuracy and sign the minutes as a correct record following circulation of the minutes to the Sub Committee members.

17 Procedure to be followed when considering Licensing Applications under the Licensing Act 2003 - Agenda Item 5

Noted.

18 Application for variation of Premises Licence for NTS Retail, Taunton Road, Bridgwater - Agenda Item 6

The Licensing Officer was invited to introduce the report.

The report stated an application had been made by Winckworth Sherwood LLP on behalf of NTS Retail in accordance with the Licensing Act 2003, for the variation of a

premises licence in respect of 9-11 Taunton Road, Bridgwater, TA6 3LP.

The premises was a petrol forecourt and store, trading as Esso Service Station.

The premises was authorised to supply alcohol for consumption off the premises daily from 05:30 hours through to 02:00 hours and provide late night refreshment daily from 23:00 hours through to 05:00 hours. The premises were open 24 hours a day.

The holder of the licence was seeking to vary the licence to authorise the supply of alcohol 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The application was subject to the usual consultation. The Council had received one representation from Bridgwater Town Council who was opposed to the application.

The representation from Bridgwater Town Council stated they had worked hard with the Neighbourhood Police Team to address the problem of street drinkers and associated Anti-Social Behaviour prevalent in the Town Centre. It was their view that making liquor available on a 24-hour basis on a site adjacent to the town centre would lead to increased levels of crime and disorder and potentially create a public nuisance. Trinity Gardens, close to the petrol filling station, was already a hotspot for street drinkers and having liquor available 24-hours a day nearby could lead to further public nuisance.

The report stated the applicant had liaised with the Police Licensing Practitioner to agree conditions relating to the provision of CCTV, the types of alcoholic sales and the removal of conditions relating to pub watch and footfall records.

There were no other objections to the application.

In response to questions about the report the Officer confirmed the Licensing Authority had not received any complaints about street drinking from that area of town.

Robert Botkai was invited to speak on behalf of the Applicant. He said the premises had a 24-hour licence and could already serve alcohol from 5 am to 2 am the next day. They were not expecting to sale a lot of alcohol in the night.

The Police had spoken to the applicant and conditions had been agreed. As a result, certain products such as white cider and cider in 2 litre bottles would not be sold at the shop at all.

The applicant had written to the Bridgwater Town Council to try and agree the application. They were disappointed no one from the Bridgwater Town Council were at the meeting.

NTS had over 20 stores in the southwest. Their staff were trained and responsible.

In response to questions, the applicant's representative confirmed any products which they had agreed not to sale would not be delivered to the store. There was a

further discussion about the conditions which the Police had required, including the provision of CCTV. He said he had not objected to the conditions even though he felt some of them were not absolutely necessary.

Sim Ahtheeson, the applicant, was employed by NTS as the Area Manager. He confirmed he had not had any issues with street drinkers. He further confirmed his staff had not reported any such problems either.

Members were very disappointed the Bridgwater Town Council had not attended the meeting.

The Chair thanked everyone for their contribution and invited each attendee to sum up their case.

Robert Botkai was invited to sum up on behalf of the applicant. He said reminded Councillors the applicant had agreed conditions with the police. The area where the premises were was not conducive with street drinking.

The Licensing Officer was invited to sum up. She set out the detail of the application and set out the options the Sub Committee had.

The Sub Committee adjourned to make their deliberations.

RESOLVED

That the application be approved and the license variation granted.

All relevant parties to the decision of the Licensing Authority have the right of appeal to Magistrates Court, in connection with this matter. This must be done within 21 days of being notified in writing of the relevant decision.

(The meeting ended at 10.40 am)

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CHAIR