

STATEMENT OF WITNESS

**(Criminal Procedure Rules r16, Criminal Justice Act 1967 s 9,
Magistrates' Courts Act 1980 s 5A(3)(a) and 5B)**

STATEMENT OF *Debra CRANER*
AGE **Over 18 years**
OCCUPATION ***Section Leader – Licensing and Compliance***

This statement, consists of 4 pages signed by me, is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it anything which I know to be false or do not believe to be true.

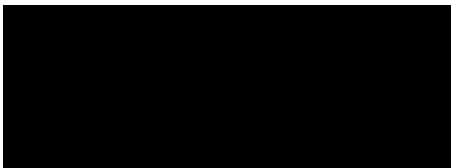
Date 20th October 2022

Signed 

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1. I am employed by Wolverhampton City Council as a Section Leader – Licensing and Compliance Officer within the Council's Licensing Department, based at the Civic Centre, St Peter's Square, Wolverhampton, WV1 1SH. I have worked for this local authority in this position since April 2019.
 2. On 28 June 2022 concerns were raised with licensing from a local Neighbourhood Safety Coordinator who had had a meeting with a Sgt Sarah Smyth of West Midlands Police regarding street drinkers in School Street, Cleveland Street and Dudley Street within the city of Wolverhampton and named as areas that were entrenched with street drinkers.
 3. On 4 August 2022 City of Wolverhampton Council hosted the Commonwealth Games Cycling Time Trial. I was assigned to a group comprising of Officers

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from Licensing, Trading Standards and Environmental Health who were tasked with ensuring compliance of street traders/pedlars/food sellers within the Commonwealth areas, including a Commonwealth Festival site.

4. On route to the festival site, it was noticed that a group were congregated around the bus shelter directly in front of Newsagents, 47 School Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 4LR consuming super strength alcohol, outside of Newsagents and also sitting inside the bus shelter. I also noticed empty cans on the floor.
5. As I knew that this street was of concern to the police with regard to street drinkers, I asked my colleagues Elizabeth Gregg a Senior Licensing and Compliance Officer within the Licensing Section, my colleague Dianne Slack - Tobacco Control Officer in Trading Standards and Samuel Hoskins – Senior Officer – Food and Health and Safety to accompany me into Newsagents, 47 School Street, Wolverhampton.
6. We entered at 14:05 hours and I introduced myself and my colleagues to the person working behind the counter. He gave his name as [REDACTED] and said he was only working there to help out. The Premises Licence Holder/Designated Premises Supervisor, Baljit Singh BATIYA was not present.
7. Whilst inside the premises a customer who appeared to be intoxicated due to his physicality and mannerisms coming into the shop to purchase a single bottle of alcohol. Whilst the premises licence does not prevent this type of sale,

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[REDACTED]

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there is an offence under S41 Licensing Act 2003 which states that it is an offence if a person knowingly (a) sells alcohol to a person who is drunk and (b) allows alcohol to be sold to such a person. I advised [REDACTED] that he should not serve alcohol to an intoxicated person.

8. This particular sale was refused by the person behind the counter. The customer was clearly unhappy that he had been refused and also seemed confused and surprised.
9. The premises was becoming increasingly busy and so we all left and stood outside the premises. I noticed two gentlemen walking past and could see one was holding a bottle of alcohol in his hand. I asked Sam Hoskins if he would ask the police officers who were standing nearby to come and assist me. The two officers one male and one female came to me. I explained to the officers that there was a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) in place within the City of Wolverhampton and pointed out the male who was close by still holding a bottle of alcohol. I asked if they would seize the alcohol as they had powers. They were very reluctant to do this as they said they didn't know about the PSPO and that they were not from this area and were only there for the Cycle Time Trial. I persuaded them that they had got within their powers to seize the alcohol. They followed the two males and did in fact take the alcohol away. Whilst waiting outside the premises Elizabeth Gregg stated to me that she had

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[REDACTED]

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just witnessed a male street drinker purchasing a single beverage The Newsagents and had seen him place the drink inside his coat pocket.

10. Myself and my colleagues re-entered the premises, and I asked [REDACTED] if I could view the CCTV footage as a sale of alcohol to one of the street drinkers had just been observed by a colleague. He told me that the owner Mr Batiya was on his way.

11. Whilst waiting for the Baljit Singh Baiya, the Premises Licence Holder to arrive, Dianne Slack confirmed she would conduct a tobacco visit and proceeded with a Code B, statutory powers of entry, search and seizure.

12. The Premises Licence Holder arrived and I explained to him what had happened and asked to view his CCTV. He was cooperative and took both myself and Elizabeth Gregg up to the first floor to a store room where the CCTV could be viewed. The previous sale of alcohol to the street drinker that Elizabeth Gregg had just witnessed was seen on the footage. Mr Batyia also confirmed this.

13. We all left the premises at approximately 15:00 hours.

Signed

[REDACTED]

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