

John Yardley

From: licensing
Sent: 17 April 2018 12:33
To: John Yardley
Subject: FW: New Premise Licence Application - Sycamore Stores
Attachments: Licensing Review Application Anglesey Avenue.pdf; Wilson-Edwards 04042018_visit.pdf

From: Wilson, Rick [<mailto:Rick.Wilson@lancashire.gov.uk>]
Sent: 17 April 2018 11:24
To: licensing
Cc: Haslam, Tony; Maxim, Amanda; Manning, Lauren; Robinson, Dawn (ENV)
Subject: New Premise Licence Application - Sycamore Stores

On behalf of Lancashire Trading Standards Service I would like to make representations in respect to the premise licence application made by Anthony Jack Edwards at Sycamore Stores, Anglesey Avenue, Burnley.

The premise has a history of failing to meet the Prevention of Crime and Disorder and Protection of Children from Harm licensing objectives. This resulted in a recent application by Lancashire Trading Standards Service to review the premise licence. The previous owners chose not to contest that application and surrendered the premise licence in advance of the scheduled review (see attached review application).

I visited the new applicant, Anthony Jack Edwards, at the premise on 4th April 2018 with a colleague, Lauren Manning, a Trading Standards Principal Officer. It is my opinion that the previous owners still have significant day to day control of the business and that Mr Edwards is not able to suitably evidence that he is the new owner of this business. I have attached a full statement which details my concerns.

I am willing to attend a hearing on behalf of Lancashire Trading Standards Service.

Rick Wilson

Principal Officer
Lancashire Trading Standards Service
Lancashire County Council

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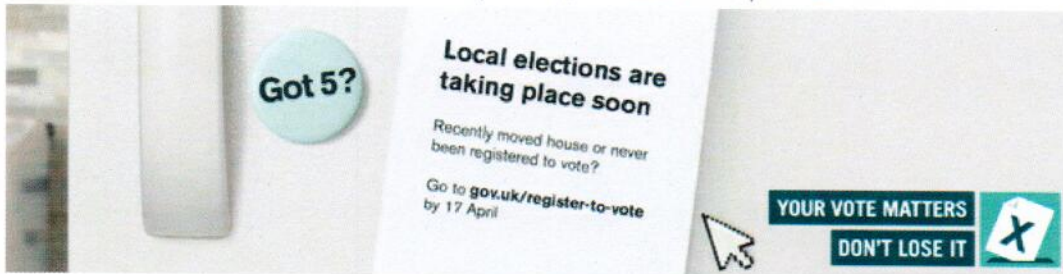
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Lancashire County Council

Statement of Witness

(Criminal Procedure Rules, r27.1(1);
Criminal Justice Act 1967, s9, Magistrates' Courts Act 1980, s5B)

STATEMENT OF: RICK WILSON

Age of witness: Over 18

Occupation of witness: PRINCIPAL OFFICER

This statement (consisting of four pages 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 5th day of April 2018 (Signed)



I am a Principal Officer at Lancashire County Council's Trading Standards Service Alcohol and Tobacco Team.

This is my account of when I participated in a visit at a convenience store in Burnley on 4th April 2018 to discuss a potential new Premise Licence application to Burnley Borough Council.

I shall now introduce the people that I shall mention in my statement which includes; myself Rick WILSON, a Principal Officer at Lancashire County Council's Trading Standards Service, Lauren MANNING, a Principal Officer at Lancashire County Council's Trading Standards Service and Tony EDWARDS, the new owner of the convenience store.

The location of the visit was in Burnley, Lancashire, at a convenience store called "PREMIER". The convenience store is located at 5 Anglesey Avenue, Burnley, Lancashire, BB12 6AY.

I asked Mr Edwards how he knew the previous owners. He replied that there was two co-owners of the business previous to his ownership. Maryam MURSALEEN was a friend of his wife and had been for 12 years. He did not know the previous co-owner Humera ZAFAR. He voluntarily stated that the previous owners were 'criminals' who had been 'dealing drugs out of the back storeroom'.

I asked Mr Edwards how much he paid for the business. He replied that it was £11,000 or £11,500. I asked if he could clarify the amount and he stated that it was £11,000 for the business and £500 for the stock.

(Signed)

LP/QR/32/02



Lancashire County Council

Statement of Witness

(Criminal Procedure Rules, r27.1(1);
Criminal Justice Act 1967, s9, Magistrates' Courts Act 1980, s5B)

Continued statement of: Rick Wilson

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I asked if he had used the services of a solicitor or accountant to assist with the purchase of the business. He stated that he hadn't.

I asked how he paid for the business. He stated he paid £11,500 in cash to Maryam MURSALEEN.

I asked where the cash came from. He replied that it was taken from his home. I asked if the cash was originally withdrawn from the bank before being taken from home to hand over to the previous owners. He stated that it hadn't, he said that he keeps 'lots of cash' at his home address.

I asked if he had a contract that I could see which related to the sale of the business. He said he didn't have a contract, but said he had a piece of paper which stated that Maryam MURSALEEN had received £11,500 from him for the sale of the business. I clarified that he only had a simple receipt. He confirmed this and said it was at his home address.

I asked Mr Edwards what the turnover and profit was for the business in the previous year's trading. He stated that he didn't know. I asked if he had asked the question from the previous owners, he confirmed that he hadn't. I asked Mr Edwards how he had been able to evaluate whether the business was worth £11,000 plus stock without this crucial information. He stated that it was 'obvious from the area the shop was in' that it was worth that amount.

The store was extremely well stocked and I asked where the current stock had come from. He stated that it was from Bookers Cash and Carry and cost £7,000 to £8,000 in total. It had been stocked up via visits to Bookers Cash and Carry from February 2018 to date.

I asked if the stock was purchased from Bookers Cash and Carry from his own account. He stated that he did not have an account with Bookers so he had used Maryam MURSALEEN's account.

I asked if the stock had been purchased using a bank account that he owned. He stated that it was paid for in cash. I asked where the cash had come from and he said he had used cash from sales in the store and taken it from the till.

I asked if Mr Edwards had been present at the cash and carry during the visits to purchase stock. He confirmed that he had not. I asked who made every visit to the cash and carry. He replied that Maryam MURSALEEN had made the trips to the cash and carry and used cash to pay for the goods which he had provided to her.

Signature:

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Statement of Witness

(Criminal Procedure Rules, r27.1(1);
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Continued statement of: Rick Wilson

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I asked how he could trust somebody he had already described as a criminal who dealt drugs from the back storeroom with such large quantities of cash. He replied that he thought Maryam was trustworthy and it was Humera ZAFAR who was the drug dealer.

I asked how many hours each week Maryam MURSALEEN was working at the store. He replied that she was in full time education and it was just the odd hour here and there. I asked how she was paid. He stated that she wasn't, he just gave her some petrol money every now and again in cash.

I asked why, if Maryam MURSALEEN was only working an odd hour here and there, her personal mobile telephone number was being used on the signage outside the store, relating to 'Under New Management' notices and a new grocery delivery service. He stated that he had been out of the country for four weeks so she had been helping out.

I asked if Maryam MURSALEEN was still the owner of the business and that he had been asked to simply act as the new owner. He stated that he was the new owner of the business.

I asked how he knew David Horner, who is a licensing consultant who is acting as his agent for the new Premises Licence application. He stated that he had found him during an internet search. I asked him how much he had paid to use the services of Mr Horner. He stated that he had sent Mr Horner £325 via a bank transfer to make the new licence application.

Mr Horner's business website states that the fee for a new licence application is actually £645, payable in full on commencement of the service - <http://dhlicensing.co.uk/premises-licence-application-service/>

I asked who was going to be the Designated Premises Supervisor at the premises. He stated that it was a person called Benji who already had a personal licence. I asked him how many hours per week Benji would be working at the store. He stated Benji would be working 35 hours per week. I asked for Benji's surname and he stated that he didn't know it. I asked how he knew Benji and he replied that Benji was a biker, and he knew him from riding motorcycles.

I do not believe that Mr Edwards is the new owner of this business for the following reasons:

1. Mr Edwards cannot evidence the business transaction that allegedly took place as there is no audit trail for the financial transaction.

Signature:



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Statement of Witness

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Continued statement of: Rick Wilson

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2. There is no formal legally binding documentation to evidence that the transaction and sale of the business took place.
3. Mr Edwards did not know basic information such as annual turnover, profit or losses which would have indicated whether £11,000 was a likely value of the business.
4. The previous owner, Maryam MURSALEEN, is using their own personal mobile telephone number on notices outside the store which clearly denote that the store is 'under new management'.
5. The previous owner, Maryam MURSALEEN, still has considerable involvement in the day to day running of the business such as the coordination of the new grocery delivery service.
6. The previous owner, Maryam MURSALEEN, still has responsibility for stocking the store, using their account at the cash and carry, and making every single trip there since the store allegedly transferred ownership.



Signature:

LP/QR/32/02



Date and place of birth of witness: 22nd March 1967 / Bolton.

Address of Witness: Lancashire County Council Trading Standards Service
Room D21, County Hall, Pitt Street, Preston

Post Code: PR1 0LD

Tel: 07789 618101

Email: rick.wilson@lancashire.gov.uk

Please circle dates when witness **will not** be available:

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Statement taken by: Self