

**LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE
20 NOVEMBER 2014 AT 2 PM**

**INFORMATION
SUBMITTED BY
METROPOLITAN POLICE
ON 18 NOVEMBER 2014**

WITNESS STATEMENT

CJ Act 1967, s.9; MC Act 1980, ss.5A(3)(a) and 5B; Criminal Procedure Rules 2005, Rule 27.1

Statement of **Peter Sparham** URN:

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Age if under 18 **Over 18**..... (if over 18 insert 'over 18') Occupation: **Police Staff**.....

This statement (consisting of: **2**..... pages 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 anything in it which I know to be false, or do not believe to be true.

Signature: Date:

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

I am currently employed as a police licensing officer for the London Borough of Merton, I have been in this role for approximately 10 years. I have been a police officer for 29 years and a Sergeant since 1996.

This witness statement is intended to assist the licensing sub-committee when considering the application for the premises licence at Tasty Chicken Mitcham Ltd, 173 London Road, Mitcham. CR4 2JB and is supplementary to my representations dated 23rd October 2013.

In my representations I have identified four(4) offences specifically linked to these premises I propose to examine these offences in more detail.

1. 30/5/14 2250-2252 - Criminal Damage - Police were called to the premises where 3 males entered the shop, apparently under the influence of drink and/or drugs, caused a disturbance before throwing items at members of staff when asked to leave. They left the shop before smashing a number of window panels when staff tried to close the shutters of the shop.
2. 13/6/14 2110-2120 - Attempted Robbery - Police were called to the premises where a male had threatened members of staff and stated he was going to take the cash till.
3. 13/6/14 2115 - Grievous Bodily Harm - This is linked to the above report, following the altercation a member of staff at the premises threw boiling oil over the victim causing severe burns.
4. 4/8/14 2345 - Criminal Damage - Police were called to the premises to a male causing a disturbance. The premises were in the process of closing and refused him service. The male then became abusive and urinated over the floor and shutters of the premises. When approached by police officers he was abusive and spat at them.

It is of note that of these offences there is only one that took place at a time when a premises licence would be in force, however, in each case those involved were under the influence of alcohol. If the premises are granted a

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Continuation of Statement of **Peter Sparham**

licence to remain open later into the night it is likely that these types of incident will become more frequent. A number of conditions have been suggested in an attempt to mitigate against future incidents.



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WITNESS STATEMENT

CJ Act 1967, s.9, MC Act 1980, ss.5A(3)(a) and 5B, Criminal Procedure Rules 2005, Rule 27.1

Statement of **Stuart Buchan** URN:

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Age if under 18 **Over 18** (if over 18 insert over 18) Occupation: **Police Officer**

This statement (consisting of **2** pages 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 anything in it which I know to be false, or do not believe to be true.

Signature:  Date: **22/10/14**

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


I am the Sector Inspector responsible for Policing across the Mitcham area within the London Borough of Merton.

Over the last 18 months police have responded to a significant increase in anti-social behaviour across Mitcham Sector and particularly in the vicinity of Mitcham Town Centre and Figges Marsh. This increase is one of the highest within the greater London area. These incidents are not specific in their type or nature but cover the whole spectrum of anti-social behaviour from urinating in the street up to and including attempted murder. Upon researching the issues it identified that a large percentage of these crimes were committed by a small group of individuals, approximately 10. These suspects are embedded either directly or indirectly in a cycle of anti-social behaviour that impacts on them, their families and most of all the wider communities.

Residents are afraid to venture into the area due to the problems caused by these individuals; the area is covered in dropped alcohol containers, smells strongly of urine, drunken persons lying/dumped in the ground/benches. Members of the public complain that they are sworn at, threatened and accosted by these individuals. Residents are now actively moving away from the area. Shop-keepers complain that their actions are driving customers away from the area which is impacting on business.

Most of these suspects live within in a short distance of where they commit their behaviour.

In an effort to control/prevent some of this behaviour a Controlled Drinking Zone was implemented across the Borough in Jun 2013. This has been partially successful and its enforcement has sent out a strong message to a wide section of the community. However the persistent hardcore offenders have ignored this zone.

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Continuation of Statement of **Stuart Buchan**

Due to the epidemic proportions that the crime has reached, Merton Police have had to dedicate 4 officers specifically to tackle this issue. This thereby removes these officers from their other responsibilities. Due to this abstraction of staff this has hindered our ability to respond to emergency calls, conduct community engagements and investigate the most serious crimes

This is in addition to the increasing financial burden placed on the Police with Merton Borough having had its budget reduced in the financial year 2014/15 and early indications suggest further cuts are likely 2015/16. All activities we undertake in respect of anti-social behaviour and those who commit this crime reduce the budget we have available to target other crimes.

This type of behaviour is known to have a detrimental effect on the community in general. They elevate the fear of crime within the area, increase the fear of strangers. It is also well known that the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour can be as debilitating as the crime itself and is a powerful stimulus in changing people's behaviour and life styles. This type of behaviour has a significant and sometimes disproportionate impact on aspects of the wider community and it is not age, gender, sex, faith or religion specific.

It also impacts on businesses who are struggling to make ends meet in this period of austerity and lack of economic growth. They are experiencing anti-social behaviour, drunkenness, gas sniffing outside their business premises this in turn is driving the customers away from their shops.

I fully support any additional activity or the use of any other legislation or power that assist us in preventing and reducing the fear of crime created by these few suspects. The use of intelligence and other sources of information, will ensure the use of anti-social behaviour orders are accurate and a proportionate response to a real and serious threat to community safety and confidence.

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WITNESS STATEMENT

(CJ Act 1967, s.9; MC Act 1980, ss.5A(3)(a) and 5B; Criminal Procedure Rules 2005, Rule 27.1)

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Statement of Siobhán McDonagh

Age if under 18 0/18 (if over 18 insert 'over 18') Occupation Member of Parliament

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.

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[Redacted Signature]

Date 8/10/2014

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

I am the above named person and can be contacted via my constituency office. I am the Member of Parliament for Mitcham and Morden and have been so since 1997. This statement relates to complaints I receive with regards to street drinking and anti-social behaviour in MITCHAM TOWN CENTRE. In the last year I have started to get more complaints from residents regarding the town centre. The complaints centre around groups hanging around and drinking from early morning until night time. Often I hear they are fighting with one another or becoming aggressive. Also their going to the toilet in the street. These complaints concentrate on areas around MITCHAM PARK GREEN and THREE KWAS PIECE. It is normally focused on men, though sometimes women, often of Eastern European origin and usually older, not young people. A lot of the complaints don't just focus on their behaviour but also on the litter and rubbish they leave behind which makes the

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Continuation of Statement of Siobhian McDonagh

area appear untidy and less inviting which is part of a negative spiral for the area. I am of the opinion this has been exacerbated by a reduction in visible policing in the town centre. In addition the decline and number and variety of shops, providing more space for the drinkers to meet. This in turn leads to fewer people wanting to shop in the town centre, giving the drinkers even more space. Also, other nearby town centres have taken a more aggressive attitude in dealing with this issue; both moving people on and providing more outreach services. Due to this I believe Mitcham became a soft spot for them to congregate and drink. I personally feel the people of Mitcham are very tolerant and put up with more than others would do so there hasn't been a concerted campaign against persistent street drinking. This has led to those who do complain being made to feel as if they're exaggerating. The negative spiral I mentioned before has a large impact, the behaviour and actions of persistent street drinkers can intimidate residents which puts them off from coming to the town centre. This combined with the rubbish and image this generates of the town centre puts off residents which in turn impacts local businesses. This has led to those with the financial means to move away do so, again having a negative impact on businesses and the local community. I recently conducted a survey that showed 30% of people

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Continuation of Statement of Siobhian McDonagh.

responding said street drinking was the thing they liked least about living in Mitcham. The general anger towards this issue was highlighted by over 200 residents coming to a meeting on a Saturday where this was discussed and that it not an easy thing to organise, so it really shows the strength of feeling. I have attached some correspondence from residents detailing their concerns about street drinking and the associated problems and how it impacts the community and their quality of life. One issue this highlights is that residents don't want their children exposed to this behaviour and its negative consequences; seeing people fighting in the street, going to the toilet in public, aggressive begging and generally making the area intimidating and uninviting. I am happy to support the application for Anti-Social Behaviour Orders in relation to the street drinkers and am willing to attend court if necessary.

[REDACTED]

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