

**REPORT:** Regulatory Sub-Committee

**DATE:** 9 April 2026

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Director – Legal and Democratic Services

**PORTFOLIO:** Resources

**SUBJECT:** Application for the variation of a Premises Licence – Royal, 1 High Street, Runcorn, WA7 1AU

**WARDS:** Mersey and Weston Ward

## 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To assist Members of the Regulatory Committee in their consideration of an application by Amber Taverns Ltd for the variation of a premises licence for the Royal , 1 High Street, Runcorn, WA7 1AU.

## 2. RECOMMENDATION

That the committee considers the contents of the report and makes a determination on the application.

## 3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The premises are located at High Street, in Runcorn Town Centre, and is surrounded by commercial premises including licensed premises namely Alchemy, Lebara, Eddys Chicken & Pizza, Tandoori Nights and Family Pizza. The premises are in close proximity to residential premises on Bridge Street, Runcorn. A location plan is attached at **Appendix A** which shows the location of the premises and surrounding licensed premises.
- 3.2 A taxi office is located opposite The Royal Public House, as well as an official Halton Borough Council taxi rank which is located on the same side as the public house.
- 3.3 The premises has been a licensed premises since November 2005.
- 3.4 There are also several licensed premises on High Street and the surrounding area. **Appendix B** of this report comprises a

list of all the licensed premises including the hours open to the public and the walking distance from this premises.

3.5 Attached at **Appendix C** of this report is the current premises licence along with the current conditions on the licence.

3.6 The applicant is looking to extend the terminal hour for the sale and consumption of alcohol and the provisions of regulated entertainment on a Friday and Saturday until 04.00 am, to extend the commencement hours on a Sunday from 10.00 am and to update the conditions on the licence the details of which are set out below.

3.7 The premises has recently benefited from a number of Temporary Event Notices (TENS) from October 2025 until the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2026 where they have extended the hours on a Friday and Saturday for the following:

Regulated entertainment, sale of alcohol and hours open to the public until 04.00 am.

The Temporary Event Notices, did not receive any objections from the Responsible Authorities which are namely Cheshire Police and the Councils Environmental Health Department. The Licensing Department have not received any information relating to the extension during the period the TENS were in place.

#### 4. THE APPLICATION

4.1 The application has been made under section 34, of the Licensing Act 2003 (“the Act”).

4.2 A copy of the application can be found at **Appendix D**.

4.3 According to the application, the applicant seeks the following

##### **Hours open to the Public**

Monday to Thursday 10.00 to 00.30

Friday & Saturday 10.00 to **04.30**

Sunday **10.00** to 00.30

### **Supply of alcohol**

Monday to Thursday 10.00 to 00.00  
Friday & Saturday 10.00 to **04.00**  
Sunday **10.00** to 00.00

### **Live Music, Recorded Music, Dance, anything similar to recorded music or dance**

Monday to Thursday 10.00 to 00.00  
Friday and Saturday 10.00 to **04.00**  
Sunday **10.00** to 00.00

### **Late night refreshments**

Monday to Thursday 23.00 to 00.00  
Friday and Saturday 23.00 to **04.00**  
Sunday 23.00 to 00.00

4.4 Within the operating schedule set out in the application, the applicant has set out the steps they intend to take to promote the four licensing objectives. These include:-

- CCTV will be installed at the premises and will be recorded for 31 days,
- Absence of the DPS a designated duty manager will be on site during trading hours,
- Zero tolerance drugs policy,
- An incident book will be kept on the premises,
- Door supervisors will be deployed under a risk assessment and will be SIA registered,
- Regular toilet checks,
- All accident/incidents will be recorded and available for inspection,
- Weekly H&S checks will be implemented,
- Fire doors will not be held open other than by an approved device,
- Emergency lights and fire alarms will be tested weekly,
- A fire risk assessment will determine the occupancy,
- Any person carrying opened or sealed bottles from alternative supplier will not be allowed to enter,
- Staff will be trained on induction on Fire Safety, Challenge 25 and the non-service of dunks and refresher training undertaken at regular intervals,

- During the performance of regulated entertainment all windows and doors shall remain closed except for entrance or exit from the premises,
- A sign will be located at the exits requesting customers leave the premises quietly and consider the neighbours,
- The use of the outside area will not be permitted after 01.00,
- No external speakers shall be used after 01.00 this includes in the beer garden and car park,
- Any person under the age of 25 wishing to purchase alcohol will be asked to produce ID.

4.6 These steps will form the basis for conditions on the licence.

## **5. REQUIREMENT FOR A HEARING**

5.1 The application was submitted on 16 February 2026 and was advertised in the local newspaper, namely the Runcorn and Widnes Weekly News on 26 February 2026. Officers have confirmed that the advertisement requirements were complied with.

5.2 During the 28 days representation period, the Licensing Authority received relevant objections from two Ward Councillors from the Mersey and Weston Ward, two local residents and one from the Chair of Runcorn Pubwatch/local licensee.

5.4 Where relevant representations have been made and not withdrawn, the licensing authority must hold a hearing to consider them (unless otherwise agreed by the parties).

5.5 The hearing is held in accordance with the Act and the Licensing Act 2003 (Hearings) Regulations 2005. The procedure to be followed has been circulated to all parties and will be repeated at the beginning of the hearing.

5.6 The hearing is solely concerned with those aspects of the application, which has been the subject of the relevant representations as defined in the Act. These are the representations made by two local Ward Councillors, two local residents and Chair of Runcorn Pubwatch/local licensee.

5.7 At the time of writing this report I have not received any indication from the two Ward Councillors, the two local residents or the Chair of Runcorn Pubwatch/local licensee if they will be making any submissions to the Sub-Committee at the hearing. All parties have all been informed of the hearing.

## **6. THE REPRESENTATIONS**

### **6.1 RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITIES**

#### **Cheshire Police**

Relevant representations have been agreed with the Premises Licence Holder and Cheshire Police during the representation period.

Attached at **Appendix E** is a copy of the agreed representation.

#### **Environmental Health**

No representations have been made by the Councils Environmental Health Department in relation to the variation application.

### **6.2 ANY OTHER PERSON**

Five representations have been received from:

Two local Ward Councillors (Mersey & Weston Ward)  
Two local residents and,  
From the Chair of Runcorn Pubwatch/local licensee

These representations object to the variation of the premises licence on all 4 licensing grounds, with the main issues being the hours of operation and the likelihood of noise nuisance, anti-social behaviour and crime and disorder. A copy of these representations can be found at **Appendix F** of this report.

### **6.3 EVIDENCE**

In accordance with the normal procedure it is noted that the relevant representations do not amount to evidence. The objectors have been requested to supply the evidence they intend to rely on no later than 5 working days prior to the hearing. When received this will be forwarded to the applicant and members of the committee.

## **7. LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK**

7.1 The Sub-Committee must determine the application with a view to promoting the licensing objectives which are:

- The prevention of crime and disorder;
- The prevention of public nuisance;
- Public Safety;
- The protection of children from harm.

7.2. In making its decision, the Sub-Committee must also have regard to the national guidance issued under section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003 (“the Guidance”) and the Council’s Statement of Licensing Policy (“Policy”).

7.3 Relevant sections from the Guidance can be found at **Appendix G**.

7.4 Members’ attention is also drawn to the following paragraphs of the Council’s Statement of Licensing Policy:-

**1. Introduction**

...

5. The Council wish to promote these objectives whilst still encouraging a vibrant and sustainable entertainment and leisure industry. The Council recognises both the needs of local residents for a safe and healthy environment in which to work and live and the importance of safe and well-run entertainment and leisure facilities to the area.

6. The Policy aims to provide guidance to applicants, responsible authorities and interested parties on the general approach to licensing in the area. Although each and every application will be dealt with separately and on its own individual merits, the Council in writing this Policy is offering guidance on the wider considerations that will be taken into account.

11. The Council will carry out its functions under the Act with a view to promoting the licensing objectives, namely;

- The prevention of crime and disorder
- Public safety
- The prevention of public nuisance, and
- The protection of children from harm

...

12. No one objective is considered to be of any more importance than any other.

...

13. In carrying out its functions the Council will also have regard to this Policy and to the Guidance as issued by the Secretary of State under section 182 of the Act from time to time

...

14. Individual applicants will be required to address the licensing objectives and address the issues of the needs of the local community, the way in which the premises is to operate, the size, location and type of premises, and any entertainment which is to be provided.

15. The Councils vision as set out in the Councils Framework is that

*Halton aim to deliver the highest possible standards of work, and look for opportunities to improve where we can, we take steps to understand the needs of our customers, colleagues and stakeholders, ensuring those needs are reflected in how we deliver our services. We encourage and support innovation and creativity to improve service delivery and outcomes.*

16. The Council's vision as set out within the Corporate Strategy 2024 – 2029;

*“Halton will support residents to live in a decent and affordable homes, surrounded by safe and thriving communities, working with everybody to keep our neighbourhoods clean and tidy. Encouraging good quality health and wellbeing. Fostering a strong, diverse local economy where there is access to good jobs and successful businesses in our community, providing opportunities for all”*

...

17. The Council has identified strategic priorities and key themes that are set out in its Corporate Plan 2024-2029 . These are:

- Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence,
- Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy,
- Supporting Children, Young People and Families,
- Tackling Inequality, Helping those who are most in need,

- Working towards a greener future,
- Valuing and appreciating Halton and our community.

...

18. So far as is consistent with the licensing objectives, the Council will carry out its licensing functions with a view to promoting these priorities and themes (including priorities and themes which may be adopted from time to time).

19. The Council will encourage the provision of a wide range of entertainment activities within the Halton area including promotion of live music, dance and so on, in the interests of broadening cultural opportunities within the local community.

28. Licensing is about regulating the carrying on of licensable activities on licensed premises, by qualifying clubs and at temporary events within the terms of the Act. Conditions attached to various authorisations will be focused on matters which are within the control of individual licensees and others in possession of relevant authorisations. Accordingly, the Council will focus its attention on the premises being used for licensable activities and the vicinity of those premises

...

29. In addressing this matter, the Council will primarily focus on the direct impact of the activities taking place at the licensed premises on members of public living, working or engaged in normal activity in the area concerned. Licensing law is not the primary mechanism for the general control of nuisance and anti-social behaviour by individuals once they are away from the licensed premises and, therefore, beyond the direct control of the individual, club or business holding the licence, certificate or authorisation concerned. Nonetheless, it is a key aspect of such control and licensing law will always be part of a holistic approach to the management of the evening and night-time economy in town and city centres.

[...]

### **30 The need for licensed premises**

31. There can be confusion about the difference between “need” and the “cumulative impact” of premises on the licensing objectives, for example, on crime and disorder. “Need” concerns the commercial demand for another pub or restaurant or hotel. This is not a matter for the Council in discharging its licensing functions. “Need” is a matter for planning committees and for the market.

[...]

41. Licensing law is not the primary mechanism for the general control of nuisance and anti-social behaviour by individuals once they are away from the licensed premises and, therefore, beyond the direct control of the individual, club or business holding the licence, certificate or authorisation concerned. Nonetheless, it is a key aspect of such control and licensing law will always be part of a holistic approach to the management of the evening and night-time economy in town and city centres. Once away from the licensed premises, a minority of consumers will behave badly and unlawfully. The general public needs to be made aware that there is a much broader strategy for addressing these problems than the licensing regime of the Act. There are other mechanisms both within and outside the licensing regime that are available for addressing such issues. For example:

- planning controls;
- positive measures to create a safe and clean town centre environment in partnership with local businesses, transport operators and other departments of the local authority;
- the provision of CCTV surveillance in town centres, ample taxi ranks, provision of public conveniences open late at night, street cleaning and litter patrols;
- powers of local authorities to designate parts of the local authority area as places where alcohol may not be consumed publicly;
- police enforcement of the general law concerning disorder and anti-social behaviour, including the issuing of fixed penalty notices;
- the prosecution of any personal licence holder or member of staff at such premises who is selling alcohol to people who are drunk;
- the confiscation of alcohol from adults and children in designated areas;
- closure notices and orders under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014; and
- the power of the police, other responsible authorities or a local resident or business to seek a review of the licence or certificate in question.

[...]

### **43. Licensing hours**

44. With regard to licensing hours, consideration will be given to the individual merits of an application.

- The Council recognises that, in certain circumstances, longer licensing hours with regard to the sale of alcohol can help to ensure that concentrations of customers leaving

premises simultaneously are avoided. This is necessary to reduce the friction at late night fast food outlets, taxi ranks and other sources of transport which lead to disorder and disturbance.

- The Council also wants to ensure that licensing hours should not inhibit the development of a thriving and safe evening and night-time local economy.

45. The term “zoning” is used in the Guidance to refer to the setting of fixed trading hours within a designated area. At the moment the Council sees no need to adopt such a policy. The Council has followed the advice in the Guidance and will not be adopting such a Policy within the Borough. However, stricter conditions with regard to noise control will be expected in areas which have denser residential accommodation, but this will not limit opening hours without regard to the individual merits of any application.

...

## **68. Proof of Age**

69. It is unlawful for children under 18 to attempt to buy alcohol just as it is unlawful to sell or supply alcohol to them. It is also an offence for an over 18 to purchase alcohol for an under 18 – this is called proxy purchasing. To prevent such crimes, it may be necessary to require a condition to be applied at certain licensed premises going beyond the mandatory minimum requirements requiring the production of "proof of age" before such sales are made. This should not be limited to recognised "proof of age" cards, but allow for the production of other proof, such as photo-driving licences, student cards and passports. Trading Standards regulate the sale of alcohol to under 18s and can provide advice and materials relating to the prevention of underage sales. They can also provide free staff training.

## **79. Plastic containers and toughened glass**

80. The Council has concerns about the dangers of bottles and glasses being used as weapons. It believes that the use of safer forms of glasses can help to reduce injuries and will expect applicants to state in their operating schedule what proposals they have to minimise such injuries through the use of safer forms of glasses, bottles and other means.

81. Consideration will therefore be given to conditions requiring either the use of plastic containers or toughened

glass which inflicts less severe injuries. Location and style of the venue, the activities carried on there, and the hours of operation, would be particularly important in assessing whether a condition is necessary: for example, the use of glass containers on the terraces of outdoor sports grounds may be of concern.

[...]

## **82. CCTV**

83. The presence of CCTV cameras can be an important means of deterring and detecting crime at and immediately outside licensed premises. Conditions should not just consider a requirement to have CCTV on the premises, but also the precise siting of each camera, the requirement to maintain cameras in working order, and to retain recordings for an appropriate period of time. The police should provide individuals conducting risk assessments when preparing operating schedules with advice on the use of CCTV to prevent crime.

## **87. Crime prevention**

88. Conditions attached to premises licences and club premises certificates will, so far as possible, reflect local crime prevention strategies. For example, the provision of closed circuit television cameras in certain premises. Conditions will, where appropriate, also reflect the input of the local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership.

## **92 Drugs**

93 The Council recognises that the supply and use of illegal drugs by individuals is not relevant to all licensed premises but it is recognised that conditions may need to be attached to the licences for certain venues if representations are received. The aim will be to endeavour to reduce the availability, sale, and consumption of illegal drugs and to create a safer environment for those who may have taken them. Any conditions will take into account the relevant guidance and advice from appropriate bodies.

The Council expects licensees of all venues to take all reasonable steps to:

Prevent the entry of drugs into licensed premises,

Prevent drugs changing hands within the premises,  
Understand the signs of drug misuse in people so that  
practical  
steps can be taken to deal with any instances that occur,  
Have appropriately trained staff to deal with drug related  
incidents.

94 The Council expects licensees to permit the access and use of drug dogs within the public and staff areas of the premises upon request of the Council and/or police involved in such an initiative.

95 The increasing prominence and dangers that can occur from Novel (New) Psychotic Substances (Legal Highs) is recognised and the Council would encourage all venues to include suitable steps within their Drugs Policy to deal with legal highs. The Council will consider whether it would be appropriate to impose a condition in order to promote one or more of the statutory licensing objectives where there is evidence to do so.

#### **96 The control of excessive Alcohol consumption**

97 It is an offence under the Licensing Act 2003 to sell to, or obtain alcohol for, a person who is drunk on licensed premises.

In practical terms this includes:

- Selling an alcoholic drink to someone who you know is drunk
- Buying an alcoholic drink for someone who you know is drunk

98 The Council expects all premises licence holders to take steps to control excessive consumption and drunkenness on relevant alcohol licensed premises. All serving staff should be trained in recognising the signs of drunkenness, how to refuse service and the premises duty of care. The premise should display prominent signage at point of sale that it is an offence to sell alcohol to anyone who is drunk.

99 This will reduce the risk of anti-social behaviour occurring both on and away from the premises after customers have departed. Premises licence holders are expected to be able to demonstrate a general duty of care to customers using their premises and others affected by their activities.

## **102. Good Management**

103. Certain kinds of physical environment within places subject to premises licences (such as an over preponderance of vertical drinking) are generally thought to be less conducive to avoiding crime and disorder. Good management and adequate staff training are vital. Where appropriate the provision of food in addition to alcohol can have a beneficial effect. Where food is provided it is good practice (but not mandatory under the licensing system) to have regard to current practice on healthy eating. The Council encourages premises licence holders to take an active part in local Pub Watch and Arc Angel schemes. 100.

104 Another aspect of good management in relation to door supervision is to have proper systems in place to comply with the Private Security Industry Act 2001 and to think about how good door supervision systems can contribute to crime reduction both within and outside of premises. Applicants will be expected to have considered these and all relevant issues and to reflect these within their operating schedules

- 7.5 A full copy of the Guidance and the Council's Policy will be available at the hearing.
- 7.6 Every case must be considered on its own merits. The Sub-Committee may depart from the Guidance and Policy if there is good reason to do so. However, proper reasons must be given.
- 7.7 In addition to the above, the Committee must have regard to its wider duties under section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Article 1 of the First Protocol of the Human Rights Act 1998.

## **8. OPTIONS**

- 8.1 The Committee has the following options under Section 35 of the Act:
  - (1) Grant the variation application subject to such conditions that are consistent with the operating schedule and any mandatory conditions;
  - (2) Modify the conditions of the licence, by altering or omitting or adding to them;
  - (3) Reject the application in whole or in part.

## **9. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 None

## **10. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

10.1 There are no special financial considerations to the Authority which need to be highlighted at this stage. However, it should be noted that the decision of the sub-committee is subject to appeal to the Magistrates' Court. If an appeal is made, there will be costs associated with this.

## **11. IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

### **11.1 Children and Young People in Halton**

None identified.

### **11.2 Employment Learning and Skills in Halton**

None identified.

### **11.3 A Healthy Halton**

None identified.

### **11.4 A Safer Halton**

None identified.

### **11.5 Halton's Urban Renewal**

None identified.

## **12. RISK ANALYSIS**

12.1. The Council is required to hold the hearing in accordance with the Licensing Act 2003. Failure to do so, may mean that the Council is acting in breach of its obligations under that Act.

## **13. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

13.1 There are no equality and diversity issues to highlight.

#### 14. CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

14.1 There are no climate change implications since the decision will have no effect on the environment.

#### 15. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Guidance issued under Section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003	Licensing Section/ Government Website see link 1 below.	Kim Hesketh
Halton Council's Statement of Licensing Policy	Licensing Section/ Council website see link 2 below.	Kim Hesketh

1. [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/705588/Revised\\_guidance\\_issued\\_under\\_section\\_182\\_of\\_the\\_Licensing\\_Act\\_2003\\_April\\_2018\\_.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/705588/Revised_guidance_issued_under_section_182_of_the_Licensing_Act_2003_April_2018_.pdf)
2. <https://www3.halton.gov.uk/Documents/business/licencing/alcoholent/StatementofLicensingPolicy.pdf>