

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Licensing and Regulatory Committee held at 9.30 am
on Tuesday, 5 August 2025

Present:

Members: Councillor F Abbott (Chair)
 Councillor J Birdi
 Councillor T Jandu
 Councillor S Jobbar
 Councillor K Maton
 Councillor C Miks
 Councillor R Thay
 Councillor CE Thomas

Employees (by Service Area):

Law and Governance S Ahmed, P Bansal, T Robinson, A Veness, A Wright

Regulatory Services D Cahalin-Heath, M Coggins, R Masih

Apologies: Councillors B Christopher, S Gray, A Hopkins, J Innes,
 M Lapsa and M Mutton

Public Business

22. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

23. Minutes

The Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 18th February 2025 and the Sub-Committee hearing on the 20th of May 2025 were agreed and signed as true records.

There were no matters arising.

24. Licensing Act 2003 - Review of Statement of Licensing Policy 2026 - 2031

The Committee considered a report from the Director of Law and Governance which sought approval to consult on the draft revised Statement of Licensing Policy 2026-2031 under the Licensing Act 2003.

Under the terms of the Licensing Act 2003 the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy has to be renewed every five years. The current Statement of Licensing Policy came into effect on 16th March 2021, and a review was therefore required. There is a requirement in the Act for the Council to publish and advertise the revised Statement of Licensing Policy at least 4 weeks before, by 16th February 2026.

The Statement of Licensing Policy produced by the Licensing Authority under the Licensing Act 2003 is relevant for all licensing decisions taken by the Council as the Licensing Authority over five years commencing on 16th March 2026.

The general principles of the Statement of Licensing Policy remain the same and the document is still centred around the Licensing Act's four licensing objectives, namely:

- Preventing of Crime & Disorder
- Promotion of Public Safety
- Prevention of Public Nuisance
- Protection of Children from Harm

Before amending the Policy for a further five-year period, licensing authorities are required to carry out a wide consultation process. In addition to those it must consult by law, the Council had authority to include in the process any individuals or organisations it deemed appropriate.

The Responsible Authorities included statutory consultees – West Midlands Police, West Midlands Fire and Rescue Service, Planning, Environmental Health Safeguarding Children Board, HM Revenue & Customs, Community Safety and Public Health will be consulted on the draft revised Policy.

The proposed changes to the Policy were shown highlighted in the draft revised policy (Appendix 1) and are listed below:

- Paragraph 8.11 amended to include website links for drink spiking, violence against women & girls, serious youth violence & counter terrorism.
- Paragraphs 8.38 & 8.39 added to include considerations relating to child exploitation.
- Paragraph 11.1 amended to include best practice schemes.
- Section 16 added – Environmental best practice in Licensed Premises.

RESOLVED that, the Committee:

1) Considers the draft Statement of Licensing Policy 2026-2031 and forwards the following comments as part of the consultation process:

- **Increase consultation with neighbouring Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council considering the Warwickshire technical group and existing consultation efforts with the 6 neighbouring Warwickshire authorities.**
- **Promote the 'Best Bar None' programme and its incorporation into best practice in the Policy.**
- **Promote the ask for Angela/Clive initiative and its incorporation into best practice in the Policy – endorse improving accessibility to employees through a new online learning platform and booklet.**

25. Review of the Current Statement of Licensing Policy (Taxi & Private Hire) to Include Changes on Emissions, Age of Vehicles and Best Practice Guidance

The Committee considered a report from the Director of Law and Governance which sought approval to consult on the current Statement of Licensing Policy (Taxi & Private Hire) to include changes on Emissions, Age of Vehicles and Best Practice Guidance.

The current Statement of Licensing Policy (Taxi & Private Hire) commenced on 14th September 2022. The Policy is reviewed every 5 years unless a review is required due to legislative changes or emerging issues. The purpose of the Policy was to set out the terms and conditions that will apply to new applicants and those already licensed for the Hackney Carriage & Private Hire trade.

Coventry City Council has a duty under the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 and the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 to carry out its functions as the Licensing Authority.

The Council has a duty under these acts to carry out the following functions:

- Ensure that drivers are 'fit & proper'.
- Ensure that all licensed vehicles are road worthy and fit for the carriage of fare paying passengers; and
- Protect public safety.

The DfT has national responsibility for Hackney Carriage & Private Hire legislation in England & Wales. The DfT has issued best practice guidance on taxi & private hire vehicle licensing since 2006 to assist local authorities that have responsibility for the regulation of taxi & private hire vehicle trades. This is updated periodically, considering stakeholder views and the way in which the sector operates. The DfT has published non statutory best practice guidance to compliment the statutory standards in 2010 and revised and re-issued this in November 2023, covering a range of issues outside of the remit of the statutory standards.

A review of the Statement of Licensing Policy requires a wide consultation process. In addition to those it must consult by law, the Council has authority to include in the process any individuals or organisations it deems appropriate. The Responsible Authorities (statutory consultees – Chief Officer of Police, Safeguarding Children Board and the Planning Authority) would be consulted on the draft revised Policy.

The report stated that the Council is part of the West Midlands Taxi Licensing Harmonisation Group which aims to create consistent and standardised taxi licensing policies across the region. Following discussions with neighbouring authorities, the Group proposed 1st January 2030 as the date from which new vehicle licence applications will no longer be accepted for vehicles emitting 75g CO2/km or more.

Therefore, the proposal was to amend the current section on emissions in the Policy so that any new and replacement vehicles are required to be either an Ultra-Low Emission Vehicles (a vehicle that will produce less than 75g CO2/km), produce zero emissions or be zero emission-capable by 1st January 2030.

Additionally, the West Midlands Taxi Licensing Harmonisation Group also explored a regional Emissions Policy with the aim of preventing licensees moving to other local authorities to licence their vehicle, rather than upgrading their vehicle.

RESOLVED that the Committee:

1) Considers the Statement of Licensing Policy (Taxi and Private Hire) and forwards the following comments as part of the consultation process:

- **Consider spaces at taxi ranks for wheelchair accessible vehicles only.**
- **Better signposting for drivers to subscribe to the Disclosure and Barring (DBS) Subscription Service.**
- **Update compliance tests for wheelchair accessible hackney carriage vehicles and invite Licensing Officers to attend the Disability Equality Action Partnership (DEAP) for further consultation.**

26. Outstanding Issues Report

There were no outstanding issues.

27. Any other items of public business which the Chair decides to take as matters of urgency because of the special circumstances involved

There were no other items of public business.

(Meeting closed at 12.25 pm)