

Licensing Sub-Committee

Thursday, 27th November,
2025

MINUTES

Present:

Councillors Matthew Dormer, Andrew Fry and David Munro

Also Present:

Leanne Ringrose (General Manager of Popzone and the applicant),
Shean Keystone (Co-Owner), Robert Edge (applicant's Agent of Licence
Leader Ltd), PC Rebecca O'Keeffe and PC Gemma Gibbs

Officers:

Paul Morrish, Michel Clohessy (of Anthony Collins Solicitors)

Democratic Services Officers:

Gavin Day

1. ELECTION OF THE CHAIR

Councillor Dormer was elected as Chair for the Hearing.

2. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. 25/05484/TEN - POPZONE/GORGEOUS, 12 MARKET PLACE, REDDITCH, WORCESTERSHIRE, B98 8AA

The Chair welcomed all those present to the hearing and introduced
Members and Officers.

All parties in attendance introduced themselves, which included
Leanne Ringrose, the General Manager of Popzone, Shean
Keystone, Co-Owner of Popzone and Robert Edge, the Applicant's
Agent (of Licence Leader Ltd), speaking in support of the

Chair

Licensing Sub-Committee

Thursday, 27th November, 2025

application. PC Rebecca O'Keeffe and PC Gemma Gibbs of West Mercia Police were in attendance to speak in objection.

At the invitation of the Chair, The Technical Officer (Licensing), Worcestershire Regulatory Services, presented the report and detailed that, On 11 November 2025 a temporary event notice (TEN) application was received from Mrs Leanne Jean Ringrose in respect of licensable activities being proposed to take place at:

Popzone
12 Market Place
Redditch
Worcestershire
B98 8AA

The applicant stated that the nature of the event was a Christmas function for McDonald's staff, therefore, the TEN was seeking to permit under 18's to be present throughout the function on 10th and 11th December 2025. This was contrary to the licence condition currently attached to the premises which stated, **"Under 18s are permitted until 20.00, and must be accompanied by an adult at all times and when attending a specific event eg family fun days."**

An objection notice had been received from PC O'Keefe, sent on behalf of the Chief Officer of West Mercia Police. Concerns were raised in relation to the licensing objective of the Protection of Children from Harm.

The Committee was obliged to determine the application with a view to the promotion of the licensing objectives:

- the prevention of crime and disorder;
- public safety;
- the prevention of public nuisance;
- the protection of children from harm.

In making its decision, the Sub-Committee was also obliged to have regard to the guidance issued by the Secretary of State under section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003 and the Council's own Statement of Licensing Policy.

Following the report, there were no questions for the Licensing Officer from any party.

At the invitation of the Chair, Robert Edge who was the Applicant's Agent addressed the hearing. Mr edge stated Mrs Ringrose

Licensing Sub-Committee

Thursday, 27th November, 2025

submitted the application in November 2025 to hold a Christmas party for McDonalds staff which included those under the age of 18 (but over the age of 16). A TEN was required as the venue did not permit under 18s to be on site after 20:00 hours.

The event was not planned to be a typical nighttime event as it was a Christmas party and McDonalds wanted to give all staff the opportunity to attend. Therefore, there would be greater monitoring and supervision when compared to a usual nightclub evening.

Mr Edge detailed a number of measures that were proposed to limit the risk of harm to children, these included:

- Wrist bands being worn by all attendees (Green for 18 and over and Red for Under 18) – these would be distributed by McDonalds.
- I.D checks of all persons on entry to ensure that they were wearing the correct wristbands.
- A safeguarding lead would be in attendance – this would be a specialist who would be externally sourced.
- No other persons would be permitted entry, only McDonalds employees.
- The whole event would be fully risk assessed and supervised by 3 Designated Premises Supervisors (DPSs).
- Different containers would be used for Alcoholic and soft drinks which can be easily identified at a glance.
- The upper floor would be a “quiet zone” which would have a lower volume of music and some activities.
- 6-8 SIA security badge holders would monitor the event. This would be an increase from the usual 5-6 persons. These Officers would start 15/20mins prior to the guest’s arrival and work until the venue is empty.
- Transport would be provided by McDonalds to and from the event.

Mr Edge stated that it was impossible to completely remove the risk, however, it was his opinion that the measures proposed by the venue were satisfactory to mitigate that risk. Additionally, he stated the Popzone did not want to suffer any reputational damage by mismanaging the activity and would therefore ensure that everything possible was done to faceguard young people from harm.

After questions from Members, Mrs Ringrose clarified that they were expecting approximately 300-350 attendees, however, they did not have exact figures as McDonalds had not supplied the tickets, yet pending the outcome of the hearing. Approximately 75 (20-25%) attendees were expected to be under 18.

Licensing Sub-Committee

Thursday, 27th November, 2025

To combat persons filling “soft drink” cups with alcoholic drinks, employees would be regularly collecting empty cups and there would be careful monitoring by the DPSS, SIA staff and the Safeguarding Officer. However, Mrs Ringrose accepted that it was not a foolproof system, and that staff would have to be extra vigilant throughout the night. It was further detailed that there would be zero tolerance for the supply of alcohol to under 18s and that any adults doing so would be handled accordingly, any under 18s found drinking would have their nominated adult contacted to collect them from the venue.

Mr Keystone, the Co-Owner of Popzone noted that the venue could hold up to 600 individuals so it would be approximately at 50% capacity. Additionally, he stated that his company had experience with late night events and those open to younger individuals and therefore, was confident that measures had been put in place to manage these situations.

At the invitation of the Chair, PC O’Keefe addressed the hearing on behalf of West Mercia Police (WMP).

PC O’Keefe stated that they were raising the objection to the application as there was a serious risk of harm to young people as a direct consequence of the event. The Potential harm was not only from the consumption of alcohol but also in subjecting under 18s to a nightclub environment and drunken behaviour and there was a risk of Moral/psychological or physical harm.

PC O’Keefe further stated that the event was intended to proceed from 21:00 hours to 03:00 hours which was the same finishing time as the nightclub. This was clarified to be at the request of McDonalds who had booked the venue and not a choice made by the venue itself.

Although the 300-350 attendees was much less than the maximum permitted under the licence, it would still be a very busy event and would make monitoring behaviour difficult. As a comparison it was detailed that the venue would regularly have 220-300 customers on a typical weekend night but did go much higher during special events.

WMP Officers noted that there had been 15 incidents logged in relation to Popzone over the past 12 months on their ‘innkeeper’ system. However, detailed information could not be supplied as it was considered new evidence. Mrs Ringrose detailed that some of the incidents would likely have been reported by themselves as

Licensing Sub-Committee

Thursday, 27th November, 2025

they took their duties seriously. The good working relationship between WMP and Mrs Ringrose was confirmed by PC O'Keefe

At the invitation of the Chair, PC O'Keefe summed up and said that the venue had proposed some measures to mitigate the risk of harm, however, WMP Officers believed that the potential was still too great and that they had the opportunity to completely remove the risk to young people and therefore objected to the TEN.

Robert Edge then summed up on behalf of the applicant and stated that WMP had objected to the application under the impression that the nightclub would be operating as it usually would over a weekend, however, the event would be fundamentally different as it was a planned Christmas party event with more structure and supervision than usual.

It was accepted that it was impossible to completely remove any risk of harm to children and young people, however, the venue was proposing a number of measures to mitigate this and in his opinion, these were more than adequate to allow the TEN event to take place safely and without contradicting the licencing objectives.

At the invitation of the Chair, the legal advisor for the Committee stated that Members had been given all the information and must determine this application with a view to the promotion of the licensing objectives which were:

1. the prevention of crime and disorder;
2. public safety;
3. the prevention of public nuisance;
4. the protection of children from harm.

It was further detailed that Members might take one of the following steps.

- a) Decide to serve a counter notice – prevent the event taking place.
- b) Decide not to serve a counter notice and allow the event to continue.

Additionally, if the Sub-Committee decided not to serve a counter notice, they could deem that it appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives to attach one or more of the conditions attached to the relevant premises licence to the temporary event notice. However, it was noted that they could **not** impose any new conditions not already present on the premises licence.

In accordance with the provisions of Part 3 of Schedule 5 of the Act, where the licensing authority gives a counter-notice under section

Licensing Sub-Committee

Thursday, 27th November, 2025

105, or when the authority does not give a counter notice, the applicant or relevant person may appeal against the decision respectively. In either case, an appeal must be made to the Magistrates Court within 21 days of receiving notification of the decision - however, no appeal can be brought less than 5 working days prior to the first proposed event day.

All parties were informed that a decision will be made in closed deliberation and that a decision notice would be supplied within 5 working days to all interested parties as to the outcome.

Members then retired to deliberate.

The Meeting commenced at 12.30 pm
and closed at 1.40 pm