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| <b>Licensing Sub-Committee</b> | <b>Agenda Item 6</b>       |
| <b>22 January 2026</b>         | <b>FOR GENERAL RELEASE</b> |

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| <b>Purpose of the Report</b> | To determine an application for the review of a premises licence under the Licensing Act 2003 |
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## 1. Application for Review

| <b>Applicant and Premises</b> |   |
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| Application Type              | Review                                    |
| Applicant                     | Home Office Immigration Enforcement       |
| Premises                      | Oriental House                            |
| Premises Licence Holder       | Xin He Wang                               |
| Premises Address              | 2 St Botolph's Circus, Colchester CO2 7EF |
| Ward                          | New Town                                  |

The Licensing Authority has accepted the application for a review of the premises licence in respect of the Oriental House at 2 St Botolph's Circus, Colchester CO2 7EF which was made by Home Office Immigration Enforcement.

The application was duly served and advertised by the Licensing Authority in accordance Section 51 of the Licensing Act 2003 and the regulations that accompany it.

The review relates to the undermining of the licensing objective of the prevention of crime and disorder by permitting illegal working at the premises.

In support of its application for a review of this premises licence, the applicant has submitted detailed information to evidence the reasons why it believes such a review is necessary.

The application is attached at **Appendix 1**.

Evidence in support of the review is attached at **Appendix 2**.

A letter of support in relation to the review has been submitted by Essex Police and is shown at **Appendix 3**.

The licence is shown at **Appendix 4**.

## 2. Section 182 Guidance

### Reviews arising in connection with crime

11.24 A number of reviews may arise in connection with crime that is not directly connected with licensable activities. For example, reviews may arise because of drugs problems at the premises, money laundering by criminal gangs, the sale of contraband or stolen goods, the sale of firearms, or the sexual exploitation of children. Licensing authorities do not have the power to judge the criminality or otherwise of any issue. This is a matter for the courts. The licensing authority's role when determining such a review is not therefore to establish the guilt or innocence of any individual but to ensure the promotion of the crime prevention objective.

11.25 Reviews are part of the regulatory process introduced by the 2003 Act and they are not part of criminal law and procedure. There is, therefore, no reason why representations giving rise to a review of a premises licence need be delayed pending the outcome of any criminal proceedings. Some reviews will arise after the conviction in the criminal courts of certain individuals, but not all. In any case, it is for the licensing authority to determine whether the problems associated with the alleged crimes are taking place on the premises and affecting the promotion of the licensing objectives. Where a review follows a conviction, it would also not be for the licensing authority to attempt to go beyond any finding by the courts, which should be treated as a matter of undisputed evidence before them.

11.26 Where the licensing authority is conducting a review on the grounds that the premises have been used for criminal purposes, its role is solely to determine what steps should be taken in connection with the premises licence, for the promotion of the crime prevention objective. It is important to recognise that certain criminal activity or associated problems may be taking place or have taken place despite the best efforts of the licence holder and the staff working at the premises and despite full compliance with the conditions attached to the licence. In such circumstances, the licensing authority is still empowered to take any appropriate steps to remedy the problems. The licensing authority's duty is to take steps with a view to the promotion of the licensing objectives and the prevention of illegal working in the interests of the wider community and not those of the individual licence holder.

11.27 There is certain criminal activity that may arise in connection with licensed premises which should be treated particularly seriously. These are the use of the licensed premises:

- for the sale and distribution of drugs controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 and the laundering of the proceeds of drugs crime;
- for the sale and distribution of illegal firearms;
- for the evasion of copyright in respect of pirated or unlicensed films and music, which does considerable damage to the industries affected;
- for the illegal purchase and consumption of alcohol by minors which impacts on the health, educational attainment, employment prospects and propensity for crime of young people;
- for prostitution or the sale of unlawful pornography;
- by organised groups of paedophiles to groom children;

- as the base for the organisation of criminal activity, particularly by gangs;
- for the organisation of racist activity or the promotion of racist attacks;
- for employing a person who is disqualified from that work by reason of their immigration status in the UK;
- for unlawful gambling; and
- for the sale or storage of smuggled tobacco and alcohol.

11.28 It is envisaged that licensing authorities, the police, the Home Office (Immigration Enforcement) 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.

### 3. Policy Context

Policy references are given for guidance only.

#### Reviews

152. The review of a licensed premises is the key protection for residents and businesses where one or more of the licensing objectives are being undermined and these problems can be linked to the operation of a licensed premises. A responsible authority or any other body can ask for the review of a licence.

153. When considering a review request, or other possible enforcement action, the Licensing Authority will consider all relevant matters and in particular –

- The use of the premises for criminal activities such as the supply of drugs or money laundering
- Failure to promptly respond to a warning given by a responsible authority
- Failure to engage with the responsible authorities in an effective manner
- Previous convictions for licensing offences
- Previous failure to comply with licence conditions

154. The Licensing Authority will not normally engage its role as a responsible authority by calling reviews on behalf of other people, such as local residents or community groups. These individuals are entitled to do so in their own right where there are sufficient grounds to do so.

155. Where responsible authorities have concerns about problems identified at a premises, the Licensing Authority considers it to be good practice for them to give the licence holder early warning of their concerns and the need for improvement. Where possible and/or appropriate it would be expected that advice and guidance in addressing the issue(s) should be given, such as using an Improvement

Plan before bringing the premises to review. Responsible authorities may seek to amend a licence via review where evidence indicates the need for permanent enforceable conditions to be added to a licence.

156. It should be noted that a review can be called without an early warning where a serious situation has occurred, and immediate action is required. Where premises are associated with serious crime and/or disorder a senior Police officer may apply for a summary review of a premises licence.

157. The outcome of a review hearing will not ordinarily have effect until such time as the period given for appealing (normally 21 days) expires or an appeal is disposed of.

#### 4. Options available to the Sub-Committee

The Sub-Committee must take such of the following steps as it considers appropriate to ensure the promotion of the licensing objectives –

- Modify the conditions of the premises licence
- Exclude a licensable activity from the licence
- Remove the Designated Premises Supervisor
- Suspend the licence for a period not exceeding three months
- Revoke the licence

#### Appendices

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| Appendix 1 | Application for Review              |
| Appendix 2 | Supporting documentation            |
| Appendix 3 | Letter of Support from Essex Police |
| Appendix 4 | Licence                             |

#### Report Author

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