

Subject:	Licensing Update	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Licensing Committee	Date:	22 nd April 2025
Report of:	Public Protection Manager	Lead Member:	Environment and Corporate Services
Key Decision:	<input type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input type="checkbox"/>	General Exception <input type="checkbox"/>	Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
Equality Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached: No
Biodiversity Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached: No
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1. RECOMMENDATION

1.1 That members note the contents of this update report.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Rossendale maintains a proportionate hackney carriage fleet relative to the Borough's population
- Regular monitoring and enforcement of licensed premises continues
- The Licensing Authority continue to uphold the four key objectives under the Gambling Act 2005
- Animal Licensing unified various pieces of legislation
- The licensing unit administers and enforces 12 distinct licensing regimes, requiring officers to maintain extensive knowledge across multiple regulatory areas.

3. DETAILS

Taxi's and Private Hire

Rossendale continues to operate a hackney fleet which is proportionate to the population of the Borough. There are 197 licensed vehicles and 251 licensed drivers. Hackney carriage drivers and hackney carriage vehicles represent 64% respectively.

Vehicles are inspected regularly both during their formal tests every 6 months and on an ad hoc basis by licensing officers on the streets. As a result of the proportionate fleet size, officers can ensure that vehicles and drivers who work locally are subject to regular compliance inspections.

Drivers and vehicles are regularly referred to the sub-committee for application decisions and reviews of licences where appropriate.

Premises Licensing

There are around 334 premises licences in the Borough which includes those operating under Club Premises Certificates (22).

Work continues to ensure that all licensed premises are operating within the terms of their licences.

Over the last 12 months, there have been 3 licensing hearings. These amounted to 2 grants and 1 revocation of licence. An appeal against the revocation has been lodged and this is yet to be heard.

Licensing officers will continue to act without favour or prejudice in considering such applications, but must remain within the framework of the law when dealing with potentially contentious issues.

Officers work closely with the SIA in ensuring that door staff are compliant with the licence requirements placed upon them.

The Government is gearing up to introduce digital ID's for age verification. It aims to modernise the age verification process reducing reliance on physical documents like passports and driving licences.

Lidl has announced plans to open it's first pub in Northern Ireland. The initiative represents a novel approach for the supermarket chain, aiming to integrate pub services within its retail environment. Greggs have ventured into the hospitality sector in similar fashion and IKEA has tested pop-up restaurants. Increasingly, brands are trying to create more immersive experiences, tapping into new revenue streams and keeping customers engaged for longer.

The Government have also confirmed that the temporary off-sales easement introduced by the Business and Planning Act 202 will come to an end on 31st March 2025.

Gambling

The Gambling Act 2005 states that Licensing Authorities must have regard to the licensing objectives as set out in the Act.

The Licensing Objectives are:

- ✓ preventing gambling being a source of crime or disorder;
- ✓ being associated with crime and disorder or being used to support crime;
- ✓ ensuring gambling is carried out in a fair and open way; and
- ✓ protecting children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling.

There are 4 betting shops in the Borough. The largest part of Gambling for this Authority remains small society lottery registrations which amount to 61.

Animal Licensing

The Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018 came into effect on 1st October 2018. The regulations unified and updated a number of current licensing acts. Unfortunately, extra funding was not provided to local council's to deal with the increase in work required to administer the new regime and this remains a challenge to deal with.

Inspectors must be qualified to Level 3 certificate in Inspecting licensable activities involving animals in order to conduct inspections at such premises. There is a shortage of qualified people and inspections for the simplest of activities can take 1.5 hours excluding a review of

all necessary paperwork, policies and procedures. This course involves a mandatory practical session which is typically held at Heathrow Airport.

A public register of all licences and applications under consideration is maintained on the Council's website.

Other Licensing

The unit is responsible for administering and enforcing a total of 12 licensing regimes. While all regimes contribute to the unit's overall workload, 3 key regimes form the core of its operation and are examined in greater detail within this report. The remaining regimes, although equally important, constitute a smaller and more intermittent portion of the unit's responsibilities.

Licensing Officers play a crucial role in ensuring that businesses comply with law, protect public safety and promote responsible trading. To do this effectively, they must possess extensive knowledge across multiple areas. They also need to stay up to date with frequent changes in legislation, case laws and best practices to ensure that their decisions are legally sound and align with evolving regulatory frameworks. Continuous professional development is essential for licensing officers.

4. RISK

There are no specific risk issues for members to consider arising from this report.

5. FINANCE

All financial implications are noted in the report.

6. LEGAL

All legal matters are covered within the body of the report.

7. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

All policy or equality implications are noted in the report.

8. REASON FOR DECISION

Members should note the contents of the report.

No background papers