

LICENSING COMMITTEE

AGENDA



Tuesday 20 May 2025

at the Adjournment of Annual Council

**in the Council Chamber,
Civic Centre, Hartlepool.**

MEMBERS: LICENSING COMMITTEE:

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS

3. MINUTES

- 3.1 To approve the minutes of the Licensing Committee meeting held on 28 March 2025.

4. ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

- 4.1 Licensing Sub-Committee and Regulatory Sub-Committee Memberships –
Director of Legal, Governance and Human Resources

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

CIVIC CENTRE EVACUATION AND ASSEMBLY PROCEDURE

In the event of a fire alarm or a bomb alarm, please leave by the nearest emergency exit as directed by Council Officers. A Fire Alarm is a continuous ringing. A Bomb Alarm is a continuous tone.

The Assembly Point for everyone is Victory Square by the Cenotaph. If the meeting has to be evacuated, please proceed to the Assembly Point so that you can be safely accounted for.

LICENSING COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

28 March 2025

The meeting commenced at 10.00am in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor: Martin Dunbar (In the Chair)

Councillors: Gary Allen, Ben Clayton, Rob Darby, Michael Jorgeson, Sue Little, John Nelson, Carole Thompson and Mike Young

Officers: Sylvia Pinkney, Assistant Director (Regulatory Services)
Rachael Readman, Trading Standards and Licensing Manager
Gemma Redfern, Solicitor
Jo Stubbs, Democratic Services Officer

15. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were submitted by Councillors Quewone Bailey-Fleet and Matthew Dodds.

16. Declarations of interest by Members

Councillor Sue Little declared an interest in item 4.1 due to her role as a PSV operator although this did not relate to taxis.

Councillor Michael Jorgeson declared an interest as he is personally acquainted with some taxi drivers.

17. Confirmation of the minutes of the Licensing Committee meeting held on 13 December 2024

Minutes approved

18. Receipt of the minutes of the Licensing Sub-Committee meeting held on 21 January 2025

Minutes received

19. Receipt of the minutes of the Regulatory Sub-Committee meeting held on 22 November 2024

Minutes received

20. Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Policy (Assistant Director (Regulatory Services))

The current private hire and hackney carriage licensing policy requires that all vehicles be Euro 6 compliant by 1st April 2025 and that a first time licence only be granted to a vehicle under 5 years old from the date of first registration. Drivers had been advised of the policy changes in 2019 when Licensing Committee had approved the amendments and the majority of licensed vehicles had been upgraded. A petition had been submitted requesting that the policy be amended to delay the Euro 6 requirement and remove the age restrictions. The petition was discussed by members at the 13 December 2024 meeting and it was decided that a review of the policy take place.

The proposed changes were discussed with licensees at the Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Annual General Meeting in February 2025. The key changes are:

- The removal of all vehicle age requirements
- A requirement that all licensed vehicles be Euro 6 compliant by September 2025
- The updating of insurance write-offs to replace the S and N categories replacing the old C and D categories
- A requirement that new drivers must provide evidence of satisfactory completion of a driving assessment approved by Hartlepool Borough Council

225 Private Hire and Hackney Carriage vehicles are currently licensed by Hartlepool Borough Council – 32 of which are not Euro 6 compliant.

A member suggested that the date for compliance with Euro 6 be extended further. However other members noted that there had been extensive discussion on this at the December meeting and felt that the updated policy reflected that discussion well. The Assistant Director (Regulatory Services) noted that the policy had been updated to remove any vehicle age requirements provided cars received 1 MOT and 2 mechanical checks per year. Drivers had been advised of the policy changes in 2019 when Licensing Committee had approved the amendments. The original compliance date of 2021 had subsequently been extended to accommodate for financial pressures on drivers resulting from the pandemic. The majority of licensed vehicles had been upgraded.

Khalid Hussain asked that the date for Euro 6 compliance be extended for a further 2 years. Drivers were already being hit by the introduction of Uber into town and this deadline would put further pressure on them. Mr Hussain had 7 cars and could not afford to change them all over within the required timeframe. He also noted that other local authorities were giving financial

assistance to drivers to pay the costs of adaptation to Euro 6. Members noted that this had been discussed previously and as requested the age restrictions had been removed. However the Council was focussed on being Euro 6 compliant. Drivers had been aware of these requirements since 2019 and it was unfair on those owners who had already upgraded their vehicles to delay the requirement.

Members discussed the issues raised by those present. They felt that the priority was the safety of passengers using licensed vehicles and part of this was ensuring emissions were at a suitable level, something which Euro 6 compliance would address. It was also noted that as part of this process the draft policy would go out for consultation to a wide range of consultees including licensees, Cleveland Police, disability groups, school transport and the general public as service users.

Councillor Carole Thompson moved the vote. This was seconded by Councillor Mike Young. A recorded vote was taken. It was agreed that this would be done in 2 parts.

That members note the contents of the report and approve the Draft Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Policy

Those for – Councillors Gary Allen, Ben Clayton, Rob Darby, Martin Dunbar, Sue Little, John Nelson and Carole Thompson.

Those against – Councillors Michael Jorgeson and Mike Young

Those abstaining – None

That members approve the commencement of consultation on the Draft Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Policy

Those for – Councillors Gary Allen, Ben Clayton, Rob Darby, Martin Dunbar, Michael Jorgeson, Sue Little, John Nelson, Carole Thompson and Mike Young.

Those against – None

Those abstaining – None

Decision

That the Draft Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Policy be approved and

That commencement of consultation on the Draft Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Policy be approved

The meeting concluded at 10:30am

CHAIR

LICENSING COMMITTEE

20 MAY 2025



Report of: Director of Legal, Governance and Human Resources

Subject: LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE AND REGULATORY SUB-COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To appoint the Licensing Sub-Committees and Regulatory Sub-Committees.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Committee has four Licensing Sub Committees of three members dedicated to considering licences for premises and three Regulatory Sub Committees of four members primarily dedicated to considering licences for hackney carriage and private hire drivers. Licensing Sub Committees require a minimum of three members present as a statutory requirement.
- 2.2 There is a need this year to determine the Sub Committee memberships at the very earliest opportunity as there is already an application for a premises licence that has to be determined. Normally there would be a proposed list of Sub Committee memberships for the Committee to consider but in light of the timescales these will be presented at the meeting.

3. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The Local Government and Housing Act, 1989, requires 'as far as practicable' that a local authority allocates seats on Committees and Sub Committees in the same proportion to reflect the number of Members in each political group to the overall membership of the authority. It is therefore open to the Licensing Committee to agree the composition (in this case) of its Sub Committees which departs from the principle, where it is appropriate and practicable to do so. This would apply where the nominations received required the various Sub Committees to have a 'disproportionate' number of Members from the same political group, in order to allow its business to be transacted.

4. RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is requested to consider and approve the Sub Committee memberships.

5. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

Without the Sub Committees being appointed, the Licensing Committee cannot operate properly in fulfilling its statutory and Constitutional obligations.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Licensing Act Committee Minutes 7 January 2005
Licensing Committee Minutes 15 March 2006
Extraordinary Council Minutes 6 March 2013
Annual Council 21 May 2024
Annual Council 20 May 2025

7. CONTACT OFFICER

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