

LICENSING COMMITTEE



Report subject	Review of Statement of Licensing Policy
Meeting date	18 September 2025
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	The Licensing Act 2003 places a duty on the Licensing Authority to determine and publish a Statement of Licensing Policy every five years. The current Statement of Licensing Policy is valid until November 2025 Following 2 periods of public consultation, agreed by members of the Licensing Committee and undertaken in accordance with Section 5 of the Licensing Act 2003, the Licensing Committee on behalf of the Licensing Authority must now consider all responses received in respect of the proposed Statement of Licensing Policy and decide after considering the responses what amendments should be made to the draft policy. As part of the process the Licensing Committee must provide reasons of why they decide to include or exclude any consultation response. as they make their decision.
Recommendations	It is RECOMMENDED that: Members consider consultation responses and feedback, if necessary, amend the draft document and recommend a final version of the Statement of Licensing Policy for adoption by Full Council.
Reason for recommendations	Section 5 of the Licensing Act 2003 requires a licensing authority to prepare and publish a statement of its licensing policy at least every 5 years. During the five year period the policy must be kept under review, and the licensing authority may make any revisions to it as it considers appropriate. If revisions are made to the policy after consultation, a new five year period commences on the day it is published.

Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Kieron Wilson
Corporate Director	Glyn Barton - Operations
Report Authors	Sarah Rogers Nananka Randle
Wards	Council wide
Classification	For Decision

Background

1. On 19 September 2024 Members of the Licensing Committee considered and approved the draft of the proposed Statement of Licensing Policy. See Appendix 1
2. The draft was proposed following two policy workshops which took place during 2024, these consisted of members of the licensing committee, licensing and legal officers as well as Dorset Police Licensing Sergeant Gosling. In addition, all responsible authorities were issued a copy of the proposed draft for comment prior to approval by committee.

Consultation

3. Public consultation took place between 11 November 2024 to 6 December 2025 which was then extended until 22 December 2025. This was undertaken via the council's consultation tracker on the website and via email to all parties as listed as direct consultee in Appendix 2. 8 responses were received.
4. Following feedback from local legal representatives a further period of consultation took place between 27 February 2025 and 17 March 2025 this was direct to the licensing team and was sent to all those listed in Appendix 3. 2 further responses were received.
5. Only 10 responses were received to the consultation, and these are summarised together with officer recommendations for policy amendments in Appendix 4.

Options Appraisal

6. Members are asked to consider each of the responses received which are set out in Appendix 3 and decide in respect of each of them to whether
 - Accept the comment and amend the policy accordingly, or
 - Disregard and exclude the comments from the policy.
7. Reasons should be given for any amendments made.

8. Once all feedback has been discussed members are asked to agree a final version of the Statement of Licensing Policy to be recommended to Full Council.

Summary of financial implications

9. Any fees incurred will be absorbed within current budgets. Any costs associated with the review process will be covered by the income from the Licensing Act 2003 fees and/or annual fees received.
10. Paragraph 13.8 of the Section 182 Guidance states “When undertaking consultation exercises, licensing authorities should have regard to cost and time. Fee levels are intended to provide full cost recovery of all licensing functions including the preparation and publication of a statement of licensing policy, but this will be based on the statutory requirements. When licensing authorities exceed these requirements, they will have to absorb these costs themselves.”

Summary of legal implications

11. The Licensing Act 2003 requires all authorities to publish a policy and review this policy every 5 years. If the authority does not publish such a policy, the authority cannot rely on the policy as part of its decision-making process and could be subject to Judicial review.

Summary of human resources implications

12. There are no implications on human resources the current licensing team will continue to implement the policy within current resource levels.

Summary of sustainability impact

13. There are no sustainability impacts

Summary of public health implications

14. Public health is considered within the policy. In addition, as a responsible authority under the Licensing Act all applications are sent to colleagues in public health so that if there are concerns with an application these can be addressed.

Summary of equality implications

15. A full Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and accepted by the EIA panel.
16. The report summary states that the Licensing Authority will comply with the General Equality Duty and advance equal opportunity by working to promote a safe and welcoming night-time economy with a broader appeal for all. We will seek to foster good relationships by promoting the public voice and by working in partnership with the public and businesses. We will work to eliminate unlawful discrimination by working as a Council to fulfil our responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010. Any application will be considered on its relative merits having regard to the promotion of the Licensing Objectives and other relevant policy considerations, including equality, diversity, and inclusion. The Licensing authority recognises that no policy is absolute and where necessary it may depart from its policy; where it considers it to be necessary and appropriate to do so.

Summary of risk assessment

17. There is a risk of judicial review should any new policy be challenged.
18. The Licensing Committee must ensure that any decisions give due consideration to the public sector equality duty as they are made.

Background papers

[Licensing Act 2003](#)

[Revised guidance issued under section 182 of Licensing Act 2003 - GOV.UK](#)

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Draft Statement of Licensing Policy 2025 - 2030

Appendix 2 – Consultation List (11.11.234 – 06.12.24 and extended to 22.12.24)

Appendix 3 – Consultation List (27.02.25 – 17.03.25)

Appendix 4 – Responses to Consultations