

WITNESS STATEMENT

(Criminal Justice Act 1967, s.9; Magistrates' Courts Act 1980, s.5B;
Criminal Procedure Rules, Rule 16.2)

NICHE Ref. No:	<input type="text"/>	URN:	<input type="text"/>
Statement of:	Catherine Anne Arkle		
Date of birth:	Over 18	Occupation:	Police Officer
This statement (consisting of: 3 page(s) each 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.			
Signature:		Date: 12/04/2019	
Time and date statement taken:			

Check box if witness evidence is visually recorded (supply witness details on rear)

I am a Police Officer in West Yorkshire Police, with twenty six years' service, currently serving as a licensing officer for Leeds District Licensing Department, based in Leeds City Centre. I have been a police licensing officer for 14 years and mainly cover the city centre, having responsibility for over 500 licensed premises.

My role involves liaison with licensed premises and I am tasked with implementing various remedial, action-planning and enforcement procedures on those which do not fulfil their required responsibilities in promoting the licensing objectives.

I also interrogate police computer systems to assess any crimes or incidents said to be associated with named premises. I also deal with applications for new premises licences, variations to existing premises licences, enforcement applications and other clerical duties concerned with the Licensing Act 2003.

I make this statement in relation to premises known as Norman Bar, 36, Call Lane, Leeds.

At 03:10 on Sunday 24th March 2019 West Yorkshire Police were alerted to a large scale disorder both inside and outside the premises – I have described this in my initial application for a summary licence review. This incident triggered the summary review process and the Licensing Sub-Committee agreed with West Yorkshire Police that suspension of the licence was appropriate as an Interim Step to ensure public safety. Norman Bar did not contest this.

History

Norman Bar, as long as I have been in Licensing, have always named the manager of the venue as the joint Premises Licence Holder (PLH) and Designated Premises Supervisor (DPS). I have therefore had no contact with the owner of the premises until recently, but have always known him to be called [REDACTED] from other operators and door staff.

Any dealings I have had with the venue historically were with [REDACTED], who, up until summer last year, was DPS and PLH. There were never really a high volume of incidents but periodically there would be a spike in incidents or a serious incident which we had to speak about. Towards the end of his tenure there were issues with a lack of actioning requests – he had promised to ask the owner about the installation of a CCTV camera in Hirsts Yard, down the side of the venue, and had also been

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required to send details of a new door policy to Leeds City Council Licensing after a complaint, but these were not resolved, and in July 2018 he informed us he had resigned.

His successor, [REDACTED] was named as DPS in August 2018. He asked for help with issues in the alleyway and liaised with West Yorkshire Police regarding the run up to August Bank Holiday weekend and the acknowledged increase in knife and drug related incidents in the area. [REDACTED] tried to address some long standing issues around the customer base in the venue and this may account for what appears to be an increase in some of the incidents whilst he was in charge. In my opinion this was a result of him pro-actively managing the venue. His attempts to change the style of the venue and what it attracted were short lived. At the beginning of 2019 he informed Police Licensing that he was to leave the venue but would oversee the transition between him and the new manager who was yet to obtain her personal licence.

Leonna Taylor took over the running of the venue. She is relatively young and inexperienced and only obtained her personal licence on 21st February 2019. There were some concerns regarding her inexperience but no reason or grounds at that time to object to her becoming the DPS. On March 24th she and her staff were clearly overwhelmed by events which has led to objections to the pending applications to transfer the licence in to her name and for her to be named as DPS on the licence. These matters have been scheduled to be heard at a later date.

Chronology

Incidents of major concern

28/05/2018 – suspects involved in stabbing incident elsewhere in the city have been in Norman Bar prior to attacking victim.

29/07/2018 – victim of stabbing had been in Norman Bar prior to assault. Will not co-operate with police.

12/08/2018 – double stabbing. Victim had been in Norman Bar prior to being stabbed. Victim unable or unwilling to account for what happened. **NOT IN ORIGINAL CHRONOLOGY.**

07/10/2018 – victim of stabbing had been in Norman Bar prior to attack – victim and friends unwilling to co-operate with the police.

All four of the above incidents refer to knife crime – none of it occurred inside Norman Bar but the people involved, victims and suspects, clearly feel comfortable in the bar, as opposed to any other venue on the street, or indeed the city. I can't show that any knives had been inside the venue or why these people are attracted to the bar but they obviously are, and this needs addressing in the interests of public safety and in order to promote the licensing objectives.

Since the suspension of the premises licence West Yorkshire Police have had an opportunity to meet with the owner's representative and solicitor. A full and frank discussion has taken place and our concerns have been addressed with the following suggested conditions.

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1. A computer based identification system shall be installed and maintained to the reasonable satisfaction of West Yorkshire Police. The details of all customers seeking entrance to the premises shall be processed through the system.
2. Polycarbonate vessels shall be used at all times the premises are open with the exception of champagne glasses in dedicated VIP areas. No glass bottles will be sold over the bar without first being decanted with the exception of bottles of Champagne in VIP areas. These areas will be supervised and glassware will be removed from these areas promptly.
3. The minimum number of door supervisors employed at the premises shall be 4. Additional door supervisors (to a maximum of 7) will be employed after a risk assessment and are deemed to be required.
4. At least 2 door supervisors at the front door and 2 door supervisors inside the premises will wear body cameras. The cameras shall record constantly throughout their tour of duty.

In my opinion, the i/d scanner should be off-putting to the element which is comfortable around the use of knives and do not co-operate with the police. It should also be off putting to those who are not afraid to use violence once inside licensed premises.

There is already an element of plastic/polycarbonate use at the premises which may account for the lack of really serious injuries during the recent violent disorder offence. Tightening up on this will help reduce the potential for more serious injuries to be sustained should there be any disorder.

The current condition on the premises licence in relation to door staff is for a minimum of 1 to be deployed. The offer of a minimum of 4 with chest cameras constantly recording is also a tightening up of security and adding another element, the audio and video, which will be off putting to the more undesirable element that may try and access the bar.

I would strongly suggest that the proposed modification of conditions be adopted at the review hearing on 17th April. The 4 suggested conditions are appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives and address specific concerns West Yorkshire Police have in relation to the premises.

At any review of the interim steps under Section 53D of the Licensing Act 2003, West Yorkshire Police would not object to the modification of the original steps taken (suspension of the licence) only if any modification were to replicate word for word the suggested conditions we have asked the Licensing Authority to consider imposing at the review. We are mindful that the decision at review does not take immediate effect, and would therefore want to ensure appropriate proportionate safeguards are in place until that time. The suggested course of action would ensure that those safeguards have to be in place.

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