

Licensing Hearing Panel

14 April 2026

Licensing Act 2003 Application for a new premises licence at 129-131 High Street, Strood, Kent ME2 4TJ

Report from: Bhupinder Gill, Assistant Director – Legal and Governance

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Summary

To consider a new premises licence application for 129-131 High Street, Strood, Kent ME2 4TJ following the submission of representation during the consultation period.

1. Recommendation

1.1. That the Licensing Hearing Panel, having regard to the Licensing Act 2003, the statutory guidance issued under section 182, the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy and all matters before it, both written and oral, considers and determines this application for a premises licence.

2. Budget and policy framework

2.1. Medway Council has published its Statement of Licensing Policy, which it takes into account in all applications relating to the Licensing Act 2003.

2.2. The cumulative impact of licences in a particular area may lead to the area becoming saturated with premises of a certain type, making it a focal point for large groups of people, and thereby creating exceptional problems of crime, disorder and nuisance over and above the impact from individual premises themselves.

2.2.1. Due to this concern, Medway Council have introduced Cumulative Impact Areas and Stress Areas, which require the applicant to show how their premises will not add to the cumulative impact on the licensing objectives already experienced.

2.2.2. This application is for a premises within the Strood Town Centre Stress Area. The assessment states that if an application is submitted for a premises within the designated area, the applicant is expected to have carried out a risk assessment for their business and considered the addition of recommended measures to prevent a negative effect on the licensing objectives.

2.2.3. A copy of the Strood Stress Area Assessment can be found at Appendix A.

3. Background

3.1. On 12 February 2026, an application was received for a new premises licence at 129-131 High Street, Strood. The application was deemed complete and the consultation began on 20 February 2026.

3.2. The application was for the sale by retail of alcohol, live and recorded music, performance of dance and late-night refreshment at the following standard times:

3.2.1. Live music: Friday and Saturday 22:00 to 04:00 and Sunday 19:00 to 23:00.

3.2.2. Recorded music: Monday to Thursday 11:00 to 23:00, Friday and Saturday 11:00 to 04:00 and Sunday 11:00 to 00:00.

3.2.3. Performance of dance: Thursday 19:00 to 23:00, Friday and Saturday 22:00 to 04:00 and Sunday 19:00 to 00:00.

3.2.4. Late-Night Refreshment: Monday to Thursday 11:00 to 23:00, Friday and Saturday 11:00 to 04:00 and Sunday 11:00 to 00:00.

3.2.5. Sale by retail of alcohol: Monday to Thursday 11:00 to 23:00, Friday and Saturday 11:00 to 04:00 and Sunday 11:00 to 00:00.

3.3. The applicant also proposed seasonal variation and non-standard timings as follows:

3.3.1 They intend to open the premises until 02:00 during summer nights from Sunday to Thursday.

3.3.2 They plan to open the premises until 02:00 during Christmas, Easter, St Georges Day and Halloween from Sunday to Thursday.

3.4. The application has been correctly advertised in the local press and by the display of notices at the premises.

3.5. A copy of the application and the proposed plans can be found at Appendix B.

4. Options

4.1. The Licensing Hearing Panel is asked to consider the information in this report and presented to them at the hearing and decide the outcome of the application. The options available are:

4.1.1. Grant the licence as applied for,

4.1.2. Grant the licence with amendments, i.e. changes to hours or activities

4.1.3. Grant the licence with additional conditions,

4.1.4. Refuse the application.

5. Advice and analysis

5.1. The applicant is expected to demonstrate that they understand the four licensing objectives and have considered the promotion of them in their application. Members will find the conditions offered by the applicant in Appendix B, at section M of the application form.

5.2. The four licensing objectives are:

5.2.1. The prevention of crime and disorder;

5.2.2. Public safety;

5.2.3. The prevention of public nuisance;

5.2.4. The protection of children from harm.

5.3. Further information is available within the report guidance.

6. Risk management

6.1. The Council has to consider and determine this application, which is a function relating to licensing and registration as set out in Schedule 1 of the Functions Regulations, the Licensing Act 2003, the Gambling Act 2005 and other licensing functions reserved by law to the Council's Licensing and Safety Committee and its Sub-Committees, in accordance with the law, (both statutory and case law) relevant statutory guidance and statements of policy.

7. Consultation

7.1. This application has been brought to this committee because representation have been received during the prescribed consultation period.

7.2. On 9 March 2026, we received a representation from The City of Rochester Society in relation to the crime and disorder and public nuisance objectives. A copy of which can be found at Appendix C. Following mediation this representation stands.

7.3. On 12 March 2026, we received a representation from the Ward Councillors of Strood North and Frindsbury, Cllr Field, Cllr Van Dyke and Cllr Hubbard, in relation to the crime and disorder, public safety and public nuisance objectives. Following mediation this representation has been withdrawn, so has not been included in this report.

7.4. On 15 March 2026, the applicant sent a response which was shared with those making representations, a copy of which can be found at Appendix D.

- 7.5. On 16 March 2026, Trading Standards and the applicant submitted agreed conditions to be added to the operating schedule. These conditions and the agreement can be found at Appendix E.
- 7.6. On 19 March 2026, Kent Police requested additional conditions and amendments to the licensable hours. Following mediation, the applicant agreed to update the Operating Schedule in relation to adding conditions and changing their licensable hours. The agreed conditions can be found at Appendix F.
- 7.7. Following further mediation between the applicant and the Ward Councillors, the applicant agreed to reduce their licensing hours again and on 23 March 2026, the three Ward Councillors withdrew their objections. The agreement to the hours can be found at Appendix G.
 - 7.7.1. Within their response at Appendix G, the applicant has mentioned being open past the terminal hour of 01:00. It has been explained to him that Licensing are only involved in the 'opening times' for licensable activities and he would need to find out if his planning hours would permit this.
- 7.8. The final proposed hours replacing those set out at paragraph 3.2 of this report are as follows:
 - 7.8.1 Live music: Friday and Saturday 22:00 to 01:00 and Sunday 19:00 to 23:00.
 - 7.8.2 Recorded music: Monday to Thursday 11:00 to 23:00, Friday and Saturday 11:00 to 01:00 and Sunday 11:00 to 00:00.
 - 7.8.3 Performance of dance: Thursday 19:00 to 23:00, Friday and Saturday 22:00 to 01:00 and Sunday 19:00 to 00:00.
 - 7.8.4 Late-Night Refreshment: Monday to Thursday 11:00 to 23:00, Friday and Saturday 11:00 to 01:00 and Sunday 11:00 to 00:00.
 - 7.8.5 Sale by retail of alcohol: Monday to Thursday 11:00 to 23:00, Friday and Saturday 11:00 to 01:00 and Sunday 11:00 to 00:00.
 - 7.8.6 The summer hours at paragraph 3.3.1 of this report have been withdrawn and are no longer requested.
 - 7.8.7 The non-standard times at paragraph 3.3.2 of this report, where the premises will be open until 01:00 are now:
 - 7.8.7.1 Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Eve.
 - 7.8.7.2 Good Friday, Easter Saturday and Easter Sunday.
 - 7.8.7.3 St Georges Day – 23 April.

7.8.7.4 Halloween – 31 October

7.9. To provide clarity, at Appendix H you will find a list of the conditions now on the operating schedule for this premises application. This is a combination of the conditions offered in the original application, the conditions agreed with the responsible authorities and the conditions offered in response to the objections.

8. Financial implications

8.1. The Council's licensing activities are met from a budget within the Business Support Department and licence fees contribute to meeting the cost of the service. There are no direct financial implications relating to the decision regarding this application.

9. Legal implications

9.1. There are no direct legal implications at this time.

9.2. This hearing is regulated by the Licensing Act 2003 (Hearings) Regulations 2005 (as amended).

9.3. There is the possibility of a challenge by way of appeal by either the application or objectors should either have the requisite ground to do so. Legal advice will be given to Members as appropriate at the hearing. However, whatever the decision of the Panel, this must be based on the evidence placed before it, in line with the licensing objectives and the Panel must decide what weight to attribute to this information.

Lead officer contact

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Appendices

Appendix A – Cumulative Impact Stress Area for Strood Town Centre

Appendix B – Application and associated plans

Appendix C – Representation from The City of Rochester Society

Appendix D – Applicant's response to representations

Appendix E – Trading Standards agreed conditions

Appendix F – Police agreed conditions

Appendix G – Agreement to hours with Councillors

Appendix H – Final conditions for the Operating Schedule.

Background papers

None.