

Report to: Licensing and Enforcement Committee



Date of Meeting 11 February 2026

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

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## **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.

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### **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** [English Devolution White Paper: Power and partnership: Foundations for growth - GOV.UK](#) [Local transport authorities and the licensing of taxis and private hire vehicles - GOV.UK](#) [e-bulletin 26 January - 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
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## 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 last quarter reporting period. This will be referred to as the reporting period.
- 1.2 During the previous reporting period, and at the time of writing this report, the licensing team received and processed 154 applications, these all included, new premises licence applications, minor and full variations, transfers of premises licences, DPS variations, personal licences, review of a premises licence, suspension notices issued, Temporary Event Notices (TENs) and other miscellaneous licensing applications, such as change of names and addresses, surrender of premises licences and replacement licences.
- 1.3 A total of 4 premises of interest were visited during the reporting period.
- 1.4 During the reporting period a total of one licensing and enforcement sub-committee hearing has taken place for the application for the grant of a premises licence.
- 1.5 Premises licence applications are currently busy with the preparation of time limited premises licences including the Sidmouth Folk Festival, Exmouth Pride and Gate to Plate events.
- 1.6 The team continue to work with Environmental Health and have been involved in dealing with complaints regarding noise nuisance at premises' and we continue to work closely with Police Licensing and have enforcement visits arranged to take place in the near future.
- 1.7 The team attend the local LVA groups in Exmouth and Axminster to maintain good working relationships with the trade.
- 1.8 The summary review of the Licensing Act 2003, Statement of Licensing Policy was adopted by full Council on 10 December 2025 and is available to view on the licensing team's webpages. The Policy will run from 2026 to 2031. During the review and adoption of the Policy new guidance was issued from Government concerning the National Licensing Policy Framework and the Policy will be amended to reflect the new guidance.

### **2 Pavement Licensing**

- 2.1 A separate report concerning the outcome and comments from the recent public consultation will be submitted to Members at this meeting and a draft version of the Pavement Licensing Policy will be submitted for consideration.
- 2.2 There are currently 28 pavement licences in operation across the district of which 21 of these licences will be due for renewal in 2026.

- 2.3 The current cost for a 2-year pavement licence is £100.00, once the new policy is adopted, we will be looking to increase the fees for this licence. The maximum capped amount for a new pavement licence is £500.00 and for a renewal of a licence the maximum capped amount is £350.00. We will liaise with the Devon Licensing Officers Group with respect to bench marking of pavement licence fees locally.

### **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 release of the bulletin can be found at 'links to background information'.
- 3.2 We have received an application for a new Bingo Premises Licence from Haven Leisure Limited at Devon Cliffs Holiday Park, Exmouth. The application is currently under consultation in line with the Gambling Act 2005 and the last date for representations will be 22 February 2026. The application can be viewed on the licensing team's webpages.
- 3.3 No further update to the Guidance to Licensing Authorities document is currently available.

### **4 Taxi & Private Hire Licensing.**

- 4.1 Day to day taxi and private hire licensing administration remains high. We have received a number of new driver and private hire operator applications in the recent months and the number continues to rise. This increase combined with the individual checks required for each driver and vehicle continues to keep this area of licensing significantly busy.
- 4.2 There are currently 13 new taxi driver applications, and 7 new private hire driver applications and 4 new private hire operator applications in progress.
- 4.2 Licensing Officers continue to monitor the ranks across the district, mainly in busier areas such as Exmouth. Complaints from the taxi trade based in Exmouth continue regarding the unlawful use of the designated taxi rank in Capel Lane, Exmouth. These include reports of unlicensed vehicles using the taxi rank as a parking space to use local amenities, preventing the lawful use of the taxi rank by licensed EDDC taxi drivers. This matter has been reported to DCC Civil Enforcement, who provided an explanation as to how they enforce the unlawful use of the taxi rank and to DCC Highways who have not responded. This matter will continue to be monitored by the licensing team.

4.3

<b>Year</b>	<b>Taxi Driver Licences</b>	<b>Taxi Vehicle Licences</b>	<b>Private Hire Drivers</b>	<b>Private Hire Vehicles</b>	<b>Private Hire Operators</b>
February 2025	135	129	53	42	27
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

#### **4.4 Revocations, suspensions & refusals**

- 4.5 During the reporting period, licensing officers have issued two taxi vehicle suspensions for vehicles involved in an accident, and one taxi vehicle revocation as a result of a suspension notice not being complied with, within two months.
- 4.6 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.

#### **5 Local Transport Authorities and the licensing of Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles**

- 5.1 The Department for Transport (DfT) has launched a consultation to seek feedback on the potential benefits and challenges of making all local transport authorities responsible for taxi and private hire licensing. The consultation follows the publication of the English Devolution White Paper in December 2024. The consultation is looking at the impact this would have on, local authorities, taxi and PHV businesses and passengers. Full details of the consultation and the Devolution White Paper and how to respond can be found within this report at 'links to background information'.
- 5.2 The licensing team have read the consultation and determined that the questions posed from the consultation are predominantly financial and not operational in terms of issuing licences, checks and enforcement.
- 5.3 To date the licensing team have not provided a response to the consultation due to the nature of the questions, however we would ask the Committee as to their opinion on whether a response should be submitted and would this be from an Officer level or from the wider council or from the Committee.
- 5.4 The Devon Licensing Officers Group (DLOG) will be meeting in March to formulate a Devon wide response.

#### **6 The Taxi Table of Maximum Fares**

- 6.1 At the meeting of the Licensing & Enforcement Committee on 3 June 2025 it was resolved to proceed no further with the drafting of a hackney carriage fare setting procedure and to proceed to review the hackney carriage table of maximum fares for 2025 using existing methodology. The new fare tariff was approved at the meeting of the Licensing & Enforcement Committee on 8 October 2025. A further review of whether to continue to proceed with the Guildford Method will be considered by the Committee at their meeting in June 2026.
- 6.2 Basic data relating to some of the costs of operating a hackney carriage in East Devon continues to be collected by way of vehicle compliance data, insurance and licensing costs related to operating a hackney carriage in East Devon.

#### **7 Street Trading Consents**

- 7.1 At the time of writing this report 20 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 13 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 public consultation for the review of the street trading policy will end on 4 February 2026. Feedback from the consultation will be brought back to the Licensing & Enforcement Committee for consideration before any amendments are made to the draft policy.

## **8 Staffing within the Licensing Team**

A long-term serving licensing officer and another experienced licensing officer will leaving the licensing team in mid-February. Recruitment for both posts is in progress.

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### **Financial implications:**

There are no financial implications

### **Legal implications:**

There are no legal implications.