

Report to LICENSING COMMITTEE

LICENSING UPDATE

Portfolio Holder:

Councillor Taylor: Cabinet Member for Housing & Licensing

Officer Contact: Nasir Dad

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25 February 2025

Reason for Decision

The reason for this report is to request that Members note the activities of the Licensing Team since the last meeting.

Recommendations

Members are asked to note the report.

LICENSING UPDATE**1 Background**

- 1.1 The Council, acting in its role as Licensing Authority carries out a range of statutory functions including taxi and private hire licensing, alcohol, entertainment and late night refreshment, gambling, and street trading.
- 1.2 This report sets out the activities of the licensing team since April 2024 together with outlining the challenges and demands on the service.

2 Alcohol, Entertainment and Late Night Refreshment

- 2.1 The team continues to advise, issue, and ensure compliance with a range of premises licences issued under the Licensing Act 2003.
- 2.2 There has been one hearing since April 2024 as detailed below:
- Greene's Bistro and Parlour, Wade Row, Uppermill.
Application to vary licence refused.
- 2.3 Officers continue to advise and respond to complaints about licensed premises and undertake inspections to ensure compliance with conditions.

3 Taxi and Private Hire

- 3.1 There has been a total of circa. 1300 new applications received for dual driver licences since April 2024.
- 3.2 The total number of licences now in force are detailed below with comparison figures from May 2023.

Licence Type	February 2025	October 2024	May 2023
Dual drivers' licence	3433	3088	1305
School contract drivers	79	86	95
Private hire vehicles	1880	1756	1030
Private hire operators	93	90	38
Hackney carriage vehicles	85	85	85

- 3.3 As Members will see from the above figures, the significant increase in licensed drivers has placed an additional burden on Officers within the team. A recruitment exercise has taken place with two new staff joining the team recently and one position yet to fill. This will bolster the team in order to meet demand, including extending opening hours of our service reception.
- 3.4 The additional vehicles being licensed has also meant an increase in testing capacity at our testing station at Moorhey Street is required. A third bay is due to open imminently and then 44 extra test slots per week will be available for booking. In addition, a waiting room and CCTV viewing of the testing bay has been installed.
- 3.5 Officers are working towards the implementation of a new service database and front facing driver application and account system which we hope to deliver late 2025. This will improve efficiency and speed of processes and hopefully make it easier for service users to handle their applications.
- 3.6 Current statistics for vehicle tests since April 2024 are as follows:

Month	Total no. of tests	Hackney Carriage Pass Rate	Private Hire Pass Rate
October 2024	356	50%	56%
November 2024	335	69%	60%
December 2024	252	73%	56%
January 2025	328	33%	53%

Overall running year: 57% pass rate (reduction from 64% from last meeting)

Main reasons for failure	Brakes Suspension Tyres	Condition of interior Lights
Missed tests.	213	

- 3.7 Since April 2024 there have been 60 hearings before the Drivers Panel. The breakdown of outcomes is detailed below.

Applications granted	Applications refused	Licences Suspended	Licences Revoked	NFA
7	37	3	11	1

- 3.8 In addition, there have been 12 delegated revocation decisions made by Officers for urgent matters.

4 **Options/Alternatives**

4.1 Not applicable.

5 **Consultation**

5.1 Not applicable.

6 **Financial Implications**

6.1 Not applicable

7 **Legal Implications**

7.1 Not applicable

8 **Appendices**

8.1 None