

STATEMENT OF TONY DALES

I am a Licensing Consultant and operate under Due Diligence Matters. I previously worked as a consultant working for Bakers Solicitors, Glossop.

During the past 5 /6 years I have conducted licensing work for a Mr Adil Khurshid, who ran licensed premises in Chester, Dukinfield and Ashton Under Lyne. Prior to a large fire and the outbreak of covid. I conducted work for Costcutters, Kings Street, Ashton under Lyne. The premises since reopening have changed their name to Premier Hurst Cross. During this time Mr Khurshid has always instructed me on all of his licensing issues. No other person has contacted me to undertake work on these premises.

In April 2021 I cannot give the precise date, Mr Khurshid contacted me by phone. He stated that the premises licence for Premier Hurst cross needed to be changed to his new business partner, Mr Tasadaq Ahmed. He also stated that he needed Tasadaq to obtain his personal Licence and to become the DPS at the premises.

I informed him that this was okay and that I would need the last premises licence, details of Tasadaq and Mr Khurshids signature of consent to transfer. Adil informed me that he was no longer the premises licence holder and that a Mr Ayoob name was on the licence. I was surprised to hear this as I have conducted all changes to premises licence but had not been consulted on this change. Adil stated he had changed the name while he was away in Pakistan. Mr Ayoob had since left the premises. I explained to Mr Khurshid that I would need Mr Ayoobs consent and I would send him the consent form. At no stage did Mr Khurshid state that Mr Ayoob would not consent to the transfer. The fee for the transfer was £175.00. Mr Khurshid stated that, Mr Tasadaq would be paying for the transfer.

I completed a consent to transfer form and sent it to Mr Khurshid by email for his attention. I had no indication from Mr Khurshid that there would be any problem with this application.

A short period of time elapsed and I had not received any communication from Mr Khurshid. I attempted to ring him on several occasions but got no reply. I then forwarded to him a reminder text message, that stated I required Ayoobs signature, a copy of the premises licence and Mr Tasadaqs contact details.

I finally received a copy of the premises licence and Mr Tasadaqs details. On 26th April I received a payment of £175.00 from Tasadaq

Around the same time, I received in the post a consent to transfer form signed by Mr Ayoob. I had no reason to believe that this signature was false. It had not been dated I scanned the document and in PDF format dated it 27th April 2021. This document together with application to transfer, a copy of the premises licence and Mr Tasadaqs proof of right to work in the UK, I submitted by email to Licensing @tameside.gov.uk. Payment of £23.00 was made to the council by card payment over the telephone.

I can confirm that the only person I dealt with regarding the transfer was Mr Adil Khurshid. Other than providing his right to work document (passport) Mr Ahmed played no part in the application.

During the next month I dealt with Mr Tasadaq exclusively to progress his personal licence application and the personal licence for a member of his staff, Mrs Gill Price.

I also recall that following a visit from the council, I was required to undertake a small amount of Due Diligence Work for the premises. Once again I dealt with Mr Tasadaq to sort out this issue. I got the impression that Tasadaq had now taken over the running of the premises and during my telephone conversations with him he was keen to ensure that the premises and staff were exercising due diligence and to comply with his premises licence conditions. This was good to hear.

The premises licence was subsequently issued by Tameside MBC in Mr Tasadaqs name. Mr Tasadaq and Mrs Price subsequently obtained their personal licences. Mr Tasadaq also became the designated premises supervisor. I was responsible for completing this work.

With regard to the transfer of the premises licence into Mr Tasadaqs name. I had no idea that there was a problem. I did receive a call from Mr Tasadaq towards the end of May 2021. There had been an incident at the premises where the police were called. Mr Tasadaq stated he had provided the police with my telephone number and if I was contacted would I confirm that he was the premises licence holder. I had no problem with this request, but as it transpired, I received no call from the police.

The next communication I received from Tasadaq was a telephone in late June. He was in the company of Licensing Officer Mr Mike Robinson, who explained that the application to transfer the licence in to Mr Tasadaqs name had hit a problem. Mr Ayoob had complained that he had not consented to the transfer and the signature on the consent form wasn't his.

Mr Tasadaq sounded visibly shocked and upset by the visit. I instructed Tasadaq unless informed to the contrary, to carry on his business and to wait for correspondence from the licensing department. As Adil Khurshid had dealt with this transfer with me, I did make contact with him. I asked what was happening with Mr Ayoob. He informed me that Mr Ayoob had consented and was trying to make trouble after a fall out. They had now made up and he would be withdrawing his complaint.

I was not happy at all with Mr Khurshids explanation and told him so. I could not understand what was happening and why Mr Ayoobs consent had been sent to me if he had never consented to the application.

If at any time Mr Khurshid had disclosed that Mr Ayoob was not consenting to the transfer then I would still have progressed the application without Mr Ayoobs consent. This is a process that can be used as part of an application. I have used it on several occasions where the outgoing premises licence holder cannot be traced.

In conclusion my application and supportive documents for the transfer of Mr Tasadaqs name onto the premises licence was submitted by me and received by Tameside licensing in good faith and in the belief that Mr Ayoobs signature was genuine. There was nothing to suggest anything to the contrary. It appears that Mr Khurshid was the only person who really knew what was going on. In my opinion Mr Tasadaq knew nothing of this issue. Mr Tasadaq will address the committee.

Since my involvement with Mr Tasadaq in April 2021. He is in charge of the day to day running of Premier Hurst cross, with no involvement from either Mr Ayoob or Mr Khurshid.