



East Cambridgeshire District Council

Minutes of a Meeting of the Licensing Committee

Held at The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely, CB7 4EE at 10:00am
on Wednesday 10th September 2025

Present:

Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith
Cllr Lee Denney
Cllr Lorna Dupré (substitute for Cllr Charlotte Cane)
Cllr Mark Goldsack
Cllr Martin Goodearl (Vice Chair)
Cllr Keith Horgan
Cllr Julia Huffer (Chair)
Cllr Mark Inskip
Cllr Alan Sharp (substitute for Cllr Lavinia Edwards)
Cllr John Trapp
Cllr Christine Whelan
Cllr Gareth Wilson

Officers:

Patrick Adams – Senior Democratic Services Officer
Lin Bagwell – Licensing Officer (Enforcement)
Stewart Broome – Licensing Manager
Maggie Camp – Director Legal

8. Apologies and substitutions

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Charlotte Cane and Cllr Lavinia Edwards. Cllr Lorna Dupré attended as a substitute for Cllr Cane. Cllr Alan Sharp attended as a substitute for Cllr Edwards.

9. Declarations of interest

Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith declared a personal interest as her husband held an alcohol licence for Littleport Leisure Centre.

10. Minutes

The Committee received the Minutes of the Licensing Committee meeting held on 18th June 2025.

It was resolved unanimously:

That the Minutes of the Licensing Committee meeting held on 18th June 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and be signed by the Chair.

11. Chair's announcements

There were no Chair's announcements.

12. Licensing Act 2003 - Licensing Authority Statement of Licensing Policy – Five Year Revision

The Licensing Manager presented a report, AA42 previously circulated, that invited the Committee to recommend to Council the revised version of the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy, as laid out in Appendix 2. It was noted that the new Licensing Policy would come into effect on 7th January 2026.

The Licensing Manager explained that the Council was waiting for the Government to clarify the implications for clubs and other organisations of the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, also known as Martyn's Law. In reply to Cllr Gareth Wilson, the Licensing Manager confirmed that he had assured the Ely Sailing Club that complying with the Act would be less onerous for smaller clubs than for larger organisations.

The Licensing Manager confirmed that the population figures for the district would be updated in the Preface to the Policy and the capitalisation would be consistent regarding the words Council, district and Licensing Authority throughout the Policy. It was agreed that the reference to a "borough" in paragraph 1.87 should be corrected to "district" and the words "Licensing Authority's" should be corrected to "The Licensing Authority" at the start of paragraph 1.93. It was also agreed that in sub section h) in paragraph 1.106 a comma should be added after the word "of".

Following a brief discussion, it was agreed that in the first sentence of paragraph 1.17A on the Promotion of Equality, the word "different" be removed and the word "all" be inserted before the word "individuals", as this was more inclusive.

Following another brief discussion, it was agreed that the words "and partners" should be added after the words "local strategies" in paragraph 1.15 of the Policy to ensure that the strategies of the Council's partners were taken into account.

The Licensing Manager explained that the district did not have any Late Night Levies, which a local authority could use to raise a contribution towards the costs of policing the nighttime economy. It was noted that the Policy would have to be reworded if the Mayor took over the responsibilities of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Cllr Julia Huffer proposed and Cllr Martin Goodearl seconded the recommendations in the report, with the minor amendments agreed above.

It was unanimously resolved to:

- A) Approve the draft version of the Statement of Licensing Policy at Appendix 2, with the agreed minor amendments.
- B) Recommend the approved Statement of Licensing Policy to full Council for adoption to come into effect on 7 January 2026.

13. Hackney Carriage Fares – Consideration of Request from Trade to Increase Fares

The Licensing Manager presented this report, AA43 already circulated, which invited the Committee to consider increasing the fares payable by members of the public to use an East Cambridgeshire District Council taxi following a formal request from members of the taxi trade. It was noted that the fares had last been increased in 2022. It was understood that the proposed increase would result in taxi drivers earning an average of 20% more than they currently receive.

In reply to Cllr Martin Goodearl, the Licensing Manager explained that he was not aware of any electric vehicles being used as hackney carriages in the district.

In reply to Cllr Mark Goldsack, the Licensing Manager explained that the Council did not currently have a concession scheme for disabled service users. It was noted that the fares were the maximum that taxi drivers could charge and so they could charge less. The Licensing Manager reported that wheelchair users tended to book private hire vehicles instead of using hackney carriages, to ensure that the vehicle was accessible.

In reply to Cllr Keith Horgan, the Licensing Manager explained that adding £0.85 per journey spread the increase across all trips, instead of disproportionately affecting a few journeys. Journeys of 960 yards or less were not affected and actually worked out cheaper under the proposals being considered.

In reply to Cllr Lee Denney, the Licensing Manager stated that he believed that the number of hackney cabs in the district had reduced over the last ten years, but the Council did not have any comparative data on the use of private hire vehicles and hackney carriages. There was no obligation on private hire vehicle companies to inform the Council of their charges.

In reply to Cllr John Trapp, the Licensing Manager explained that whilst a 20% increase, which worked out as approximately 7% a year, was higher than other cost of living increases, taxi drivers were expected to tax and maintain their vehicles and regularly purchase new ones. The Council was keen to promote a modern, clean and efficient trade. If agreed, the cost of hackney carriage fares would be the 3rd most expensive of the seven different districts

in Cambridgeshire. It was noted that if driving hackney carriages became unprofitable, a service to the public would be lost.

In reply to Cllr Gareth Wilson, the Licensing Manager reported that all taxi drivers in the district were obliged to undergo a DBS check and maintain a DBS Update Service registration at a cost of £16 a year. The Council regularly checked that these records were kept up to date.

After a brief discussion, prompted by Cllr Mark Goldsack, the Committee agreed that the implementation date in the report should be amended from 1 October 2025 to 3 October 2025 to give sufficient time for details of the increased fares to be published in the printed press.

The Licensing Manager reported that the plan would be to review the fares again in two years' time.

Cllr John Trapp proposed and Cllr Mark Goldsack seconded the recommendation in the report. A vote was taken and with 11 votes in favour, 1 against and no abstentions

It was resolved to:

- A) Instruct officers to vary the existing Table of Fares using the proposed Table of Fares contained in Table 7 in the report, to take effect from 3 October 2025, subject to the statutory consultation process, as detailed in paragraph 3.3 and 3.4 below.

14. Licensing Manager's update

The Licensing Manager praised the work of the licensing team and explained that licensing fees would be reviewed at the meeting on 19 November 2025.

It was resolved:

That the Licensing Manager's Update be noted.

15. Forward agenda plan

The Committee received its Forward Agenda Plan.

It was resolved:

- A) That the Forward Agenda Plan be noted, with typographical corrections.
- B) That the next meeting due to be held on 8 October at 10 am be cancelled.

- C)** That the next meeting will be held on 19 November 2025 at 10 am.

The meeting concluded at 11:55 am

Chair.....

Date.....