



Agenda for Licensing and Enforcement Committee
Wednesday, 8th April, 2026, 10.00 am

Members of Licensing and Enforcement Committee

Councillors: B Bailey, I Barlow, K Bloxham (Vice-Chair), V Bonetta, A Bruce, M Chapman, O Davey, T Dumper, S Gazzard, Y Levine, C Nicholas, J O'Leary, M Rixson, S Westerman and J Whibley (Chair)

Venue: Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton

Contact: Sarah Jenkins;

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(or group number 01395 517546)

Friday, 27 March 2026

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1 Minutes of the previous meeting (Pages 3 - 5)

2 Apologies

3 Declarations of interest

Guidance is available online to Councillors and co-opted members on making [declarations of interest](#)

4 Public Speaking

Information on [public speaking](#) is available online

5 Matters of urgency

Information on [matters of urgency](#) is available online

6 Confidential/exempt item(s)

To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded. There are no items which officers recommend should be dealt with in this way.

7 Committee Update - Licensing Act 2003, Gambling Act 2005, Taxi & Private Hire Licensing & General Licensing (Pages 6 - 10)

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Members of the public exercising their right to speak during Public Speaking will be recorded.

[Decision making and equalities](#)

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EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**Minutes of the meeting of Licensing and Enforcement Committee held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 11 February 2026****Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 10.02 am and ended at 11.10 am

31 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 November 2025 were agreed and signed as a true record.

32 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

33 Public Speaking

There were no public speakers.

34 Matters of urgency

There were no matters of urgency.

35 Confidential/exempt item(s)

There were no confidential or exempt items.

36 Committee update report - Licensing Act 2003, Gambling Act 2005, Taxis and General Licensing

The Licensing Manager introduced the report which provided an update on the activities of the Licensing Service under the Licensing Act 2003, Gambling Act 2005, Taxi and Private Hire Licensing and General Licensing including Street Trading and Pavement Licensing.

Discussion and responses to questions included the following points:

- Regarding misuse of taxi ranks across the District, and particularly the taxi rank in Imperial Road, Exmouth, the Licensing Manager was waiting for a response from Devon County civil enforcement regarding the possibility of changing the highway designation to prevent unlawful parking in the taxi rank of vehicles using local amenities;
- The reporting period covered by the update report was October to December 2025;
- It was noted that the Imperial Road taxi rank, Exmouth, was the closest rank to Exmouth station and had been constantly misused for a number of years. Licensing Officers would continue to raise this with Devon County Council;
- Further action could be considered at the next meeting if a response had not been received from DCC. Cllr Dumper would also raise this via the HATOC;
- Regarding the Pavement Licensing Policy, it was noted that the majority of renewals fall in September to October and it would be possible to review the fees prior to that at the April or July Committee meeting;
- It was agreed that the number of applications received under the Licensing Act 2003 could be broken down into categories for future reporting;

- Regarding the Department for Transport consultation on potential benefits and challenges of making all local transport authorities responsible for taxi and private hire licensing, it was agreed to leave the consultation response to the Devon Licensing Officers Group to formulate a Devon wide response;
- The Licensing Manager was waiting for authority to recruit for the part time Licensing Officer role. Once received, both vacant posts [1x full time; 1x part time] could be advertised on the same advert;
- During the recruitment process, the Licensing team would have to cut back on proactive site visits due to reduced capacity, however, all statutory obligations would continue to be met.

The update report was noted.

37 **Pavement Licensing Policy**

The Licensing Officer provided an overview of the report. A draft pavement licensing policy was developed jointly by local authorities across Devon and Cornwall through 2025 and presented to the Licensing and Enforcement Committee on 16th July 2025. On that date, the Committee approved moving to a public consultation on the draft pavement licensing policy.

The consultation ran until 30 September 2025 and was open for 10 weeks. The consultation received 253 contributions, and the report summarised the responses and feedback received. It was noted that numerous responses had cited a need for an earlier start time than the 10:00am start which had been proposed. Officers proposed that consideration be given to amending the general opening hours start time to 9:00am following the feedback received.

The policy, if approved, would ensure that the Council carries out its pavement licensing responsibilities in a fair, equitable and consistent manner, and in line with other Devon authorities who have adopted the policy.

Discussion and responses to questions included the following points:

- The proposed amended start time for the policy of 9:00am was supported as this would assist small businesses;
- The 2m width rule on the pavement was vital, particularly for visually impaired persons;
- It was noted that an applicant could apply for an earlier start time than that set out in the policy, with evidence to support the application, and that a decision could be made under officer delegation;
- Applications would not be progressed where clearance was not sufficient to comply with Government mobility legislation;
- Fees initially charged by EDDC were lower than other Devon authorities, however, more information was now available regarding costs to EDDC to better inform setting fees going forwards;
- Concern was expressed that there needs to be some balance when assessing applications which did not meet the pavement width requirements;
- Officers would conduct site visits to assess localities on an individual basis to find the right balance between business needs and mobility requirements;
- It was noted that there was no right of appeal to an external organisation. Appeals would be made directly to EDDC.

The Licensing & Enforcement Committee gave consideration to the feedback received during the public consultation and

RESOLVED

To approve the adoption of the draft policy with an amended start time for general opening hours in the policy of 9:00am.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and expressed the Committee's thanks to those officers who were shortly to leave the Council's employment.

Attendance List

Councillors present:

I Barlow
K Bloxham (Vice-Chair)
V Bonetta
T Dumper
S Gazzard
Y Levine
M Rixson
J Whibley (Chair)

Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)

R Collins

Officers in attendance:

Sarah Jenkins, Democratic Services Officer
Phillippa Norsworthy, Licensing Manager
Giles Salter, Solicitor
Lee Staples, Licensing Officer

Councillor apologies:

B Bailey
M Chapman
O Davey
C Nicholas
S Westerman

Chair

Date:

Report to: Licensing and Enforcement Committee



Date of Meeting 8 April 2026

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

Committee Update – Licensing Act 2003, Gambling Act 2005, Taxi & Private Hire Licensing & General Licensing

Report summary:

This report provides an update on the activities of the Licensing Service under the Licensing Act 2003, Gambling Act 2005, Taxi and Private Hire Licensing and General Licensing including Street Trading and Pavement Licensing.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

Recommendation:

That the report be noted.

Reason for recommendation:

To keep the Licensing and Enforcement statutory Committee up to date with current arrangements relating to the Licensing Service.

Officer: Phillippa Norsworthy, Licensing Manager, Housing & Health, licensing@eastdevon.gov.uk

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Assets and Economy
- Communications and Democracy
- Council, Corporate and External Engagement
- Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism
- Environment - Nature and Climate
- Environment - Operational
- Finance
- Place, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities

Equalities impact Low Impact

If choosing High or Medium level outline the equality considerations here, which should include any particular adverse impact on people with protected characteristics and actions to mitigate these. Link to an equalities impact assessment form using the [equalities form template](#).

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Choose a risk level; Low Risk

Links to background information [e-bulletin 16 March - Gambling Commission newsletter](#)

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- A supported and engaged community
 - Carbon neutrality and ecological recovery
 - Resilient economy that supports local business
 - Financially secure and improving quality of services
-

Report in full

1. Licensing Act 2003 – Applications received, licences issued, premises visited and number of hearings.

1.1 The reporting period refers to the period from the date of the last meeting 11 February 2026 to the date of writing this report, 24 March 2026. This will be referred to as the reporting period.

The table below shows the amount of Licensing Act 2003 applications received during the reporting period.

Applications Processed

Application Type

New Premises Licences	11
Variations (Full)	0
Minor Variations	2
DPS Variations	8
Transfers	3
Temporary Event Notices (TENs)	87
New Personal Licences	6
Personal Licence Change of Address	2
Personal Licences Lost/Stolen	1
Cancellation of Premises Licences	5
Premises Licences Lost/Stolen	1
Premises Licences – Suspensions Lifted	2

1.2 A total of three premises of interest have been visited during the reporting period.

1.3 During the reporting period no Licensing and Enforcement Sub-Committee hearings have taken place for applications made under the Licensing Act 2003.

1.4 Representations were received in respect of one application for the grant of a premises licence; however, these representations were withdrawn through mediation.

2. Pavement Licensing

- 2.1 The new policy for Pavement Licensing was approved by the Licensing and Enforcement Committee on 11 February, this report will be presented to Cabinet for approval.
- 2.2 At the time of writing this report a total of 29 pavement licences are in operation across the district.
- 2.3 Work continues to take place to check pavement licences across the district to ensure compliancy with specified and approved furniture, duration of the pavement licence and the distance from the furniture to the kerb to ensure access to all persons is not compromised.
- 2.4 We have received two complaints during the reporting period regarding pavement licences allegedly operating beyond their timings as set out in the licence and persons having tables and chairs on the public highway without a pavement licence. These matters are currently being dealt with and one nighttime visit has taken place.

3. Gambling Act 2005

- 3.1 The Gambling Commission circulates a regular bulletin for licensing authorities outlining changes in legislation and any enforcement action taken. The latest bulletin can be found at 'links to background information'.
- 3.2 A total number of eight licensed gambling premises have been visited during the reporting period, the inspections included unlicensed family entertainment centres (UFEC), adult gaming centres (AGC), Bingo premises and alcohol on licensed premises holding gaming machine permits.
- 3.3 No further update on the publishing of the Guidance to Licensing Authorities has been received from the Gambling Commission.

4. Taxi & Private Hire Licensing

- 4.1 Day to day taxi and private hire licensing administration continues to be busy. The tables below show the number of licences currently in use and the number of outstanding applications.

4.2

Year	Taxi Driver Licences	Taxi Vehicle Licences	Private Hire Drivers	Private Hire Vehicles	Private Hire Operators
March 2025	133	128	51	40	27
June 2025	134	127	52	40	28
November 2025	131	126	55	42	31
February 2026	135	126	56	44	31
March 2026	135	126	56	43	31

4.3

New HCD	Renewal HCD	New HCV	Renewal HCV	Transfer HCV	New PHD	Renewal PHD	New PHV	Renewal PHV	Transfer PHV	New PHO	Renewal PHO
10	2	0	0	1	4	0	2	0	0	1	0

4 Revocations, suspensions & refusals

- 4.1 During the reporting period, licensing officers have suspended two vehicle licences, one vehicle was involved in an accident, and the other vehicle requires a vehicle inspection report.
- 4.2 All revocations, suspensions and refusals are entered into the National Register of Revocations, Refusals and Suspensions, it is mandatory for local authorities in England to input details of individuals whose driver licences have been revoked, suspended or refused.
- 4.3 During the reporting period there have been no entries to the National Register of Revocations, Refusals or Suspensions.

5. Local Transport Authorities and the Licensing of Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles

- 5.1 A meeting with other Devon Local Authorities and the Devon and Torbay Combined County Authority (CCA) took place on 16 March. This was to discuss the joint response from the Devon Local Authorities and the response from Devon and Torbay CCA, in response to the consultation from the Department of Transport to seek feedback on the potential benefits and challenges of making all local transport authorities responsible for the licensing of taxi and private hire vehicles. This consultation ends on 1 April 2026.
- 5.2 Below are the main points from the draft response from the Devon Local Authorities.
 - Transferring taxi and private hire licensing from district councils to local transport authorities would create substantial initial costs, including staff transfers, legal changes, and merging multiple IT systems. Ongoing costs are also likely to rise, as councils would lose shared-cost efficiencies and the flexibility of multi-disciplinary licensing teams. The anticipated savings are minimal, since taxi licensing is intended to be cost-neutral, and enforcement savings are uncertain.
 - The proposal does not address the core problems in the current system, particularly inconsistent national standards and cross-border hiring. The document argues that meaningful improvement requires modernised legislation, national standards, or potentially a national licensing model rather than simply shifting responsibilities to transport authorities.
 - There are also risks to service provision—especially in rural areas, where drivers may migrate to urban centres—and challenges around staffing, local fee-setting, and emission requirements. While some economies of scale could be realised, these would be better achieved through broader local government reorganisation or national reform rather than this partial restructuring.
- 5.3 The Devon and Torbay CCA will be submitting a response to the consultation.

6. The Taxi Table of Maximum Fares

- 6.1 At a meeting of the Licensing & Enforcement Committee on the 3rd June 2025, the Committee resolved to proceed no further with the drafting of a new hackney carriage fare setting procedure at that time. The Licensing Team were instead asked to continue collecting trade data with a view to re-visiting this decision in June 2026.

The Committee instead determined to review the table of maximum fares using existing fare setting methodology and, a new table of maximum fares came into effect on the 10th October 2025. The Chair reaffirmed the Committee's opinion that small, annual, increases to the fare tariff were preferable to infrequent, larger adjustments.
- 6.2 While the Licensing Team has continued to collect trade data throughout 2025/26, further detailed consultation with the taxi trade has not been possible due to increased levels of work and staff shortages within the team. In addition, Local Government Reorganisation and the recent Government consultation about transferring the responsibility for taxi and

private hire licensing to the Local Transport Authority (referred to above) raises uncertainty about the future relevance of any such fare setting procedure for East Devon.

The taxi trade remains divided on whether a fare increase is necessary in 2026.

- 6.3 The East Devon Taxi Association has indicated that they are likely to request a small fare increase on behalf of their members due to rising trade costs, including higher UK petrol and diesels costs driven up by recent increases in wholesale oil and gas prices. Other members of the trade however have expressed concerns that any further fare rise may price out customers.

The Licensing Team therefore proposes to bring a further report to the next Licensing & Enforcement Committee, recommending that work on a fare-setting procedure be deferred until more is known about any transfer of licensing responsibilities. The report will also include an option for the Committee to consider a 2026 fare review using the existing fare setting methodology.

7. Street Trading Consents

- 7.1 At the time of writing this report 21 street trading consents are in operation across the district. These include sole traders and traders as part of an event not held under premises licence. At the time of writing this report 18 applications are in progress, this increase in applications is due to the number of organised events in the spring and summer months, which require additional street trading consent.
- 7.2 The team continue to remain vigilant to traders operating across the district without holding a consent and have contacted these traders when complaints have been received.
- 7.3 A draft version of the summary review of the existing Street Trading Policy will be available for Members to consider at a later meeting, with the outcome of the recent public consultation.

8. Staffing within the Licensing Team

The recruitment of the two Licensing Officer vacancies is currently in progress. The interest in both posts has been high, and 43 applications have been received so far. The closing date for both vacancies is 5 April 2026.

The team continue to work hard in ensuring all applications are dealt within the statutory timescales and the workflow into the team remains high.

Financial implications:

There are no financial implications

Legal implications:

There are no legal implications.