

Ref: Trading Standards Review – 29 London Road



Creating a safer
Cambridgeshire

Wednesday 27th June 2018

Darren Dolby
Licencing Officer
Peterborough City Council
Town Hall
Bridge Street
Peterborough
PE1 1HU

Dear Darren,

Re: Trading Standards review application – 29 London Road Late Store

On the 06th June 2018 Cambridgeshire Constabulary received notification of a Licencing review application submitted by Peterborough City Council Trading Standards. The review application refers to the 'Off' Licensed premises called 'Lifestyle Convenience Store' at 29 London Road, Peterborough, PE2 8AN. The Premises Licence reference 074451 is held by Mr. Ardalan Karim Mahmood of the same address. The designated premises supervisor is Mr Ahmed Sherzad Ghafoor of [REDACTED] Cherry tree Grove, Peterborough, PE1 4NX who holds an Alcohol Personal Licence No: 073602 issued by Peterborough City Council.

The Premises License and Designated Premises Supervisor (DPS) was transferred over on 30th November 2017 to Mr. Mahmood and Mr Ghafoor respectively. The Premises License allows for the sale of alcohol daily between 06:00hrs and 00:00hrs.

Trading Standards, with ongoing support and co-operation of partners including Cambridgeshire Constabulary, have effectively used information collated over a period of time to prove that those connected with this store have been knowingly trading in counterfeit & illicit cigarettes from the premises. Clearly knowing the wrongs in such activity, it is evident that Mr Mustafa and Ghafoor have continued to be a party to the secreting of goods within the store, with a view to selling them from the store, for their or someone else's gain. This leads me to seriously doubt whether Mr Mustafa and Ghafoor are fit and proper to be concerned in the sale of alcohol.

The Premises License Holder, Mr Mahmood, has stated during formal interview that the cigarettes belonged to a third party who left them in the shop. It is my experience from previous unrelated events that this a commonly used tactic to try to mislead or impede the authorities and claim that those found in possession have no ownership or involvement with the illicit goods. The fact is that counterfeit / illicit cigarettes have been found on a number of occasions at this premises, and ordinary members of the public have found it necessary to inform the authorities about the activity.

Cambridgeshire Constabulary fully support the ongoing operation and partnership with Trading Standards and HMRC in a positive effort to prevent and deter counterfeit / illicit cigarettes and alcohol being sold or supplied in Peterborough.

We take a very serious view on the sale of illicit / counterfeit goods. This is a serious breach upon the licencing objective to prevent crime and disorder, and in my opinion does not promote public safety. Such crime has a detrimental effect upon the immediate community and can be harmful to unwitting customers including children. Foreign cigarettes and hand rolling tobacco are not subject to the strict regulation and control measures that would benefit UK authorised sale items and in most cases have not had UK duty paid on them. Distribution and sale of illicit / counterfeit goods is linked to serious and organised crime and nationally is a drain on the economy.

Section 182 Guidance - Licensing Act 2003 Para 11.27 states –

“There is certain criminal activity that may arise in connection with licensed premises which should be treated particularly seriously”.

This includes amongst other criminal activity –

“The sale or storage of smuggled tobacco and alcohol”.

Para 11.28 states –

“It is envisaged that licensing authorities, the police and other law enforcement agencies, which are responsible authorities, will use the review procedures effectively to deter such activities and crime. Where reviews arise and the licensing authority determines that the crime prevention objective is being undermined through the premises being used to further crimes, it is expected that revocation of the licence – even in the first instance – should be seriously considered”.

Cambridgeshire Constabulary support Trading Standards with their review application and also ask for the Licensing Sub-Committee to seriously consider revoking the Premises licence held by Mr Mahmood.

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