

Reba Danson

From: Reba Danson on behalf of Licensing
Sent: 27 April 2022 14:41
To: Walsall Licensing
Subject: RE: [External]: Premises Licence Review following Closure Order

Hi Jennifer,

Thank you for your email, this is to acknowledge receipt.

Kind regards



Reba Danson
Licensing Officer
Resilient Communities
Economy Environment & Communities

Walsall MBC
Civic Centre
Darwall Street
Walsall
WS1 1TP



www.walsall.gov.uk

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From: Walsall Licensing <H_WALSALL_LICENSING@westmidlands.police.uk>
Sent: 26 April 2022 12:13
To: Licensing <Licensing@walsall.gov.uk>
Cc: Walsall Licensing <H_WALSALL_LICENSING@westmidlands.police.uk>
Subject: RE: [External]: Premises Licence Review following Closure Order

CAUTION: STOP and THINK - This email originated from outside of the council. If it looks suspicious it probably is and you should NEVER enter your council username and password into an external link or open attachments.

Please find attached West Midlands Police evidence in support of the Licensing Authorities Review of the Spar Store in Aldridge.

Can you please confirm receipt and advise if I need to serve the attached papers on any of the Responsibly Authority's or the Premise Licence Holder.

Kind regards

Jennifer

Jennifer Mellor
Walsall Licensing and Regulatory Services Officer
Walsall Partnership Team
Walsall Police
Civic Centre, Walsall

Sign-up for neighbourhood policing alerts at www.wmnow.co.uk

Follow us on social media
www.twitter.com/wmpolice

From: Reba Danson <Reba.Danson@walsall.gov.uk> **On Behalf Of** Licensing
Sent: 20 April 2022 12:23
To: Walsall Licensing <H_WALSALL_LICENSING@westmidlands.police.uk>; alcohol@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk; firesafety.admin <firesafety.admin@wmfs.net>; Neil Aston-Baugh <Neil.Aston-Baugh@wmfs.net>; Community Protection <CommunityProtection@walsall.gov.uk>; TradingStandards <TradingStandards@walsall.gov.uk>; Environmental Health <EnvironmentalHealth@walsall.gov.uk>; Namita Mistry <[REDACTED]> planningsservices <planningsservices@walsall.gov.uk>; Rebecca Warren <[REDACTED]> Janice Rowley <[REDACTED]> PHBusinessSupport <PHBusinessSupport@walsall.gov.uk>
Cc: Sayful Alom <[REDACTED]>
Subject: [External]: Premises Licence Review following Closure Order
Importance: High

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of West Midlands Police. Do not click links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.

Dear Colleague,

I am writing to notify you that the Council has received a **Closure Order** in respect of the premises below and the Licensing Authority must now review the premises licence issued under the Licensing Act 2003:

Premises: Spar, 62 Walsall Road, Aldridge, Walsall, WS9 0JW

Please see the attached Notice informing you of the grounds for the review and [please note the 7 DAY consultation period.](#)

The application documents are attached and the **last day for representations is 27 April 2022.**

Please let me know if you require any further information.

Kind regards



Reba Danson
Licensing Officer
Resilient Communities
Economy Environment & Communities

Walsall MBC
Civic Centre
Darwall Street
Walsall
WS1 1TP


www.walsall.gov.uk

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more secure way. If you want us to respond by email you must realise that there can be no guarantee of privacy.

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Licensing Authority Review

Spar, 62 Walsall Road, Aldridge, Walsall WS9 0JW

West Midlands Police Supporting Evidence

Licensing Officers Timeline Statement	Page 1
West Midlands Police Licensing Review	Page 5
Inspector Fagan Impact Statement	Page 15
Photograph of weapon seized	Page 19
Officer PC Philips Statement	Page 21
Officer PC Whittaker statement	Page 25
Officer PC Whittaker additional statement	Page 33

WITNESS STATEMENT

Criminal Procedure Rules, r 27.2; Criminal Justice Act 1967, s. 9; Magistrates' Courts Act 1980, s.5B

Crime No. **N/A**URN **N/A**

Statement of Jennifer Mellor

Age if under 18 over 18 (if over 18 insert "over 18")

Occupation Walsall Licensing & Regulatory Service
Officer, West midlands Police

This statement (consisting of 5 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: (witness)

Date 25 April 2022

Tick if witness evidence is visually recorded ☐ (supply witness details on rear)

I am Jennifer Mellor 60384, Walsall Licensing and Regulatory Services Officer currently stationed at Walsall Police Station.

This statement is a timeline of notifiable incidents occurring at the Spar Store, 62 Walsall Road, Aldridge, Walsall from the period 14th February 2022 to April 2022. The information has been gained from speaking with police officers and officers of Walsall Borough Council. I have researched police and external systems and read police officer statements. The purpose of this statement is to provide supporting evidence in support of the Licensing Review served by the Walsall Council Licensing Authority.

On the 14th February 2022 a large-scale disorder at Oakley Avenue, Aldridge occurred which resulted in police officers visiting the Spar Store 62, Walsall Road as information received linked the disorder with youths frequenting the store. The Premise Licence Holder (PLH) and Designated Premise Supervisor (DPS) Paul Sapra advised, youths were using the side alleyway of the store as a place to hide weapons as he had seized a claw hammer which has been placed in the alleyway on the same day as this disorder had occurred.

Police returned to view internal CCTV and evidenced one of the youths involved in the disorder enter the store asking for the hammer. Of note, the Premise Licence holder had not called the police prior to the officer's visit to record the finding of this claw hammer which was then seized by the Police.

On the 19th February 2022 due to concerns of violence and tensions within the school and the local area which West Midlands Police were aware of, PC Whittaker on patrol in the vicinity, was approached by the Premise Licence Holder who disclosed a metal wrench had now been found in the alleyway. This again was seized by police.

Signature Signature witnessed by

03/2016

OFFICIAL – (when complete)

Crime No. N/A

URN N/A

Statement of Jennifer Mellor

On the 23rd February 2022 a Trading Standards operation was completed at the shop where a 15-year-old volunteer was able to purchase an Elux Blueberry Raspberry vape bar which was non-compliant resulting in the seizure of 57 illegal vapes. This vape bar is an age restricted product and should not be sold to anyone under the age of 18 years of age. Trading Standards and West Midlands Police returned to the store after the sale took place which resulted in the arrest of a member of staff for Possession of a Controlled Drug namely Cannabis and Possession of an Offensive Weapon. The drugs were found in the kitchen area and the Offensive Weapon, a Rambo style knife was found underneath the counter.

Due to the continued concerns of anti-social behaviour, potential violence within the area which the school and the police were receiving, extra patrols were necessary to reduce the risk of harm around the school and the store. An additional camera was installed by Walsall Borough Council in the area to support the work of the police around the local anti-social behaviour concerns.

On 15th March 2022 the member of staff found in possession of cannabis on 23rd February (as mentioned above) was found guilty and received £75 fine and £185 court costs fee.

On 17th March 2022 from the footage viewed on the Walsall Borough Councils re-deployable camera, youths are seen coming and going from the shop including a female vaping on the car park which officers believed to be under the year of 18 years of age and a male standing in the doorway with a balloon in his mouth who, was also in the officer's opinion, under the age of 18 years of age. From the same footage, a number of youths can be seen entering the store, shortly after a teacher can be seen from the local school entering the shop.

On the 17th March 2022 the Neighbourhood policing team contacted the Walsall Licensing for advice and support as the level of concerns and the intelligence received was a concern.

On 18th March 2022 PC 23760 Phillips with PC Greenfield visited the Spar store after receiving intelligence and used police bodycam to record the internal footage from the store cameras from the 17th March. Officer's evidenced youths attending the store in large groups, some of these youths were seen vaping freely inside the premise without being challenged. These youths were in school uniform and in the officer's opinion; these children were below the age of 18 years of age whilst Mr Sapra was in the store. Full details

Signature

Signature witnessed by

03/2016

OFFICIAL – (when complete)

Crime No. N/A

URN N/A

Statement of Jennifer Mellor

are provided in PC Phillips statement which will be provided in the evidence attached.

On 18th March 2022 When PC Whittaker viewed the footage that has been recorded on PC 23760 Phillips police bodycam which related to the same time and date when the two youths mentioned above were in the store, these youths can be seen inside running into the private part of the shop. Paul Sapra the Premise Licence holder can be heard saying "Teachers are coming" as if to warn the students. There are also other students of school age seen vaping in the store in the presence of the Premise Licence Holder. Students can be heard giving the teacher verbal abuse such as "get the fuck out". Once the teacher leaves the store the Premise Licence Holder can be heard saying "not inside the shop, you can beat him up outside I don't care just not inside the shop". The footage also evidences students inhaling what police officers believe to be C02 from balloons inside the store.

On Monday 21st March a Closure Notice was served on the Premise Licence Holder

On Wednesday 23rd March PC Whittaker and PC Phillips attended Black Country Magistrates Court where the court issued a Closure Notice with the following restrictions:

- Closure Order given for 3 months effective from 12:00 today until 15th June 2022
- A named member of staff to be banned indefinitely from the store and not to be present there at any time
- For SIA accredited staff to be present at the store between the hours of 08:00-10:00 and 14:00-17.00
- No under 18's to be present in the store unless accompanied by an adult over the age of 21
- For any future staff to be DBS checked prior to undertaking any work at the store.

On 28th March PC Whittaker and PC Greenfield attended the Star store at 16:22hours. The store was open and operating without an SIA accredited door staff at the time that it should have according the undertaking listed in the Closure Order.

On 29th March PC Stokes and PC Waddison attended the Spar store at 16:25 hours. The store was open and operating without an SIA accredited door staff at the time that it should have according the undertaking

Signature

Signature witnessed by

03/2016

OFFICIAL – (when complete)

Crime No. N/A

URN N/A

Statement of Jennifer Mellor

listed in the Closure Order.

On 19th April 2022 West Midlands Police served a Licensing Review as we believed there has been a serious lack of management at this premise with all four of the licensing objectives clearly being undermined. Police had evidenced breaches of the Closure Notice issued by the court on 23rd March 2022 which is a serious offence. The actions of the store have caused concerns within the local community and within the local school which the local policing team have worked with to alleviate this situation. West Midlands Police requested the Licensing Sub-committee to revoke this Premise Licence

On 21st April 2022 West Midlands Police were advised by Walsall Council Licensing Department their Licensing Review had not been accepted by them.

West Midlands Police fully support the Licensing Authority's Review and respectfully request the Premise Licence on this occasion be revoked. Mr Sapra has been unable to keep to the undertakings of the Closure Notice issued by the Court, we therefore believe on the balance of probabilities, any conditions added by the Licensing Sub Committee at the hearing would not be adhered to.

Signature

Signature witnessed by

03/2016

OFFICIAL – (when complete)



Walsall Council

Application for the review of a premises licence or club premises certificate under the Licensing Act 2003

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 this 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. You may wish to keep a copy of the completed form for your records.

I **The Chief Constable of West Midlands Police**

(Insert name of applicant)

apply for the review of a premises licence under section 51 / apply for the review of a club premises certificate under section 87 of the Licensing Act 2003 for the premises described in Part 1 below (delete as applicable)

Part 1 – Premises or club premises details

Postal address of premises or, if none, ordnance survey map reference or description	
Aldridge Spar (Name of Premise Licence is Aldridge News and Booze) 62 Walsall Road Aldridge	
Post town Walsall	Post code (if known) WS9 0JW

Name of premises licence holder or club holding club premises certificate (if known)
Mr Paul Sapra

Number of premises licence or club premises certificate (if known)
WS/PRL/0369

Part 2 - Applicant details

I am

Please tick ✓ yes

1) an individual, body or business which is not a responsible authority (please read guidance note 1, and complete (A) or (B) below)

☐

2) a responsible authority (please complete (C) below)

☒ X

3) a member of the club to which this application relates
(please complete (A) below)

☐

(A) DETAILS OF INDIVIDUAL APPLICANT (fill in as applicable)

Please tick ☒ yes

Mr

☐

Mrs

☐

Miss

☐

Ms

☐

Other title

(for example, Rev)

Surname

First names

I am 18 years old or over

Please tick ☒ yes

☐

**Current postal
address if
different from
premises
address**

Post town

Post Code

Daytime contact telephone number

**E-mail address
(optional)**

(B) DETAILS OF OTHER APPLICANT

Name and address

Telephone number (if any)

E-mail address (optional)

(C) DETAILS OF RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY APPLICANT

Name and address Chief Constable of West Midlands Police Walsall Licensing Section West Midlands Police HQ Lloyd House Birmingham B4 6NQ
Telephone number (if any) 101 8896331
E-mail address (optional) H_WALSALL_LICENSING@westmidlands.pnn.police.uk

This application to review relates to the following licensing objective(s)

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| | Please tick one or more boxes ✓ |
| 1) the prevention of crime and disorder | X |
| 2) public safety | X |
| 3) the prevention of public nuisance | X |
| 4) the protection of children from harm | X |

Please state the ground(s) for review (please read guidance note 2)

On Monday 21st March 2022 Police served a Closure Notice under Section 80 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 at the Spar Shop 62 Walsall Road, Aldridge, Walsall due to a number of concerns raised by the local neighbourhood policing team and schools. These concerns included anti-social behaviour, crime and disorder.

On Wednesday 23rd March 2022 the Police attended Black Country Magistrates Court where the court issued a Closure Notice on the grounds that a person has engaged in anti-social behaviour on the premises and the use of the premises is associated with significant and persistent disorder or persistent serious nuisance to members of the public. The Closure Notice imposed restrictions on the premises until 15th June 2022.

Weapons, drugs and illegal vapes have been seized from this premise and an underaged sale of age restricted products has been made whilst under the ownership of the Premise Licence Holder together with anti-social behaviour during the current year

Since the Court issued the Closure Notice the Premise Licence holder has breached the undertaking of that Closure Notice which is an offence.

The activities taking place at this premise clearly undermine the Crime and Disorder, Public Nuisance, Public Safety and the Protection of Children from Harm licensing objection. West Midlands Police would respectfully request the revocation of the licence.

Please provide as much information as possible to support the application
(please read guidance note 3)

On the 14th February a large-scale disorder at Oakley Avenue, Aldridge occurred which resulted in the police officers visiting the Spar Store 62, Walsall Road as information received linked the disorder with youths frequenting the store. The Premise Licence Holder (PLH) and Designated Premise Supervisor (DPS) Paul Sapra advised, youths were using the side alleyway of the store as a place to hide weapons as he had seized a claw hammer which has been placed in the alleyway on the same day as this disorder had occurred.

Police returned to view internal CCTV and evidenced one of the youths involved in the disorder enter the store asking for the hammer. Of note, the Premise Licence holder had not called the police prior to the officer's visit to record the finding of this claw hammer which was then seized by the Police.

Due to concerns of violence and tensions within the school and the local area which West Midlands Police were aware of, PC Whittaker whilst on patrol, on 19th February was approached by the Premise Licence Holder who disclosed a metal wrench had now been found in the alleyway. This again was seized by police.

On the 23rd February a Trading Standards operation was completed at the shop where a 15-year-old volunteer was able to purchase an Elux Blueberry Raspberry vape bar which was non-compliant resulting in the seizure of 57 illegal vapes. This vape bar is an age restricted product and should not be sold to anyone under the age of 18 years of age. This clearly undermines the Crime and Disorder and the Protection from Harm Licensing objective. Trading Standards and West Midlands Police returned to the store after the sale took place which resulted in the arrest of a member of staff for Possession of a Controlled Drug namely Cannabis and Possession of an Offensive Weapon. The drugs were found in the kitchen area and the Offensive Weapon, a Rambo style knife was found underneath the counter. This undermines the Crime and Disorder, Public Safety and Protection of Children from Harm licensing objectives.

Due to the continued concerns of anti-social behaviour, potential violence within the area which the school and the police were receiving, extra patrols were necessary to reduce the risk of harm around the school and the store. An additional camera was installed by Walsall Borough Council in the area to support the work of the police around the local anti-social behaviour concerns.

On 17th March 2022 from the footage viewed on the Walsall Borough Councils re-deployable camera, youths are seen coming and going from the shop including a female vaping on the car park which officers believed to be under the year of 18 years of age and a male standing in the doorway with a balloon in his mouth who, was also in the officers opinion, under the age of 18 years of age. From the same footage, a number of youths can be seen entering the store, shortly after a teacher can be seen from the local school entering the shop.

On 18th March PC 23760 Phillips with PC Greenfield visited the Spar store after receiving intelligence and used police bodycam to record the internal footage from the store cameras from the 17th March. Officer's evidenced youths attending the store in large groups, some of these youths were seen vaping freely inside the premise without being challenged. These youths were in school uniform and in the officer's opinion; these children were below the age of 18 years of age whilst MR Sapra was in the store. Full details are provided in PC Phillips statement which will be provided in the evidence bundle.

On 18th March 2022 When PC Whittaker viewed the footage that has been recorded on PC 23760 Phillips police bodycam which related to the same time and date when the two youths mentioned above were in the store, these youths can be seen inside running into the private part of the shop. Paul Sapra the Premise Licence holder can be heard saying "Teachers are coming" as if to warn the students. There are also other students of school age seen vaping in the store in the presence of the Premise Licence Holder. Students can be heard giving the teacher verbal abuse such as "get the fuck out". Once the teacher leaves the store the Premise Licence Holder can be heard saying "not inside the shop, you can beat him up outside I don't care just not inside the shop". The footage also evidences students inhaling what police officers believe to be CO2 from balloons inside the store.

On the 17th March the Neighbourhood policing team contacted the Walsall Licensing for advice and support as the level of concerns and the intelligence received was a concern.

On 23rd February the member of staff found in Possession of Cannabis. On 15th March 2022 he was found guilty and received £75 fine and £185 court costs fee.

On Monday 21st March a Closure Notice was served on the Premise Licence Holder

On Wednesday 23rd March PC Whittaker and PC Phillips attended Black Country Magistrates Court where the court issued a Closure Notice with the following restrictions:

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- No under 18's to be present in the store unless accompanied by an adult over the age of 21
- For any future staff to be DBS checked prior to undertaking any work at the store.

On 28th March PC Whittaker and PC Greenfield attended the Star store at 16:22hours. The store was open and operating without an SIA accredited door staff at the time that it should have according the undertaking listed in the Closure Order.

On 29th March PC Stokes and PC Waddison attended the Spar store at 16:25 hours. The store was open and operating without an SIA accredited door staff at the time that it should have according the undertaking listed in the Closure Order.

West Midlands Police believe there has been a serious lack of management at this premise with all four of the licensing objectives clearly being undermined. Police have now evidenced breaches of the Closure Notice issued by the court on 23rd March 2022 which is a serious offence. The actions of the store have caused concerns within the local community and within the local school which the local policing team have worked with to alleviate this situation. We therefore request the Licensing Sub-committee revoke this Premise Licence

Within the evidence bundle which will be supplied prior to the hearing, the following will be supplied.

Photograph of the combat Knife

Close Notice paperwork and decision by the court

Officer Statements

Local Policing Inspectors Statement

Licensing Officer Statement

Neighbourhood Policing Statements

Any other relevant information

Have you made an application for review relating to the premises before

Please tick ✓ yes

No

If yes please state the date of that application

Day Month Year

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If you have made representations before relating to the premises please state what they were and when you made them

N/A

Please tick ✓

- I have sent copies of this form and enclosures to the responsible authorities and the premises licence holder or club holding the club premises certificate, as appropriate **X**
- I understand that if I do not comply with the above requirements my application will be rejected **X**

IT IS AN OFFENCE, LIABLE ON CONVICTION TO A FINE UP TO LEVEL 5 ON THE STANDARD SCALE, UNDER SECTION 158 OF THE LICENSING ACT 2003 TO MAKE A FALSE STATEMENT IN OR IN CONNECTION WITH THIS APPLICATION

Part 3 – Signatures (please read guidance note 4)

Signature of applicant or applicant's solicitor or other duly authorised agent (please read guidance note 5). **If signing on behalf of the applicant please state in what capacity.**

Signature

Date 19th April 2022

Capacity Chief Superintendent 3398 Dolby

Contact name (where not previously given) and postal address for correspondence associated with this application (please read guidance note 6) Walsall Licensing Department Civic Centre Darwall Street Walsall West Midlands	
Post town Walsall	Post Code
Telephone number (if any) 101 8896324 or 07826 956933	
If you would prefer us to correspond with you using an e-mail address your e-mail address (optional) j.mellor@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk	

Notes for Guidance

1. A responsible authority includes the local police, fire and rescue authority and other statutory bodies which exercise specific functions in the local area.
2. The ground(s) for review must be based on one of the licensing objectives.
3. Please list any additional information or details for example dates of problems which are included in the grounds for review if available.
4. The application form must be signed.
5. An applicant's agent (for example solicitor) may sign the form on their behalf provided that they have actual authority to do so.
6. This is the address which we shall use to correspond with you about this application.

WITNESS STATEMENT

Criminal Procedure Rules, r 27.2; Criminal Justice Act 1967, s. 9; Magistrates' Courts Act 1980, s.5B

Crime No. URN

Statement of Janine FAGAN

Age if under 18 0/18 (if over 18 insert "over 18") over 18 Occupation POLICE INSPECTOR 3749

This statement (consisting of 1 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: J. Fagan (witness)

Date 19.04.2022

Tick if witness evidence is visually recorded ☐ (supply witness details on rear)

I am Police Inspector 3749 of West Midlands Police currently operating within the Aldridge Neighbourhood Team based at Aldridge Police Station, Aldridge, Walsall.

I am making this impact statement to highlight the negative impact that the 'SPAR' at 62 WALSALL ROAD, ALDRIDGE WS9 0JW is having on the residents of the local community of which the Aldridge Neighbourhood Team police, the local school, and the high demand placed not only on the Aldridge Neighbourhood Team but also on other supporting departments of Walsall Police as a direct response to the shop, and criminal incidents affiliated to the shop.

It must be stressed that when reviewing the licensing of the store, there is overwhelming evidence to suggest that the licensing objectives of Crime and Disorder, Public Nuisance, Public Safety and Protection of Children from Harm been all been undermined by the actions of the Premise License Holder, Paul SAPRA, in how he has been operating the shop, which has had a negative effect on the local neighbourhood and the residents of Aldridge.

Firstly, the location of the shop is on a a main arterial route into Aldridge and Walsall and close to a large high school. This has meant that the shop has become a popular location for high school students to gather in large groups in and around the shop in the morning before school commences and in the afternoon when school has finished. This is not unusual behaviour, however it is a huge concern for police that a member of staff operating the store was recently arrested by police for being in possession of an offensive weapon, namely a zombie knife, of which was seized from inside the store by officers along with controlled drugs.

This is a clear breach of the SAPRA's responsibility to prevent crime and disorder and ensure public safety whilst trading under his licensing terms. It can be argued it was not SAPRA in possession of the knife, however he is the Premise License Holder and therefore it is his responsibility to ensure that the licensing objectives are upheld of which he evidently has not. Furthermore, a further concern for police is that the

Signature J. Fagan

Signature witnessed by

03/2016

OFFICIAL – (when complete)

Crime No. URN

Statement of Janine FAGAN

shop is within a very close proximity to where a large scale disorder occurred on Monday 14th February 2022 involving young 15-16 year old children engaging in 'postcode wars' where various weapons have been retrieved from the side passage of the shop during the same period that this disorder involving weapons and young individuals have occurred.

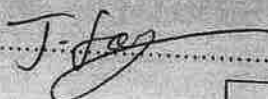
A further incident occurred on 17/03/22 where two youths have been seen entering the store, one wearing balaclava, and have hidden in the rear of the store with SAPRA's permission, as shown in footage whereby he warns the individuals "THE TEACHERS COMING". This footage has been captured on officers body worn camera also you can hear SAPRA stating this verbally. This caused the two individuals to take refuge in the rear of the premises in an attempt to conceal themselves. The necessity to store weapons in and around the shop and the facilitation by SAPRA allowing children to seek refuge in his store whilst concealing their identity by a balaclava is deeply concerning. The shop is in a very close proximity to a large high school where students as young as 11 attend every day, and is also surrounded by residential houses where families of all ages have chosen to reside. The shop is therefore used by members of the community ranging from young to old, and is not an environment I believe them to be safe in if SAPRA is facilitating and allowing crime and disorder to flourish within the community putting individuals at risk with scant disregard for members of the public's safety.

Looking at internal police systems there is also a high level of intelligence reports raising concerns that the shop is facilitating county lines drugs supply by using young students and ex-students of Aldridge School to sell cannabis from the shop, as well as using the shop as a storage place for weapons to potentially be used later in crime and disorder within the community. There have also been a multitude of intelligence logs stating that the shop was responsible for selling alcohol, cigarettes and illegal vapes to children. This led police to conduct a joint operation with Trading Standards on 23/02/22 whereby the shop failed a test purchase as illegal vapes were sold to underage customers. This has substantiated police intelligence reports and further raised our concerns for the community as a whole. It is in my professional opinion that this is clear evidence that SAPRA has not adhered to one of his sole responsibilities as a License Premise Holder in Protecting Children from Harm.

As a result, police have taken action to ensure that the 5/6 individuals deemed most at risk as a result of their on-going affiliation with the shop and community tension/disorder associated with the shop have been referred via MARF and as a result of social services concerns, 3 of those individuals have been referred to family interventions to ensure they are protected from harm, away from the shop.

As an Inspector for the local area, the team and I have been contacted by the Aldridge School in the last six months more than ever and on a regular basis. Although a large school, the school have previously been

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Signature witnessed by

03/2016

Crime No. URN

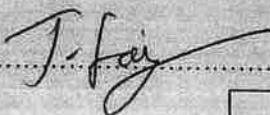
Statement of Janine FAGAN

sufficient in dealing with matters in house and have not required much police involvement or intervention over the years. However, over the last six months this has significantly increased directly as a result of the SPAR store and how the shop is operating and affiliating with students from the school causing numerous safeguarding concerns. The officers of the Aldridge NHT, alongside assistance from the Brownhills NHT and the Neighbourhood Task Force have carried out hours of reassurance patrols for weeks post the disorder to manage community tensions and prevent any further disorder occurring in and around the area of the shop and school. This has required a large amount of police time and already sparse resources to ensure that the school was patrolled before students arrived and when students were being let out at the end of the day. Although this may be reassuring to members of staff at the school and some parents, I am fearful that to some students and parents the presence of police in and around the school may cause further worry for their children's safety due to the necessity for uniformed officers to be in attendance on a regular basis. There has been liasons between the Aldridge officers and the Safeguarding Lead, [REDACTED] on multiple occasions and he has made it clear that the shop operating as usual is his biggest safeguarding concern for his students and the community as he feels that the location and Mr SAPRA's behaviours is the focal point of which the problems are stemming from, and he does not feel that the shop is supportive in his concerns.

The school is not alone in their concerns. Aldridge officer, PC23760PHILLIPS, has had a meeting with an anonymous member of the local community who wished to voice their concerns around the SPAR and the negative impact it is having on their life, and the lives of others in the local community. The informant stressed to PC PHILLIPS that the disorder that is occurring in and around the shop location and the intimidation caused by having large groups of anti-social youths, gathered in and around the front of the store has caused them to feel unsafe in their own community. Further to this, the informant requested to remain anonymous because they feared the repercussions which might come along with speaking to police to voice their concerns of their safety. Similarly to the school, the informant made it clear to me that they have lived in the community for years but never once felt intimidated around the area of the shop, however in the last 6 months that has all changed as a direct result of the SPAR and how the SAPRA is operating the shop. They stressed they feel intimidated in and around the area of the store and this has been echoed by parents who have attended Aldridge School to also voice their concerns as mentioned in Shaun Eaton's statement. This is further evidence of the store again of the Premise License Holder undermining his responsibility to ensure Public Safety to those in and around the community in which the shop trades.

From a neighbourhood policing perspective, we have a duty to identify threat, harm and risk through developing and understanding local issues in order to best protect our community. We have identified a

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03/2016

Crime No. URN

Statement of Janine FAGAN

multitude of major concerns in relation to public safety (especially that of young, vulnerable children), nuisance and crime which we believe to be all as a result of how Mr SAPRA is operating his business, and that his behaviours have continued despite multiple police visits and teacher visits and trading standards visits to the location to try and intervene and give chance to change those behaviours and activities. In my role as Neighbourhood Inspector I also spoke to Local Councillor Murray, who agreed and echoed the concerns detailed around how the business was being run. As a result our concerns, built to a point that on the 23/03/2022 officers of the Aldridge NHT were successful in their application to Walsall Magistrates Court and were able to provide enough evidence to satisfy the Court that the store was facilitating disorder and failing to protect children from harm and as a result the Court issued a Closure Order onto SAPRA. However, in the following days after the Order was issued, SAPRA was in clear breach of the terms of the orders as on two separate occasions he had not utilised an SIA accredited door staff to enforce no entry to the store of any minors under the age of 18, unless accompanied by an adult of at least 21 years of age which he was required to do so by the Court Order from 23/03/2022.

Even though SAPRA has still been allowed to trade with conditions, rather than ordered to close permanently for 3 months, he has again failed to adhere to the conditions bestowed upon him. This is a clear illustration of SAPRA's lack of consideration, respect and failure to adapt his ways when warned by authorities and I am fearful if no further action is taken in attempts to tighten SAPRA's trading terms and conditions, it will allow for further crime and disorder to flourish within the community, putting young people in harms ways and at further risk of criminal exploitation and risk.

As the Police Inspector of Aldridge, I have never seen so much concern from different members of the community before surrounding one location. The violence has become increasingly worse, putting children at risk of being drawn into illegal activities and violence. The incidents to date have caused numerous members of the local residential community, and school community to become increasingly worried. As a force we are already spread thin on the ground in terms of resources and it is becoming increasingly difficult to respond to the sheer amount of incidents alone, but SAPRA is ensuring further strain on resources as police from different neighbourhood teams, and on occasions, response are being required to conduct reassurance patrols in the area, ensure public safety and also conduct regular checks to ensure that he is complying with his Closure Order which so far he has failed to do so.

I believe that the facts stated in this statement are true to the best of my knowledge. These are my original notes.

Signature



Signature witnessed by

03/2016

OFFICIAL – (when complete)

JW-01



WITNESS STATEMENT

Criminal Procedure Rules, r 27.2; Criminal Justice Act 1967, s. 9; Magistrates' Courts Act 1980, s.5B

Crime No. URN

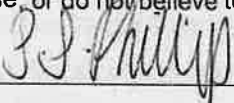
Statement of Stacey PHILLIPS

Age if under 18 O/18 (if over 18 insert "over 18")

Occupation Police Constable 23760

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:

 23760

(witness)

Date 18.03.22

Tick if witness evidence is visually recorded ☐ (supply witness details on rear)

I am PC23760PHILLIPS of West Midlands Police currently based at Aldridge Police Station in Walsall.

On 18/03/2022 I was tasked by my supervision to attend the SPAR on 62 WALSALL ROAD, ALDRIDGE WS9 0JW and request the shopkeeper to allow us access to view the store CCTV footage between 15:15 hours and 15:46 hours 17/03/2022. This is due to receiving intelligence that an incident occurred at approximately 15:25 hours on 17/03/22 whereby two individuals enter the SPAR. One individual of interest is known to police to be a [REDACTED] and the other another male was wearing a balaclava. [REDACTED] is a named offender alleged to be involved in a violent disorder on OAKLEY AVENUE, ALDRIDGE on 14/02/2022 (whereby a zombie knife was involved) which is only a street away from the SPAR. Police intelligence states SPAR is suspected to have been used by [REDACTED] among others to store weapons on the premises in relation to the disorder. Due to the tensions in the community that this disorder has caused, officers wished to attend the store and view to footage to identify any individuals in the store wearing balaclavas and causing further tension.

I attended the store at 16:03 hours 18/03/2022 in company with PC20325GREENFIELD in full street uniform. Upon entering the store I spoke to a male behind the counter. At first I did not know who the male was however I saw that he had the name "SAPRA" tattooed down the front of his left arm. This lead me to confirm that he was 'Paul SAPRA'. I was familiar that a male named Paul SAPRA worked at the shop as I had been told this by my colleague PC20739WHITTAKER previously when he had conducted enquiries at the store for previous matters. SAPRA confirmed his first name was Paul however appeared anxious and uncomfortable that officers knew his identity and questioned as to how and why.

When asked SAPRA was accommodating and showed officers the footage, however SAPRA was visibly shaking and appeared extremely nervous and fumbled often whilst trying to sort out the CCTV on his phone.

Signature

 23760

Signature witnessed by

03/2016

OFFICIAL – (when complete)

Crime No. URN

Statement of Stacey PHILLIPS

The following CCTV has been seized by myself from the SPAR store 62 WALSALL ROAD, ALDRIDGE on 17/03/2022. It has been captured on my mobility device and uploaded to my Axon BWV account. I can now produce the following footage as evidence exhibited as:

SP/01 - 1 x CCTV footage showing SAPRA name [REDACTED] as "[REDACTED]" and point out the store window moments prior to [REDACTED] entering the store with a male wearing a balaclava. You can also hear another young male in the store state "HE'S WEARING A MASK" in shock. SAPRA can then be seen ushering to someone outside the store to take off a mask just before a male enters the store. SAPRA can be heard stating "TEACHERS COMING" as if to elude the males, whereby they then walk hastily into the back of the store out of sight. The male that enters wearing a balaclava (of which he takes off) is not known to me. He is also wearing a black puffer jacket with a circular logo on the left hand shoulder side and appears to purchase an orange Oasis drink from SAPRA. There is also a large dog which appears to be an XL Bully or of a similar breed. The dog can be heard loudly barking. Two students in school uniforms that are clearly under the age of 18 can be seen vaping within the store in front my SAPRA. Court Ref (.....)

SP/02- 1 x CCTV showing a male wearing a balaclava enter the store again and rush to the back of the store. Soon after, [REDACTED] (Deputy Head Teacher of Aldridge School) can be seen entering the store clearly looking to see where the male in the balaclava had gone and who he was. [REDACTED] walks to the back of the store and SAPRA follows out of view of the camera. Quickly after [REDACTED] and SAPRA reappear and [REDACTED] goes to walk out the store. This is when [REDACTED] begins to receive a lot of verbal abuse off of some other students who are stood by the tills telling him to "GET THE FUCK OUT". EVANS leaves and SAPRA can be heard telling them "NOT INSIDE THE SHOP. YOU CAN BETA HIM UP OUTSIDE, I DON'T CARE. JUST NOT INSIDE THE SHOP". SAPRA then disappears into the back of the store again for a couple of minutes out of view of the cameras. SAPRA then returns behind the tills but continues to look warily outside of the store window. Students can clearly be heard stating "I'VE GOT TWO BALLOONS. DO YOU WANT A BALLOON?". In my professional opinion they are eluding to Nitrous Oxide Cannisters and balloons. The balloons can then be seen being inhaled by two students clearly in front of SAPRA. Court Ref (.....)

SP/03- 1 x CCTV showing a large dog behind the counter. A male can then be seen returning from the back of the store and putting his balaclava back on prior to leaving the store. Court Ref (.....).

Prior to officers attendance to gather the CCTV, SAPRA had phoned [REDACTED] and stated that he knew it was [REDACTED] that was present with the male in the balaclava. However he did not

Signature

Stacey Phillips

23760

Signature witnessed by

03/2016

OFFICIAL – (when complete)

OFFICIAL – (when complete)

MG11

Crime No.

URN

Statement of Stacey PHILLIPS

know who the male wearing the balacava was. SAPRA stated this was the first time he had ever seen this unknown male. Officer's questioned SAPRA regarding who he could identify from the footage and he stated the same to officers of which he told [REDACTED]

This statement is true to the best of my knowledge and I am willing to attend court if necessary to give evidence. These are my original notes and I had no further dealings. 18/03/22 18:54hours.

Signature

SP Phillips 23760

Signature witnessed by

03/2016

OFFICIAL – (when complete)

Witness contact details

URN : / /

Name of witness: Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss/Dr

Former name

*Email address:

*Email address needed for correspondence i.e. support material to be sent

Address

Postcode:

Preferred telephone number:

Alternate telephone number:

Agreed means of contact and frequency :

Gender

Date and place of birth

Ethnicity Code (16+1)

DATES OF WITNESS NON-AVAILABILITY: (12 months)***Witness care***

Does the witness require a Special Measures Assessment as a vulnerable or intimidated witness? (*youth under 18; witness with mental disorder, learning or physical disability; or witness in fear of giving evidence or witness is the complainant in a sexual offence case. ALSO crimes involving gun and knife crimes and victims of Modern Slavery Act 2015*)

Yes ☐ No ☐ If 'Yes', submit **MG2** with file in NGAP, contested or indictable only cases OR to read VPS in GAP cases.

Witness Consent (for witness completion)

- | | | | |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| a) I am aware that I may have to attend court. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
| b) I have been given the Victims' leaflet with the crime number on . | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| c) The Victim Personal Statement scheme (victims only) has been offered to me. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| d) It has been explained to me what will happen next with this investigation | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| e) I consent to police having access to my medical record(s) in relation to this matter (<i>obtained in accordance with local practice</i>) | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f) I consent to the statement being disclosed for the purposes of civil proceedings if applicable, e.g. child care proceedings, CICA, CLPD. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g) Child witness cases only. I have had the provision regarding reporting restrictions explained to me. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I would like the CPS to apply for reporting restrictions on my behalf. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I understand that the information recorded above will be passed on to the Witness Service, which offers help and support to witnesses pre-trial and at court. I understand that my details may be passed to other agencies who can offer me help and support in relation to being a victim of this crime. | | | |

I give my informed and explicit consent for my personal details to be passed to other agencies that can support me or are involved in the criminal justice process.

Yes ☐ No ☐

Signature..... Date

Parent/guardian signature..... Date

Address

Contact tel no

Supporter signature..... Date

Statement taken by (*print name*):

Station:

Time and place statement taken:

Signature

Signature witnessed by

03/2016

OFFICIAL – (when complete)

WITNESS STATEMENT

Criminal Procedure Rules, r 27.2; Criminal Justice Act 1967, s. 9; Magistrates' Courts Act 1980, s.5B

Crime No. URN

Statement of James WHITTAKER

Age if under 18 ☐ 18 (if over 18 insert "over 18")

Occupation Police Constable

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:  20139

(witness)


Date 18/03/2022

Tick if witness evidence is visually recorded ☐ (supply witness details on rear)

I am PC 20739 WHITTAKER of the West Midlands Police Force currently based at Aldridge Police Station on the WS Local Policing Unit.

I am making this statement in support of a Closure Order for the Spar Store, 62 Walsall Road, Aldridge Walsall, WS9 0JW all though recently I have received information that the Spar store as a franchise has distanced itself from the store due to recent incidents that had took place at the premises. The premises has previously also been known as 1st Stop, Uppal Newsagents.


The Closure Order in any case, will be supported for the Store retailing at 62 Walsall Road, Aldridge, Walsall, WS9 0JW.

The person named on the licensing conditions and licensee of the premises is a Paul SAPRA of  however is unknown as to who owns the building and pays for the building at this moment in time.

At this location there have been a number of incidents that have taken place which are of huge concern, most of which stem from students that attend Aldridge Community School, Tynings Lane, Aldridge, Walsall, WS9 0BG.

A number of youths that don't reside in Aldridge but travel to school, have ongoing disputes with one another involving weapons and violence and all frequent the store as mentioned above in some capacity, whether as a customer or a place to hang out, which seems to be a trend amongst other students, which will be explained further in this statement. Some of the youths travel specifically to the area from out of Aldridge to frequent the store also.

The most noticeable incident of note that had occurred between youths that attend the school, took place on the 14th February 2022 whereby a large scale disorder took place on Oakley Avenue, Aldridge, Walsall, of which several of youths that attend the school, who had been identified by teachers, were involved in some

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Signature witnessed by

03/2016

OFFICIAL – (when complete)

OFFICIAL – (when complete)

MG11

Crime No. []

URN []

Statement of James WHITTAKER

way. I now produce in evidence the Crime report for this incident as Police Reference Number JW/03, Court Reference (). There was also another crime recorded Threaten with a Blade or Sharply Pointed Article in a public place which I now produce in evidence as Police Reference Number JW/04, Court Reference (). This was recorded as a witness had been threatened with the Zombie knife that was used in the disorder.

It was identified that the following youths were present and involved :

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

It is believed that issues between [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were the main cause for the disorder which resulted in [REDACTED] attending the schools location armed with a Zombie knife awaiting the school to finish, which lead to the disorder taking place. Witnesses had stated that [REDACTED] was chased with the Zombie Knife by [REDACTED] and also threatened various other persons with this, who were associated with [REDACTED]. Unfortunately, all though witness were able to provide various accounts to the Police, due to the reluctance of persons present wishing to co-operate with Police in terms of providing an official witness statement no further criminal Investigation was able to take place. It is evident that this event has caused major upset and fear to the community with the levels of Anti Social Behaviour that has been occurring.

It was then that the day after the 15th February 2022 officers were conducting CCTV checks around the location and had cause to attend the store mentiond in order to ascertain as to whether there is any evidence that would help asisst identify an offender and or further witnesses to the offence.

It was then that I had a conversation with Paul SAPRA who stated that the youths were using the side alleyway of the store as a place to hide weapons as he had seized a claw hammer which had been placed in the alleyway on the same day. SAPRA provided Police with CCTV from inside the store which identified [REDACTED] as the person who came back to the store asking for the hammer which he had earlier placed there that day, after he had finished scool, in the anticipation that he may need this for further disorder that was potentially going to take place.

The hammer was seized and booked into Police Detained Property under property reference 2584491/F

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03/2016

OFFICIAL – (when complete)

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MG11

Crime No.

URN

Statement of James WHITTAKER

I am of the opinion that had officers not attended the store and spoke with SAPRA that he would not of given the wrench to officers for confiscation and had not actively looked to contact Police with his concerns regardless of the large scale disorder that took place the day previous.

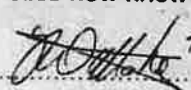
As part of the on going issues with the school and students that attend there, officers were pro actively patrolling the location in the days to come and I was then again approached by Paul SAPRA on the 19th February 2022 who further disclosed to me that another weapon of offence was found in the alleyway, namely a metal wrench. This I believe was going to be used in connection with further violence from youths that attend the school. This was also seized and booked into the Police Detained Property store under property reference 2585219/C.

The fact that weapons had been stored at the location was of great concern to the Police as the weapons that were being used were capable of causing serious injury if used. Other students at the school were being put at risk as well as other members of the public potentially due to the stores negligence in not notifying Police about their concerns.

Upon dealings with the store and reviewing the CCTV, it was also apparent that youths were attending the location in large groups and were witnessed by officers to be vaping inside the premises freely, without any person inside the store challenging their behaviour. Police had also received information from sources that the store was also allowing alcohol sales to under age persons as well as supplying energy drinks to under age persons along with vaping products and vaping devices. There was also a suggestion from another source that the store was providing cannabis to students from the school and were using the rear of the yard to allow youths to smoke cannabis and consume alcohol.

Police then patrolled the location of the store at times where schools were finishing in an attempt to reduce the possibility of any future disorder and to provide the public with reassurance that any further incidents would be dealt with. It was also requested that a Local Authority Camera be put up in that location as a preventive measure to reduce the possibility of disorder, which was duly placed on lamppost number 1 of Walsall Road, Aldridge a few days later.

On the 23rd February 2022 and due to the concerns and intelligence received that the store were selling under age products to young persons, a trading standards operation was completed in the store which the store failed as vapes were able to be bought by under age persons and as a result at SPAR, 62 Walsall Road, Aldridge, Walsall, the volunteer purchased an 'ELUX Blueberry Raspberry' vape bar which was also non-compliant and resulted in the seizure of 57 illegal vapes. In doing so, the person working at the time was a male who Police now know to be [REDACTED] who was arrested by officers in

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03/2016

OFFICIAL – (when complete)

OFFICIAL – (when complete)

MG11

Crime No.

URN

Statement of James WHITTAKER

attendance for Possession of a Controlled Drug, namely Cannabis and also Possession of an offensive weapon. I now produce in evidence the Crime report for the Possession of Cannabis as Police Reference Number JW/05, Court Reference, () and the Offensive Weapon in a public place as Police Reference Number JW-6, Court Reference ().

The Cannabis which was seized was in the kitchen area of the premises of which [REDACTED] stated was his. This evidences that drugs are either being consumed or sold on the premises as mentioned previously in the statement. [REDACTED] was also arrested for the offensive weapon. I now produce in evidence a picture of the weapon as Police Reference Number JW-01, Court Reference ().

This is a major concern as it is alarming to think that a shop owner or worker feels that he needs to be in possession of such a weapon in an environment such as this. School children regularly use this store as do other members of the public, un be known to them that a weapon such as this is stored underneath the counter. When cautioned, [REDACTED] stated that it was for his "own protection". In working in a store, what is it [REDACTED] needs protecting from? As mentioned previously there has been disorder in close proximity to the store, weapons had been concealed in the alleyway of the store and now it has been shown that weapons have been stored inside the store. It is a believed that the store had prior knowledge of the disorder or in doing so had information that suggested that further incidents would take place as a result of the first disorder which would evidence as to why weapons are being stored inside the premises or within its locality.

It further transpires that information has also been received to Police that [REDACTED], who is responsible for a large part of the original disorder, is associated with the store in some capacity working there, however it is unknown as to what his role within the store is at this moment in time.

On the 25th February 2022 schools broke up for half term and no further incidents of note had taken place during the school holidays.

Since the restart of term, there has been a significant police presence that has been put in place due to the level of threat harm and risk associated with the store and the students themselves as it is believed that the issues between the youths involved hasn't subsided even with the break. There continues to be recent intelligence and updates from the school, with ongoing concerns around the store allowing young persons to hang around in inside.

There has however been developments in school, which have boiled over between the same youths as mentioned previously in the statement which has resulted in assaults in school and fights breaking out amongst them. This has lead to recent Intelligence regarding [REDACTED] who had been

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03/2016

OFFICIAL – (when complete)

OFFICIAL – (when complete)

MG11

Crime No.

URN

Statement of James WHITTAKER

witnessed by teachers at the school to be around the Spar store following hearing news about the fight in school and that he had attended the location in an attempt to wait for school to finish and begin an attack. This was further evidenced as the CCTV camera from lampost shows 2 males, one of which is believed to be [REDACTED] and another male outside the store, concealing his identity by wearing clothing that conceals his face. They are joined by another female who comes out of the store with [REDACTED] and the other unidentified male. The female can be seen to vape on the car park of the premises having come out of the store moments earlier.


The two males and female are then on the car park for a few minutes before re entering the store, moments before a teacher from Aldridge School walks to the location. Shortly after this another unknown male can be seen to be standing in the doorway with a balloon in his mouth. This CCTV footage has been evidenced by [REDACTED] under Exhibit reference KMP/2 with the statement providing the footage as KMP/01. Still images have been made of the youths and I now produce these in evidence as Police Reference Number JW-02

The teacher from Aldridge then enters the store and the two males, run into the private area of the store, which isnt open to the public and seem to attempt to evade the teacher for unknown reasons.

SAPRA has provided the Police with CCTV footage from within the store which a copy has been taken from PC 23760 PHILLIPS on her Body Worn Camera.

I have seen the Body Worn Video footage from PC 23760 PHILLIPS which shows concerning statements made by SAPRA. Whilst the two males run in the rear of the store SAPRA can be heard to say on CCTV "TEACHERS ARE COMING" as if to warn the students of the teachers presence. There are also other students of school age that can clearly be seen to be vaping inside the store in the presence of SAPRA.

It appears that a sort conversation has been had between the teacher at Aldridge and other students some of which attend the same school, in the presence of SAPRA, some of which can be heard to be giving the teacher verbal abuse such as "GET THE FUCK OUT" amongst other things. The teacher from Aldridge School then leaves the store due to the lack of co-operation by the store and youths. SAPRA can then be heard to say "NOT INSIDE THE SHOP, YOU CAN BEAT HIM UP OUTSIDE I DON'T CARE JUST NOT INSIDE THE SHOP". The way that SAPRA has engaged with the youths that were arguing with school staff isnt particularly encouraging in asking them to stop shouting or causing any further issues for the teacher, which I would of expected from someone in his position. In no way does SAPRA ask for the students to stop how they are behaving whilst the teacher is still present.

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Signature witnessed by

03/2016

OFFICIAL – (when complete)

OFFICIAL – (when complete)

MG11

Crime No.

URN

Statement of James WHITTAKER

I had also noticed other students inside the store on this occasion that seemed to be inhaling co2 from balloons, which is commonly known as laughing gas. They are clearly visible from the CCTV in operation outside the store and inside the store. I do not know whether SAPRA has provided the youths with the nitrous oxide or whether he has access to this in the store however it is evident that SAPRA is aware of what is happening and makes no attempt to stop such activity.

A short while later SAPRA contacted the teacher at Aldridge School and stated that one of the males was indeed [REDACTED] who was one of the schools ex students and was present with the unknown male in the balaclava or face covering.

Intelligence:

Between the period of the 01/02/2022 and 19/03/2022 there have been 8 Intelligence logs submitted in respect of the premises alone which vary from the unlawful supply of vapes amongst other products, weapons being used and stored on the premises, suspects into criminal offences being harboured or assisted in some way and drug dealing either taking place on the premises or drugs being on the premises. There is evidence that is presentable that shows that the Intelligence that officers have submitted is of very good value, with offenders being arrested from the premises, weapons being recovered/seized, drugs being recovered/seized and a Trading Standards Operation that the store failed, by allowing a 15 year old person to purchase vaping products. A person has been arrested and convicted of drug related offences as a result, the store has an active ongoing case with the Trading Standards Department and yet still the store is subject to allowing students of school age to consume illegal products on the premises and do not seem to be looking to distance themselves from these matters or put measures into place so as this type of activity cannot take place on their premises.

Concerns:

In my professional opinion, there is an honest held belief that there are major concerns for both the Police and the General Public with how the store are currently operating, as evidenced above. It cannot be ignored that all be it not SAPRA, a member of staff from the store has been in possession of an offensive weapon, namely a rambo knife as well as possessing controlled drugs on a licensed premises. It is the responsibility of the person in control of the store at that time to ensure that order is kept. It is no coincidence that disorder has occurred within very close proximity of the store and in doing so weapons have been seized from the premises whilst conducting an Operation with Trading Standards. It is evident in my opinion that the store is playing a huge part in issues that are likely to continue such as further disorder and encouraging those involved to be there in the store and participate in disorder. There are links to the

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MG11

Crime No.

URN

Statement of James WHITTAKER


store from [REDACTED] who used to attend Aldridge School and now has an affiliation with the store which I believe attracts associates of his from the school, to the store. [REDACTED] is a major instigator in the original disorder and is named in recent Intelligence reports suggesting that further disorder will occur. [REDACTED] is a daily presence at the store and seems to be welcomed by SAPRA and/or other persons who work in the store. The excuse of having weapons such as the Rambo knife due to "own protection" is in my opinion no defence. In my almost 15 year policing career I have never previously known stores such as this feel the need to possess weapons such as this for their own protection and it is clear to me that the store is allowing, encouraging or assisting crime to take place inside and outside of the store. The store itself, knowing that Police have been heavily involved in its activities over recent months and with several disorders inside and outside of the school in the locality of the store, have not changed their approach or attempted to distance themselves from the known trouble causers as mentioned and appears that this will be a continuing trend based on the Intelligence that has been submitted and the offences that have been committed.

In relation to the youths involved, all the young people associated in the disorder have been linked to an ongoing feud between one another in the Walsall Borough. This has continued to escalate. Weapons have been used on multiple occasions and the violence has escalated to the point there is a real threat of harm for each individuals safety. This all came to a head during two violence incidents at Aldridge school where there was a mass disorder where adults were present and a several reports of weapons including a knife was brandished. It is clear the feud is ongoing and violence is occurring from and to each young person putting them equally at risk of causing significant as well as being the victim of serious harm and the store is facilitating this by allowing the youths to hang around the store and hide there when the need arises.

Lastly, regarding the store premises there is clear evidence to show that a person within the store has engaged in criminal behaviour on the premises. There is further evidence that the use of the Premises concerned has resulted in serious nuisance to members of the public, through the use of weapons and disorder. Moreover, there is evidence to show that there has been, disorder near the premises associated with its use and ongoing potential for it to reoccur.

Overall, I think that the making of a closure order for three months is necessary to prevent the above criminal behaviour and/or serious nuisance and/or disorder from continuing or happening there again.

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true. I understand that proceedings for contempt of court may be brought against anyone who makes, or causes to be made, a false statement in a document verified by a statement of truth without an honest belief in its truth.

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URN

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At approximately 16.45 hours on Saturday 19th March 2022 I attended the store in company with PC.20325 GREENFIELD and spoke to SAPRA and informed him that the Police intend to take action against the store due to what has been happening recently at the location and because of this a Closure Notice will be served in the near future. The process of the notice has been explained and the next steps which he understood.

James Whittaker 20329

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WITNESS STATEMENT

Criminal Procedure Rules, r 27.2; Criminal Justice Act 1967, s. 9; Magistrates' Courts Act 1980, s.5B

Crime No. URN

Statement of James WHITTAKER

Age if under 18 O 18 (if over 18 insert "over 18")

Occupation Police Officer

This statement (consisting of 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: (witness)



Date 15/04/2022

Tick if witness evidence is visually recorded ☐ (supply witness details on rear)

I am PC 20739 WHITTAKER of the West Midlands Police Force, currently based at Aldridge Police Station on the WS LPU.

I am making this further statement in relation to a Closure Notice, which had originally been issued to the Spar Store, 62 Walsall Road, Aldridge on Monday 21st March 2022 due to a number of concerns that had been raised over a period of time. At this time, Police were satisfied that a person has engaged in anti-social behaviour on the premises and the use of the premises is associated with significant and persistent disorder or persistent serious nuisance to members of the public. This notice being in force for a period of 24 hours with the relevant authority granting the Notice.

Whilst the above criteria had been met and the original Notice authorised, to enable the matter to be put before Court, there was an extension given on the notice on Tuesday 22nd March for a further period of 24 hours.

On Wednesday 23rd March 2022 I attended the Magistrates Court at Walsall and witnessed the hearing of the matter in front of the District Judge accompanied by PC 23760 PHILLIPS. It had been agreed that a Closure Order would be granted however the following conditions would be followed:

- 1 Closure Order granted for 3 months effective from 12:00 Wednesday 22nd March 2022 until 15th June 2022
- 2 [REDACTED] to be banned indefinitely from the store and not to be present there at any time
- 3 For SIA accredited staff to be present at the store between the hours of 08:00-10:00 and 14:00-17:00
- 4 No under 18's to be present in the store unless accompanied by an adult over the age of 21
- 5 For any future staff to be DBS checked prior to undertaking any work at the store

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Crime No. URN

Statement of James WHITTAKER

Both parties, CPS and the defendants legal representative were happy with these conditions so that the store could continue to trade and also to minimise any amount of disruption to the public while minimising the possibility for further disorder.

Since the order was granted on Wednesday 22nd March 2022 there has been a significant decrease in calls for service as well as information that has been given to officers on the Aldridge NHT. I cannot recall there being any calls from this location regarding incidents involving youths, weapons or drug activity. There has been no crime recorded and no intelligence relating to the premises.

To date however, there have been a number of breaches to the undertaking of the order, which have been noted by the Aldridge Neighborhood Team and evidence that has been obtained to support this. These matters will be addressed in due course.



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