



WITNESS STATEMENT

(C J Act 1967. S.9
M C Act 1980. S.55A(3) & 5B
Criminal Procedure Rules 2005 R.27.1)

STATEMENT of (Full Name) **Steven Paul Wood**

Age of Witness
(if over 21 enter "over 21") **Over 21**

Occupation of Witness **Licensing Enforcement Officer**

Address **Redditch Borough Council, Planning Services,
Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, B98 8AH**

This statement (consisting of three pages each signed by me) is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it anything which I know to be false or do not believe to be true.

Dated the 27th April 2010

Signed: *S.P. Wood* Steven Wood.

I am Steven Paul Wood, Licensing Enforcement Officer at Redditch Borough Council. I have held the position since 30th March 2009, having previously served 33 years as a Police Officer with West Midlands Police, of which my last 7 years service was as Licensing Officer.

On Thursday 23rd April 2009, I was engaged in joint operation with West Mercia Police Licensing Officer Neil Sharpe and officers from HM Customs and Excise visiting Licensed Premises.

At 1140hrs on the same day, we visited Costcutter Store, Unit 31, Woodrow Centre, Redditch, B98 7RY. At the premises I spoke to the DPS for the premises, Javed IQBAL. I saw that the premises licence summary was not on display at the premises as required under Section 57 of the Licensing Act 2003. I pointed out the offence to Javed IQBAL, and he could give no explanation as to why it was not on display. I asked to see the premises licence and was informed by him that it was not available at the premises. I again pointed out the offence

under Section 57 of the Licensing Act 2003, of failing to keep the premises licence or certified copy at the premises. Again Javed IQBAL he could give no explanation as to why the licence was not available.

I was aware that the premises had been subject of under age sales, and I asked to see the refusal book which has always been required to be kept as good working practice at all off licence premises. I was informed by Javed Iqbal that there was no such practice in operation. I was also met by the same response when enquiring about staff training and authority for staff to sell on his behalf. I detected from the responses given by Javed Iqbal that he had little knowledge of his responsibilities as DPS under the Licensing Act 2003.

The CCTV system appeared to be adequate, but I was informed that he was not able to download images in any evidential format.

I issued Javed IQBAL with a list of general requirements on behalf of Redditch Borough Council that are both legal and accepted good working practice and advised him to adhere to its directions and requirements. I advised him that I expected all of the listed requirements to be in place within 14 days.

I also assisted HM Customs and Excise in removing from the premises approx 60 cases of beer, 17 cases of wine, and 5 cases of spirits, all suspected of being counterfeit without payment of duty.

I can confirm from RBC licensing records that an application was made on 20th May 2009 for a replacement premises licence and summary, as these items had been declared as lost. These were sent out to the consultant acting on behalf of the premises on 27th May 2009.

At 1000hrs on Wednesday 21st April 2010, I visited the premises with Licensing Officer Tom Phelan. I saw that despite the previous warnings given, the premises licence summary was not on display. The DPS was not available, and I spoke to the 3 members of staff working at the premises who gave the names of Zahid Hussain, Azim Mahmood, and Sajid Ali who I believe is one of the premises licence holders together with Javed Iqbal. All three looked

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puzzled when I questioned the absence of the premises licence summary, and were unable to produce the premises licence. All three admitted that they had not received any staff training and had no written authority to sell alcohol on behalf of the DPS. None of them were able to operate the CCTV system. A refusal note pad was in place since my last visit, but entries were sketchy with insufficient detail.

It is my opinion based on my dealings with the premises and the information submitted from Responsible Authorities, that it has not operated in a responsible manner that promotes the licensing objectives and that insufficient safeguards had been put in place following my initial advice given to Mr Javed IQBAL the DPS and joint premises licence holder.

I can produce copies of my visit reports and list of general requirements issued if required.

Signed: *S.P. Wood*.....Steven Wood.

Note: Statements to be signed at the bottom of each page and immediately after the last word of the statement.

Signed: *S.P. Wood*.....Steven Wood.