

Leo Charalambides

Call: 1998 [Public Access](#)

Practice areas:

Public Law, Licensing, Local Government



Practice Profile

Leo is an expert local government barrister who is regularly instructed to act on behalf of local authorities, public bodies, and professional and law clients in a wide array of legal challenges.

Leo is highly regarded as a leading figure in Licensing Law, a Fellow of the Institute of Licensing and the Editor of the Journal of Licensing. As a nationally recognised licensing specialist, Leo has developed a strong reputation as a knowledgeable and skilled advocate who boasts a portfolio of clients including highly recognisable international brands as well as family-run businesses. He has a proven track record of success and is highly sought after by individuals and businesses looking for skilled, innovative, and successful legal representation. He appears at first-instance before licensing committees and magistrates' courts throughout England and Wales. On appeal he appears before the First and Second Tier Tribunals, the High Court and the Court of Appeal.

Public Law

Leo has developed a strong public law practice where he is regularly asked to provide advice and guidance in judicial review proceedings to local authorities on a broad spectrum of issues ranging from Local Government constitutional arrangements and powers through to the adoption and implementation of new policy. He has experience of providing representation and advice in judicial review proceedings and his understanding of complex legal points enables him to give sound advice and guidance to clients. Leo is well regarded for his work on the public sector equality duty.

Leo has advised and appeared in the following judicial review cases.

- *R (Rehman) v Wakefield Council* [2019] EWCA Civ 2166 – (written intervention for the Local Government Association).
- *Hounslow v Aslim* [2018] EWHC 733 (Admin)

- *Paul Brown v Hyndburn Borough Council* [2018] EWCA Civ 242
- *R (o/a Turner) v Sheffield City Council Co/977/2018*
- *R (o/a Delta Merseyside Ltd v Knowsley MBC* [2018] EWHC 757 (Admin)
- *Keep Streets Live Campaign Ltd v London Borough of Camden* [2014] EWHC 607 (Admin).
- *Leeds City Council v Leeds District Magistrates'* [2013] EWHC 1346 (Admin)
- *Tower Hamlets LBC v Ashburn Estates Ltd (t/a Troxy)* [2011] EWHC 3504 (Admin)

Leo was part of the judicial review team that challenged the Government on the covid-19 restrictions imposed on the hospitality and leisure industry on the part of G-A-Y. Most recently

Leo has been retained junior counsel in *Walk Safe Security Services Limited v London Borough of Lewisham* (2023).

Licensing

Leo has a substantial licensing practice and advises and represents a wide range of operators, local authorities, police authorities and residents across all aspects of licensing law (Licensing Act 2003, Gambling Act 2005, Sex Establishments, Markets, Street Trading, Pavement Licensing Special Treatments, Busking, Caravans, HMOs, scrap metal and animal licensing) and associated areas (in particular the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and the Highways Act 1980)

He is recognised as providing outstanding expert advice on all aspects of the Licensing Act 2003, he advises from the earliest stages of an application process through to appeal. Leo is regularly praised for his tactical approach when representing parties at premises licensing review hearings. Notable High Court cases include: *Tower Hamlets LBC v Ashburn Estates Ltd (t/a Troxy)* [2011] EWHC 3504 (Admin); *Leeds City Council v Leeds District Magistrates'* [2013] EWHC 1346 (Admin). Most recently Leo was part of the team that challenged the Government on the covid-19 restrictions imposed on the hospitality and leisure industry on the part of G-A-Y.

Gambling

Leo has a keen interest in advising local authorities on all aspect of local authority gambling licensing including the extent and scope of local decision making under the Gambling Act 2005. Leo also advises on national and international operators seeking entry into the UK gambling market.

SEVs

Leo is acclaimed for his knowledge and insight towards Sex Establishment licensing and brings a creative approach to clients and responsible authorities when working with unique and highly specialised venues with cultural and social importance to the community. Leo acted for the Council in *R (o/a Turner) v Sheffield City Council Co/977/2018*; other noteworthy clients include Bristol City Council, the Metropolitan Police in Camden, El and Klub Verboten.

Taxis and PHVs

Leo regularly accepts instructions from local authorities in relation to Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle licensing in the Magistrates', Crown, and High Court. Notable cases include: *R (o/a Delta Merseyside Ltd v Knowsley MBC* [2018] EWHC 757 (Admin).

Environment Abatement Appeals

Leo puts his Masters' in Environmental Law to good use advising and representing clients in high profile environmental abatement appeals, most recently in *Nigh & Day* (Manchester). Many of his cases relate to issues that arise from the operation of bars, nightclubs, and other venues in the hospitality and leisure sector. This is part of an integrated and holistic approach that Leo brings to his understanding of local government licensing in the licensing sector.

Other Licensing Regimes

Leo's broad appreciation of local government and local government licensing engages him on cases raging from caravan appeals in the First-Tier Tribunal to special treatment challenges in the High Court (*Hounslow v Aslim* [2018] EWHC 733 (Admin)) and HMO licensing in the Court of Appeal (*Paul Brown v Hyndburn Borough Council* [2018] EWCA Civ 242.)

Leo is especially interested in the distinct and inter-related interest in the licensing and use of open public spaces. He regularly advises on all aspects of open-air events, Markets & Fairs, street trading, Highways and Pavement Licensing. Leo has a niche practice in advising London local authorities (London Local Authorities Act 2000, Part V) on the regulation of buskers and busking. His clients include the London Boroughs of Camden, Westminster, and Kensington & Chelsea. Leo appeared for Camden in *Keep Streets Live Campaign Ltd v London Borough of Camden* [2014] EWHC 607 (Admin).

Local Government

Publications & Lectures

Leo is a contributor to Halsbury's Laws of England, Vol 69, Local Government (5th edition, Butterworths, 2009).

Leo has been closely involved in the development and publication of the Institute of Licensing: Journal of Licensing. The first issue of the Journal was published in November 2011, Leo has been the Editor of the Journal since the first issue, the Journal of Licensing is published by the IoL three times a year.

Leo has also contributed a number of Westlaw Insight Articles: Sex Cinemas; Sex Shops; Hostess Bars; Sex Encounter Establishments and Sexual Entertainment Venues.

Leo is well known for lecturing and training on all aspects of licensing law.

Professional Memberships

Leo is a fellow of the Institute of Licensing (2012) in recognition of his work on the Journal of Licensing, his contribution to the London Region and his wider contribution to the world of licensing.

Quotes

"Leo is always impeccably prepared – a very thorough junior."

Legal 500, 2024

"He has huge depth of knowledge and is instrumental in changing the attitudes of a local authority."

Chambers and Partners, 2023

"Leo is very approachable and easy to work with. He gives first-rate service every time."

Chambers and Partners, 2023

"Leo is very clever, and his tactical approach and advocacy skills are notable. He is very effective."

Chambers and Partners, 2023

"A truly thorough individual. Leo makes the complex seem so easy to understand and does not fear the unknown. He prepares well in advance and gives confidence in his abilities."

Legal 500, 2023

"He's very approachable, has an incisive mind and is a strong advocate." "His ability to react swiftly in crisis situations for clients is a virtue. His ability to think on his feet and look for advantages mid-presentation is a particular skill."

Chambers and Partners, 2022

"Bright and tenacious."

The Legal 500, 2014

"Very personable, very likeable and very clever"

Chambers and Partners, 2014

"[He is] one to watch"

The Legal 500, 2013

"Earnest, knowledgeable and has seen a lot. He does a great job."

Chambers and Partners, 2013

"He is very calm, meticulous and precise in all he does; he thinks outside of the box."

Chambers and Partners, 2015

"He is a real licensing expert who gives excellent, pragmatic advice and has a winning way with clients".

Chambers and Partners, 2016

"He is very astute and commercially aware".

Chambers and Partners, 2016

"He has detailed knowledge of the law and its application in commercial situations."

Legal 500, 2016