

# East Herts Council Report

## Licensing Committee

**Date of Meeting: 7 January 2026**

**Report by: Cllr Vicky Glover-Ward, Executive Member for Planning and Growth**

**Report title: Review of licensing activity for Quarter 1 of 2025-26 financial year**

**Ward(s) affected: All**

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**Summary** – Quarterly reports are presented to Licensing Committee to ensure the supervision of key areas of regulation and allow the members to review the evidence to ensure the council is fulfilling its responsibilities.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR Licensing Committee:**

- (a) That members review and comment on the Licensing activity from the first quarter of the 2025-26 financial year (01 April 2025 – 30 June 2025)**

### **1.0 Proposal(s)**

- 1.1 That the report is considered by members of the Licensing Committee.

### **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 The council's Licensing and Enforcement Team covers Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licensing, alcohol, entertainment and late-night refreshment licensing and notices, along with more infrequent applications relating to, among other things, scrap metal dealing, pavement licensing, street trading and gambling.
- 2.2 This report presents data from the first quarter of the 2025 -2026 financial year (01 April 2025 – 30 June 2025) on processing and enforcement, delegated decisions, and on 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 under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 and the Town Police Clauses Act 1847.

### **3.0 Reason(s)**

#### ***Complaints handling***

- 3.1 Members have previously requested that details be provided in relation to any trends in the types of complaints received.

#### ***Licensing Act***

During Q1 one complaint was received. This related to:

- Tamarind Tree, Bishop's Stortford. There was an allegation that the premises were selling alcohol without a licence. A test purchase was carried out by two officers and the premises did sell alcohol without a premises licence. The owner of the premises was interviewed and advice was given. Subsequent revisits have not found evidence of continued alcohol sales.
- 3.2 It is worth bearing in mind that enforcement of licensing conditions is not a statutory matter, it is a discretionary function for individual councils to choose to provide should they wish. To date, the council has chosen to have a licensing enforcement function. It is the council's part-time licensing enforcement officers along with the support of the senior licensing and enforcement officer who have been undertaking increased out-of-hours observations in the evenings and at weekends, including into the early hours of Sunday mornings. Out-of-hours working allows officers to witness any issues and reach a conclusion regarding the validity of a complaint.

#### ***Hackney carriage and private hire***

- 3.3 The enforcement team's work involves ensuring that all necessary documentation for taxi drivers and vehicles is received, therefore ensuring licences are valid. The enforcement team ensures that people with expired documents are suspended until they produce the required proof.
- 3.4 Licensing Enforcement now checks all the Vehicle Condition

Certificates (VCC) and MOT documentation to ensure that our vehicle inspection standards are being continually met. This is to ensure authorised garages are working in line with the council's vehicle standards.

3.5 In Q1, 12 Licensing Record Points (LRP) were issued to a driver who failed to notify the licensing authority that he had received points on his DVLA driving licence. In total he had received 15 penalty points on his DVLA licence for speeding and driving without due care and attention. He subsequently surrendered his taxi driver's licence to the council.

3.6 In Q1, fifteen complaints were received in relation to private hire and hackney carriage licences, these related to:

- careless driving (2 complaints). Two drivers were spoken to and given advice
- a driver refused to allow a passenger to pay using a card machine (6 complaints). Drivers spoken to and given advice
- damaged or faulty roof lights (5 complaints), drivers were contacted, and these roof lights have all now been replaced
- issues around Bishop's Stortford Train Station with illegal plying for hire from drivers/vehicles not permitted to use the private station rank (1 complaint). The driver was spoken to but ultimately it is a matter for the rank operator
- not displaying plate correctly on the back of the vehicle (1 complaint). The driver was called in and the vehicle was inspected; the plate had been displayed properly by this time.

### *Street trading and pavement licenses*

3.7 In Q1 one complaint was received regarding street trading.

- Ice cream van being parked too close to a secondary school in Bishop's Stortford. Checks showed that the vendor's street trading consent had expired so he was spoken to regarding making an application and reminded of the rules regarding proximity to school locations.

3.8 One complaint was received regarding pavement licences in Q1.

- Slice City Pizza in Hertford – a resident reported an issue with tables and chairs on the highway, with no pavement licence applied for. Premises visited and advice given but no application

has subsequently been received. Follow up visits are planned.

### *Charity collections*

- 3.9 No complaints were received regarding either house-to-house or street collections in Q1.

### *Performance monitoring*

- 3.10 The figures for the quarterly performance indicators for licensing for Q1 are detailed in the table below.

<b>Performance indicator – cumulative (reported quarterly) within the year unless otherwise stated</b>	<b>2025/2026 target</b>	<b>Q1 2025-26 performance</b>
Percentage of valid personal licences processed within 2 weeks	90%	95%
Percentage of valid temporary event notices processed within 72 hours	90%	98%
Percentage of applications for new and variation of premises licences processed within 2 calendar months (from date of validation to date of determination)	90%	100%
Percentage of driver's licences issued within 30 working days of validation	90%	100%

- 3.11 Performance data for Q1 can be found at **Appendix A**.

## **4.0 Options**

- 4.1 To not provide the members of the Licensing Committee with quarterly reports. This option has been dismissed at previous meetings as it would not allow members to oversee this area of regulation.

## **5.0 Risks**

- 5.1 None identified by author.

## **6.0 Implications/Consultations**

### **Community Safety**

Proper scrutiny of the work of the Licensing & Enforcement team helps to ensure that policies and procedures promote community safety.

### **Data Protection**

None

### **Equalities**

None

### **Environmental Sustainability**

None

### **Financial**

None as any work either carried out or proposed will be possible within existing budgets.

### **Health and Safety**

Some parts of the regulatory regimes covered in this report contribute to health & safety by ensuring standards are maintained.

### **Human Resources**

None

### **Human Rights**

None

### **Legal**

None

## **Specific Wards**

None

## **7.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material**

- 7.1 **Appendix A** – Performance data from 01 April 2025 – 30 June 2025. Including figures for applications and granted licences, notices, and other permissions.

### **Contact Member**

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Planning & Growth

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