

MINUTES

of the

LICENSING COMMITTEE HEARING

held on 3rd November 2025 at 11am

Present:

Councillor D. Clark (Chair of Hearing)

Councillors H Clark, J. Frasca and S. Manley

1. **Apologies for Absence**

No apologies for absence were received.

2. **Declaration of Interests**

All Members were reminded to declare any interests where appropriate in any items of business on the meeting's agenda. None were made.

3. **Minutes**

The minutes of the hearing held on 19th September 2025 were approved as a correct record.

4. **Licensing Act 2003 – Application for a New Premises Licence – Wheelers Farm, Wheelers Hill, Little Waltham, Chelmsford, CM3 3LZ**

The Committee considered an application for a new premises licence made under Section 17 of the Licensing Act 2003 and had regard to the representations made during the consultation period. These related to the promotion of the below Licensing objectives.

- a) The prevention of crime and disorder
- b) Public safety
- c) The prevention of public nuisance
- d) The protection of children from harm

It was noted by the Committee that there were three options namely;

- Grant the application, on the terms and conditions applied for.
- Grant the application, on the terms and conditions applied for, modified to such extent as considered appropriate to promote the licensing objectives.
- Refuse the application in whole or in part.

The below parties attended and took part in the hearing:

- Applicant

- Essex Police
- Parish Tier Council's
- Local Ward Councillor

The Committee were informed that the application sought a time limited premises licence from 1 January 2026 to 1 September 2026 for two events, each with no more than 5000 attendees. The Committee noted the existing premises licence for the venue and the recent variation to it, which meant that if the new licence was to be granted, the maximum limit of 6 events at the premises would be retained and shared across the two licences.

Officers informed the Committee that in response to the application, four representations had been received, one from a Local City Councillor, two from Parish Tier Councils and one from Essex Police.

The applicant addressed the Committee and informed them that the new licence was for two events with a maximum capacity of 5000 and as detailed by the minor variation to their existing licence, the maximum amount of six events would stay in place. They informed the Committee that they had reached out to those who had made representations and had good conversations with those who responded and provided them with information to assist with addressing their concerns.

The applicant highlighted the measures they had put in place at their premises in recent years, under their other licence and detailed that these had been effective in avoiding issues that had been present at the premises in years further back. They stated that they had worked with Essex Police, introduced a temporary traffic regulation order to reduce the speed limit on the main road nearby, electronically restricted taxi pickups to the designated area and had not received any substantiated noise complaints or comments from the Council's Environmental Health team. They highlighted to the Committee, that the two events with the higher capacity could be seen as a demonstration to the Council that the premises was suitable to have a permanent licence with a 5000 capacity and that lessons had been learnt about how to operate the site successfully with the required measures in place.

In response to questions from the Committee, the applicant confirmed that;

- The measures and arrangements put in place for the events in 2025 would continue for the new licence with the higher capacity, if granted and may be extended further as appropriate, once risk assessed.
- Dedicated emergency entrances/ exits were available at the site for emergency vehicles, along with separate areas for coach parking, general parking and pick ups, albeit using the same entrance/exit.

The Committee heard the representations made by responsible authorities, local councillors and members of the public.

The Local Ward Councillor and Essex Police stated that the organisation of recent events at the premises had been improved and that the cap of 6 events would remain if granted, due to the recent variation of the existing licence. They also highlighted the importance of the traffic management plans and other documents requiring approval by the Safety Advisory Group, as put forward in the proposed conditions for the new licence.

The representatives of the two Parish Tier Council's stated that they remained concerned about an increase in attendance for the premises and about public safety, traffic issues and noise nuisance from the premises. The representative for Little Waltham Parish Council stated that they had received noise complaints from recent events and had passed them onto the City Council. The Committee were reminded that they could only consider the evidence and representations put before them and it was noted that the City Council's Environmental Health team had not made any representations.

The Committee thanked the attendees and officers for their input and advised that the decision would be made during the deliberation after the meeting. It was noted that due to the remote nature of the meeting, the decision would be circulated to all parties within a few working days via email.

The Committee gave careful consideration to this application for a premises licence and to all relevant representations both written and as expanded on in the course of the hearing.

RESOLVED that the Director of Public Places be authorised to grant the application on the terms applied for, subject to the conditions as proposed by the applicant and referred to in annex 1 of appendix B of the report.

Reasons for Decision

In reaching its decision the Committee gave careful consideration to the application and the relevant representations both written and amplified in the course of the remote hearing. The Committee also had regard to the current statutory guidance issued under section 182 and Chelmsford City Council's licensing policy.

All decisions on licensing applications must be evidence based.

The Committee was satisfied with the measures which had been put in place for the previous events held under the current licence, including but not limited to, a temporary traffic regulation order to reduce the speed limit on part of Essex Regiment Way, implementing a clearway and putting an access only point on Wheelers Hill Farm road, hiring CSAS traffic officers to manage these measures, as well as a Highways company to direct patrons entering and leaving the event, coaches with security to take patrons to and from the event to reduce the amount of traffic, hiring security, medical and welfare personnel and implementing electronically restricted taxi pickups to the designated area. The Committee were assured that these measures had been operating effectively and were addressing the licensing objectives, particularly in relation to public nuisance and safety.

The Committee also took account of the objection received from Essex Police and noted the Police's concerns regarding previous events at the site, particularly where attendance had reached capacities up to 5,000 patrons. However, the Committee was reassured by the Police's confirmation that with the implementation of the new measures, a significant improvement in road safety and overall issues at the event had been observed. It was also noted that the Police had not received any calls or complaints from members of the

public during the previous event held at the site. The section 182 guidance states that Licensing Authorities should look to the Police as their main source of advice on crime and disorder (para 2.1).

In addition, the Committee confirmed their satisfaction with the condition put forward by the applicant, requiring a traffic and event management plan be submitted to the Safety Advisory Group (SAG) prior to any planned event and that no event would take place without the necessary consent from the SAG, meaning that there must be no outstanding written objections to the traffic and event management plan. The Committee recognised the importance of this condition, which required the plan be submitted at least ten weeks prior to any event. This was considered to be an effective regulation measure. The Committee were also content with the existing licence variation, which clearly restricts the number of events to no more than six per year. This limit includes any events that may be authorised under an additional licence.

Furthermore, the Committee took into account the statements made by Little Waltham Parish Council, stating that noise complaints had been made following the previous event. However, it was also noted that no formal representations or objections had been submitted by the Council's Environmental Health department in relation to noise nuisance. The Committee therefore concluded that, while some local concerns had been expressed at the hearing, the absence of any formal objection from the responsible authority indicated that the existing controls were functioning effectively and that the licencing objectives were being upheld.

At this point in time there was no evidence before the Committee on which it could properly conclude that, if the licence were to be granted, the licensing objectives would be undermined.

Informative

Residents are reminded that they may contact the Council's Environmental Health department should they experience any noise issues during future events. In addition, a dedicated telephone line for noise complaints will be available and advertised for use during upcoming events. This will allow residents to directly reach the event organisers and report any disturbances, ensuring that concerns are addressed promptly.

Lastly, the Committee would like to thank the applicant and representatives for their positive engagement prior to the hearing.

The meeting closed at 11.50am

Chair