

East Herts Council Report

Licensing Committee

Date of Meeting: 10th July 2024

Report by: Oliver Rawlings (Service Manager - Licensing & Enforcement)

Report title: Review of annual licensing activity in the financial year 2023-24

Ward(s) affected: All

Summary – Annual reports are presented to Licensing Committee to ensure oversight of key areas of regulation and allow the authority to evidence that it is fulfilling its responsibilities.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR Licensing Committee:

(a) That Members review and comment on the Licensing activity in the financial year 2023-24

1.0 Proposal(s)

1.1 That the report is received by members of the Licensing Committee.

2.0 Background

2.1 The council's Licensing and Enforcement Team covers licensing of taxi drivers and operators, licensed premises and temporary events notices, along with more infrequent applications relating to, among other things, scrap metal dealing and gambling.

2.2 This report presents data for the last financial year on processing and enforcement, delegated decisions and Licensing Sub Committee involvement, on licences, notices, and permits, and applications including:

- alcohol, entertainment, and late night refreshment licences under the Licensing Act 2003;

- gaming under the Gambling Act 2005;
- taxi drivers, vehicle proprietors and operators.

3.0 Reason(s)

3.1 During the last financial year, 140 actions were undertaken which are divided between visits, inspections and investigations. These have been analysed further and are presented in descending order for 2023/24. The previous two years' information is provided in the table for comparison.

Type	2021/22 totals	2022/23 totals	2023/24 Totals
Licensing Act 2003 visits to check statutory notices displayed following receipt of an application	35	32	47
Licensing Act 2003 premises visits (routine)	8	16	20
Licensing Act 2003 investigations (following complaints)	10	21	19
Licensing Act 2003 invoice visits	0	2	0
Taxi inspections (routine)	75	13	27
Taxi investigations (following complaint)	15	30	21
Street trading visits & inspections (routine)	0	3	6
Street trading investigations (following complaint)	0	2	0
Gambling Act 2006 visits/inspections/complaints	0	0	0
Charity collection visits/inspections/complaints	0	0	0
Total actions	143	119	140

3.2 All complaints have been fully investigated and have resulted in the appropriate action being taken in line with policy.

3.3 The number of taxi inspections was reduced over the previous year due to there being an increase in Licensing Act 2003 premises visits which are often more complex and time consuming. This led to time taken for ad hoc taxi inspections

being reduced.

- 3.4 Under the Licensing Record Points (LRP) scheme for taxis, a total of 18 points have been issued split between four licence holders. The points were issued to address: breaching a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO), roof light not being plugged in, plate not displayed properly and failure to wear a driver's badge.
- 3.5 The figures for the performance indicators for Licensing activity in 2023/2024 are detailed in the table below and compared with that of 2022/2023.

Performance indicator – cumulative within the year unless otherwise stated	Targets	2022/2023	2023/24
Percentage of valid personal licences processed within 2 weeks	85%	100%	90%
Percentage of valid temporary event notices processed within 72 hours	90%	96%	95%
Percentage of applications for new and variation of premises licences processed within 2 calendar months (from date of validation to issue date)	99%	100%	100%
Percentage of driver's licences issued within 30 working days of validation	95%	99%	96%

- 3.6 During the 2023/24 financial year, eight applications were decided by Licensing Sub-Committees. There were a further two hearings dispensed with after representations or applications were withdrawn. The details of the matters brought before Licensing Sub-Committees are shown below.

Premises and date of hearing	Location	Type of application	Resolved
WH Smith (27/04/2023)	Bishop's Stortford Railway Station	New Premises Licence	Granted
Hertfordshire Oktoberfest (22/05/2023)	Hartham Common, Hertford	New Premises Licence	Granted with amended conditions
Campo Sancho (06/06/2023)	Walkern Hall, Walkern	New Premises Licence	Granted with amended conditions
AMA Fest (27/07/2023)	Silver Leys Polo Club, Little Hadham	New Premises Licence (time limited)	Postponed
AMA Fest (14/08/2023)	Silver Leys Polo Club, Little Hadham	New Premises Licence (time limited)	Granted with conditions
The Horn at the Half Moon (22/08/2023)	North Street, Bishop's Stortford	Summary Review (Police application)	Additional conditions added ¹
The Lounge (12/09/2023)	The Maltings Business Centre, Stanstead Abbots.	New Premises Licence	Granted with conditions
Budgens (12/10/2023)	Baldock Road, Buntingford	New Premises Licence	Granted
Ermines café (28/11/2023)	Ermine Street, Thundridge	New Premises Licence	Granted with Conditions

3.7 More detailed performance data and year-on-year comparison figures can be found in **Appendix A**.

¹ There are variety of options available when a premises licence is reviewed ranging from no action to revocation. In the case the Licensing Sub-Committee chose to amend existing conditions and attach new conditions to ensure that the operation of the premises would promote the Licensing Objectives.

6.0 Implications/Consultations

Community Safety

All decisions are taken and matters considered in line with the prevailing legislation and guidance which, arguably, is primarily concerned with maintaining and promoting community safety.

Data Protection

None arising directly from this report.

Equalities

None arising directly from this report.

Environmental Sustainability

None arising directly from this report.

Financial

None arising directly from this report.

Health and Safety

None arising directly from this report.

Human Resources

None arising directly from this report.

Human Rights

None arising directly from this report.

Legal

None arising directly from this report.

Specific Wards

None arising directly from this report.

7.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material

- 7.1 **Appendix A** – Performance data from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. Year-on-Year comparison figures for applications and granted licences, notices and other permissions.

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