

**GREATER MANCHESTER POLICE**

**SCHEDULE 8A**

**Application for the review of a premises licence under section 53A of the Licensing Act 2003 (premises associated with serious crime, serious disorder or both)**

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PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Before completing this form please read the guidance notes at the end of the form. If you are completing the form by hand please write legibly in block capitals. In all cases ensure that your answers are inside the boxes and written in black ink. Use additional sheets if necessary

I. Police Constable 15913 Peter Eccleston

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(on behalf of) the chief officer of police for the police area apply for the review of a premises licence under section 53A of the Licensing Act 2003.

**1. Premises details**

**Postal address of premises.**

Metro Off Licence

**Post town:** Radcliffe, Bury

**Postcode:** M26 2SZ

**2. Premises licence details**

**Name of Premises licence holder (if known);**

Mr Mohammad Shafqat

**Number of Premises Licence**

PL0796

**3. Certificate under section 53A(1)(b) of the Licensing Act 2003**

I confirm that a certificate has been given by a senior member of the police force for the police area above, that in his opinion the above premises are associated with serious crime or serious disorder or both, and the certificate accompanies this application.

*(Please tick the box to confirm)*

X

#### **4. Details of association of the above premises with serious crime, serious disorder or both:**

These premises are associated with serious crime:

Premises License Holder (PLH) and Designated Premises Supervisor (DPS) of Metro Off Licence, 66 Spring Lane, Radcliffe, is a Mr Mohammad Shafqat. The premises licence was transferred to him on the 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2022 and on the 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2022, the license was varied, nominating himself as the DPS.

The circumstances of this incident are as follows:

On Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024, a test purchase was carried out at the above licensed premises which had been organised by Bury Council Trading Standards Department. A successful purchase was made of a pack of 20 Lambert and Butler cigarettes in none standardised packaging for £7 as such it did not comply with the Tobacco and Related Products Regulations 2016.

As a result of the test purchase, at 15:50 hours on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2024, Kelly Halligan (Bury Council Trading Standards Unit Manager), Laura Jones (Bury Council Deputy Licensing Officer), Lucy Sutton (Dog Handler from DC Detection Dogs), Immigration Officers and I, attended the above address as part of Greater Manchester Police's day of action, Operation Avro.

On entering the premises, we were greeted by a male member of staff who introduced himself as Adrees Masood. Mr Masood was behind the serving counter at the time and claimed that he was only helping out at the shop. Whilst looking around the store, the dog and handler, went behind the counter and x4 packets of 20 Lambert and Butler cigarettes which were in the same, none standardised packaging as the packet recovered during the test purchase were found. Also found under the counter was a large machete with a blade over 12 inches in length and a hockey stick. As the search continued, 49 disposable vapes which exceeded the maximum capacity and therefore contravened the Tobacco and Related Product Regulations 2016 were also recovered. The cigarettes and the disposable vapes were seized by Kelly Halligan who has provided her own statement and photographs of the machete and hockey stick at appendix A.

There is no legitimate reason as to why a machete or hockey stick would be kept on any licensed premises, other than to cause serious harm to someone in the event of a robbery or other similar theft related incident. Considering this premise is open to members of the public, it is illegal to have such items under Section 1 of the Prevention of Crime Act 1953 (possession of an offensive weapon). As such, I seized the items as exhibits PE/1 and PE/2 respectively and a picture of the items have been included in appendix B.

Although no other items were recovered as evidence, we did find copies of the lease agreement for the premises which named two other individuals which had signed the agreement. The third named person was Mr Masood however there was no signature next to his details. He was asked numerous questions in relation to his involvement in the business and he continued to claim that he had nothing to do with and had only been working in the store over the last couple of weeks as a shop assistant.

At the time, there was some confusion as to who the premises license holder and designated premises supervisor were as the business was had recently been bought and was under new management. As such further enquiries were made by Laura Jones from Bury Council Licensing Department who was able to make contact with the named PLH and DPS, Mr Shafqat later that day. He claimed that he sold the business.

on the 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023 to a Qasim (no further details provided) and as far as he was concerned, has had nothing more to do with the business since. This conversation was confirmed via email which has been included at appendix C.

Due to the email received from Mr Shafqat, I returned to the premises in company with Bury Council Licensing Enforcement Officer, Luke Solczak on the following day, Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2024. We spoke to a different member of staff stood behind the counter who introduced himself as Bardh Patel. He insisted that we spoke to his 'boss' and so rang him on his mobile phone and both I and Luke were able to have a conversation via the loudspeaker facility. The male we spoke to introduced himself as the owner of the business and provided his personal details, introducing himself as Mohammed Quasim Khan. We explained that because of the email from Mr Shafqat, there was no DPS in place to authorise the sale of alcohol and therefore was in breach of the Licensing Act and as such was required to either remove the alcohol from the store or close the business until such time the premises license could be transfer and a new DPS be nominated. At the time the request was complied with, and he informed us both that he would be in touch with the previous DPS, Mr Shafqat to see if he would reconsider.

I also took the opportunity to ask him questions in relation the machete which was found under the counter. He claimed that the machete had been taken off someone who attempted to rob the shop early in the previous week. He claimed that a report had been made to the police and police had attended to collect CCTV which had captured the individuals responsible but not them entering with the machete or being confronted and having the machete taken from them. What I do find extraordinary about Mr Khans account is the CCTV's ability to capture those responsible but not the machete or the confrontation as the machete is being removed from those that have entered. Furthermore, and what is even more suspicious, is the claim that police had been contacted and had been to the store to recover CCTV, yet the machete was never handed over the police and on checking police computer systems, there is no record of a report being made to Greater Manchester Police. In fact, the last reported incident to the police which involved the premises directly was on the 20<sup>th</sup> October 2023, which was in relation to a robbery.

Since the conversation with Mr Khan, a further email has been received by Bury Council Licensing Department from Mr Shafqat, asking to be reinstated as DPS at the premises. This email has been included at appendix D.

It is my opinion that an expedited review of the premises licence is necessary to allow the licence authority to impose interim steps not only for the safety of the staff but also members of the public. It is quite clear for all to see, that they are unable to run the business within the limits of the relevant laws and legislation. Having a lethal weapon on the premises plus offering for sale illicit tobacco products is not in any way promoting the licensing objectives and it is for those reasons that as a delegated licensing officer acting on behalf of the Chief Officer, I am requesting the panel to seriously consider the DPS be removed from the license and the premises license be suspended until such time a full review hearing can be heard due to the likelihood that the licensing objectives will continue to be undermined.

**Signature of Applicant:**

 PC 15913.

**Date: 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2024**

**Capacity: Police Licensing Officer**

**Contact details for matters concerning this application:**

**Address; Divisional Licensing Officer, Greater Manchester Police, Dunster Rd,  
Bury, BL9 0RD**

**Telephone number: 0161 856 2256**

**Email: 15913@gmp.police.uk**