

Licensing Sub- Committee

Friday, 28th August, 2026

MINUTES

Present:

Councillors Juliet Barker Smith (Chair), Brandon Clayton and Simon Farmer

Also Present:

Dale Murphy (Applicant and General Manager of Popzone And Gorgeous), Shean Keystone (Co- Owner of Popzone And Gorgeous) and Paul Reid (Objector and Redditch Market Manager).

Officers:

Paul Morrish and Michel Clohessy (Anthony Collins Solicitors).

Democratic Services Officers:

Gavin Day and John Swann.

1. ELECTION OF THE CHAIR FOR THE MEETING

Councillor Juliet Barker Smith was elected as Chair for the duration of this meeting.

2. APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Wanda King.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. APPLICATION FOR VARIATION OF A PREMISES LICENCE IN RESPECT OF POPZONE AND GORGEOUS, 12 MARKET PLACE, REDDITCH, WORCESTERSHIRE, B98 8AA

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

Chair

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All parties in attendance introduced themselves, which included Dale Murphy, the General Manager of Popzone And Gorgeous and Shean Keystone, the Co- Owner of Popzone And Gorgeous, speaking in support of the application. Paul Reid, the Redditch Market Manager, Redditch Borough Council, was in attendance to speak in objection.

At the invitation of the Chair, the Technical Officer (Licensing), Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS), presented the report. It was detailed that on 29 June 2026, an Application for Variation of a Premises Licence was received from Pop Venues Redditch Ltd in respect of licensable activities being proposed to take place at:

Popzone And Gorgeous
12 Market Place
Redditch
Worcestershire
B98 8AA

The application was for a number of changes, namely the following amendments to licensable activities on the premises:

- The sale of alcohol every day for consumption on the premises be amended from 11.00- 04.00 hours to 11.00- 6.00 hours.
- The playing of recorded music, the playing of live music and the performance of dance every day indoors be amended from 11.00- 04.00 hours to 11.00- 6.00 hours.
- The provision of late night refreshment every day indoors be amended from 11.00- 04.30 hours to 11.00- 6.00 hours.

The application also sought to make amendments to conditions attached to the premises licence, notably in relation to under 18's on the premises for private pre- booked events, attendance at Redditch Pubwatch meetings and the provision of SIA registered door supervisors on Friday and Saturday nights.

The Technical Officer (Licensing) outlined that a compliance visit had been carried out by a Licensing Officer and West Mercia Police on 20th April 2026, during which no issues or concerns were found in relation to the operation of the venue.

It was highlighted to those in attendance that the application had been forwarded to all responsible authorities prescribed under the Licensing Act 2003 and that no responsible authorities, including West Mercia Police or Environment Health, had made representations.

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One representation had been received from Paul Reid, the Redditch Market Manager, Redditch Borough Council. Concerns were raised in relation to the licensing objectives of the Prevention of Crime and Disorder, the Prevention of Public Nuisance and 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 presentation of the report, there were questions for the Technical Officer (Licensing) by the parties in attendance. From the questions, the following responses were made, and issues highlighted:

- No representations had been made by members of the public or residents living within the locality of the venue.
- The venue had no opening windows.
- Doors were to remain shut during the hours of operation, with double doors being used to enter or exit the premises to contain the noise within the venue.
- WRS were confident that the application had been advertised correctly.

At the invitation of the Chair, the representatives of Popzone And Gorgeous addressed the Sub Committee. It was outlined that the venue was a longstanding part of the night- time economy in Redditch which was not situated in a cumulative impact area.

It was stressed that Pop Venues Redditch Ltd was a responsible operator with well trained staff and continually updated policies in place to best ensure it was fully compliant with the licensing objectives.

The Applicants outlined that the proposed variations to the premises licence would support the venue to become more sustainable and reflected industry best practice, and cited the enhanced age- verification 'Challenge 25' policy.

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The Applicants also outlined that whilst they welcomed scrutiny, the Redditch Market took place on Thursdays and Saturdays only and that therefore the received representation had a limited insight into the totality of the venue's operations. In addition, the Applicants had provided their direct contact number to the Redditch Markets Manager and had offered to meet informally to resolve any issues which could arise.

In response to the specific issues raised as part of the representation, the Applicants detailed:

- The venue served drinks in plastic beakers only and did not use glasses.
- All drinks were not permitted to leave the venue, this included both drinks served in plastic beakers and bottled beverages.
- A dedicated smoking area was in effect and this was down the side of the premises. This area, along with the pavement to the front of the venue was swept and cleared after each night by staff to prevent litter accumulating.
- Under 18's were only permitted on the premises at private pre- booked events and not when the venue was open to the general public.

It was highlighted that all responsible authorities, whom were experts in their fields, as detailed in the Licensing Act 2003 had raised no issues in relation to the proposed variation of the premises licence and that this included both Environmental Health and West Mercia Police. In making their submission, the Applicants set out that evidence rather than speculation was required to form the basis of the Sub Committee's decision.

It was confirmed that the venue had an established Dispersal Policy in place.

In response to questions from Sub Committee Members, the following responses were made, and issues highlighted by the Applicants:

- The proposed variation related to SIA registered door supervisors working between 23.00 hours until the premises closed on Friday and Saturday nights reflected the fact the venue was not open the general public prior to 23.00 hours.
- The Applicants confirmed that should the venue open to the general public prior to 23.00 hours, SIA registered door supervisors would be employed. Additional SIA registered door supervisors were also deployed at the discretion of the

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- Designated Premises Supervisor (DPS) as per the premises licence to ensure the venue acted as a responsible operator.
- All events held at the premises underwent a risk assessment exercise.
 - It was noted that the venue's licence had never been reviewed for inappropriate trading and Pop Venues Redditch Ltd had experience operating other venues within the West Midlands region.
 - The importance of Pubwatch in preventing disorder was agreed by all parties in attendance.
 - All those entering and re- entering the venue had their ID's checked and scanned to validate their authenticity, and their bags were searched by SIA registered door supervisors. In addition, all patrons underwent 'wandering', whereby a handheld electronic metal detecting scanner was passed over their person to prevent illicit items in the venue and to uphold safety.
 - The DPS or other authorised person holding a personal premises licence was on the premises at all time during which it was open to the general public.

At the invitation of the Chair, Paul Reid, Redditch Market Manager addressed the Sub Committee and outlined his opposition to the application. He outlined that whilst setting up the Market on Thursday and Saturday mornings he had observed litter comprising of glass and cigarette butts in the locality of the venue, and that in his opinion, the venue should install cigarette disposal bins.

The Redditch Market Manager stated that whilst he did understand the value of the night- time economy, the venue had a negative impact on the town centre due to its sale of alcohol and the extension of the opening hours to 06.00 hours would increase this.

He also stated that his staff had informed him that they had experienced anti- social behaviour from persons who were presumed to have attended the venue, as his staff were usually onsite between 04.30- 05.30 hours to set up the market prior to trading.

In response to questions from those in attendance Paul Reid stated that instances of anti- social behaviour reported to him from his members of staff were not routinely passed to the police.

The venue's dispersal policy was provided to the Sub Committee and distributed to all parties in attendance. In response to questions in relation to Popzone And Gorgeous' dispersal policy, the Applicants detailed:

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- The dispersal policy reflected industry best practice and premises licensing guidance.
 - Weekly meetings were held to maintain an oversight of issues.
 - All incidents were recorded in a log which was available for inspection by authorised representatives of the licensing authority and West Mercia Police.
 - All those who were refused entry to the venue were recorded in its register which was maintained during all operating hours.

At the invitation of the Chair, Paul Reid made his final address to the Sub Committee and summed up his representation. He reiterated his concerns and outlined that he wished to see the venue adopt a policy whereby no patrons would be admitted or re-admitted to the premises after 04.00 hours.

At the invitation of the Chair, the Applicants made their final address to the Sub Committee and summed up their application for variation of a premises licence. The Applicants outlined that they were a responsible late night venue that had CCTV and other measures in place to ensure safety was upheld. In doing so they cited the case of R (on the application of Daniel Thwaites plc) v Wirral Borough Magistrates Court 2008, which ruled that licensing decisions must be based on real evidence rather than speculation and that significant weight should be given to the expert views of responsible authorities prescribed under the Licensing Act 2003, such as West Mercia Police or Environment Health.

At the invitation of the Chair, the Committee's legal advisor drew the attention of Sub Committee Members 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. Attention was also drawn to the lack of representations by all responsible authorities prescribed under the Licensing Act 2003.

The Committee's legal advisor also outlined that Members were required to 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) Grant the application as requested.

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- b) Modify the conditions of the licence, by altering, omitting or adding to them.
 - c) Reject the application in whole or in part.

Those in attendance were advised that in making its decision, the Sub Committee would take into consideration representations from all parties.

Relevant parties were advised that they had a right of appeal to the Magistrates Court within 21 days of receiving the decision notice.

All parties were informed that a decision would 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 make a decision on the application.

The Meeting commenced at 11.30 am
and closed at 1.38 pm

(The meeting was adjourned between 1.31- 12.15 pm and 1.20- 1.24 pm)