

Minutes of: LICENSING AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 19th February 2026

Present: Councillor T Rafiq (in the Chair)
Councillors A Booth, J Grimshaw, J Hook, B Ibrahim, D Quinn, I Rizvi
and M Walsh

Also in attendance: M Bridge- Licensing Unit Manager
M Cunliffe – Democratic Services
R Everitt - Elections & Land Charges Manager
D Ryan- Unit Manager - Private Rented Sector Enforcement
L Scully– Legal Observer
B Thomson- Assistant Director Public Protection & Resilience
J Willis– Legal Advisor

Public Attendance: No members of the public were present at the meeting.

LSP.1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted by Councillors R Brown, D Green and L McBriar.
There was no substitute representative for Councillors R Brown, D Green and L McBriar.

LSP.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

LSP.3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Delegated decision:

That the Minutes of the last meeting held on the 11th December 2025 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

LSP.4 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

No questions had been pre submitted to the meeting and no members of the public were in attendance at the meeting.

LSP.5 OPERATIONAL REPORT

The Executive Director (Corporate Core) submitted a report advising Members on operational issues within the Licensing Service.

The report set out updates in respect of the following issues:

The Licensing Service had dealt with a number of compliance and enforcement matters between the 1st December 2025 and the 1st February 2026.

LICENSING HEARINGS SUB- COMMITTEES

On the 18th December 2025, the Licensing Hearings Sub Committee considered an application to vary the Designated Premises Supervisor for the Towler Inn, 460 Walmsley Road, Bury.

Members heard the evidence for Greater Manchester Police and decided to refuse the application and remove the DPS.

Also on the 18th December 2025, the Licensing Hearings Sub Committee considered an application for the grant of a premises licence for Thani Whitefield, 190-194 Bury New Road, Whitefield. Members heard the evidence and decided to grant the application subject to conditions.

On the 19th December 2025, the Licensing Hearings Sub Committee considered an application vary the premises licence for Rawas Indian Street Food, 453 Bury New Road, Prestwich. Members heard the evidence and decided to grant the variation in the terms requested and agreed during the hearing, noting the opening hours would remain the same.

IMMEDIATE SUSPENSIONS

The Licensing Service were continuing, following consultation with the Chair, to immediately suspend drivers who do not have a valid subscription with the DBS update Service. Since the last Licensing and Safety Committee on the 11th December 2025, a further 55 drivers had been suspended.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

Licensing Enforcement Officers worked alongside Greater Manchester Police for three evenings over the Christmas Period including “Mad Friday” visiting licensed premises, giving advice and ensuring compliance with conditions. A number of issues were identified and dealt with.

Officers from Trading Standards and Licensing alongside Wagtail (Dora the tobacco dog) worked together on a day of action. Dora and her handler are from wagtail who work in partnership with Trading Standards. The partnership worked in action across the borough, visiting off licences, mini markets, and newsagents. The visits took place across the borough, from Prestwich though to Ramsbottom. Dora was on hand to find all the concealed hiding places, with seven premises visited, a total of 1300 packets of illegal cigarettes, 200 pouches of illegal hand rolling tobacco, 127 illegal vapes along with 38 counterfeit and unsafe toys were seized which had a street value of around £25,000. Councillor Morris and James Frith MP attended the day of action with the officers.

HACKNEY SUPPORT FUND

The Licensing Service had been advised by TfGM and the Growth Company that 100% of eligible vehicle proprietors of non-compliant Hackney Carriages have submitted applications to receive the Hackney Support Fund to enable them to upgrade to a compliant vehicle. This equated to 24 vehicle proprietors.

PROPOSED PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE SUPPORT FUND

A press release has been issued by Transport for Greater Manchester Greater Manchester in relation to steps for supporting taxi drivers with a new £4.45m vehicle fund. Greater Manchester was proposing a new Private Hire Vehicle (PHV) Support Fund to help locally licensed private hire drivers upgrade to cleaner, lower-emission vehicles.

Under the scheme, eligible drivers would be able to access either a £5,000 interest-free loan or a £1,000 non-repayable grant to support the transition to compliant vehicles, complementing the existing £8m fund for hackney cab owners.

The initiative forms part of Greater Manchester's investment-led approach to improving air quality and follows extensive engagement with the taxi trade, where drivers highlighted the need for additional financial support. If approved, the fund was expected to open for applications later this year

A Member questioned when the vehicle funding would be available and it was reported that this information was not yet in the public domain.

At the request of the Chair, the Licensing Unit Manager provided an overview of the enhanced DBS checks.

Delegated decision:

It was agreed that the report be noted.

LSP.6 HMO LICENSING POLICY AND UPDATED STANDARDS AND AMENITY DOCUMENTS

The Unit Manager PRS Enforcement Team submitted a report to seek approval from the Licensing and Safety Committee to adopt the proposed HMO Licensing Policy and the updated Standards and Amenities Guidance for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) across the borough. The introduction of a formal licensing policy was necessary due to the increasing volume of HMO licence applications and the Council's commitment to strengthening regulatory oversight of HMOs.

The updated guidance provided clearer, more detailed technical standards to support licence applicants, ensuring that HMOs meet statutory requirements relating to space, amenity provision, safety, and management. It also reflected recent legislative changes, including enhanced penalty powers under the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and revisions introduced through the Renters Rights Act 2025.

The policy set out how the Council administers and enforces HMO licensing, ensuring consistency, transparency and robust decision-making. Adoption of the documents would support improved regulation of HMOs, assist developers and landlords in meeting mandatory conditions, and enable the Council to maintain safe, compliant accommodation for residents. Following approval, delegated authority was requested to allow the Assistant Director for Public Protection and Resilience to make further amendments arising from consultation and any future legislative changes.

Attached to the agenda packs at appendix 1 was the HMO Licensing Policy, Appendix 2 detailed the HMO landlord guidance and appendix 3 listed the HMO licensing conditions.

A number of hyperlinks contained within the policy were not yet finalised and would be updated in due course.

Members asked a number of questions in relation to the policy which were answered by Officers present at the meeting.

Delegated decision:

That the Licensing and Safety Committee approved the HMO Licensing Policy and the updated Standards and Amenities Guidance. Delegated authority be granted to the Assistant Director for Public Protection and Resilience to make any necessary amendments arising from the consultation, as well as any future amendments required to reflect new or amended legislation.

LSP.7 URGENT BUSINESS

No urgent business was reported at the meeting.

LSP.8 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Delegated decision:

That in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business since it involved the likely disclosure of information relating to individuals who hold Licences granted by the Authority or Applicants for Licences provided by the Authority.

LSP.9 SUSPENSION / REVOCATION OF PUBLIC / PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER LICENCES

Licence Holder 16/2025

The Executive Director (Corporate Core) submitted a report relating to client number 16/2025, who was in attendance at the meeting. The Chair made introductions and alongside the legal advisor outlined the procedure to be followed and clarified that all those present had read the report. The report, which was accepted by the Licence Holder was presented by the Licensing Unit Manager and set out the reasons for them being before the Committee.

The Licensing Unit Manager reported and presented background information to the Committee on this case.

The Council's legal advisor and a number of Members asked questions in relation to the case.

The driver was before members for consideration to be given as to his suitability to be a private hire driver in Bury.

Delegated decision:

The Committee carefully considered the report and oral representations by the Licence Holder.

Taking into account the Council's Conviction Policy and Guidelines and in accordance with the powers granted under Section 61(1)(b) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, the Committee resolved **to immediately suspend the licence for a period of 12 months.**

In the interests of public safety and to maintain confidence in the regulatory framework, it was necessary and proportionate to impose an **immediate suspension** for a 12-month period on the grounds of public safety.

The driver was informed of their right to appeal this decision to the Magistrates' Court within 21 days of receiving written notification.

Licence Holder 17/2025

The Executive Director (Corporate Core) submitted a report relating to client 17/2025. The Licensing Unit Manager reported that the client and their legal representative had requested that the case to be deferred until a future meeting whilst body worn video evidence was obtained.

Delegated decision:

The Licencing Committee agreed that Licence Holder 17/2025 would be deferred for consideration at an upcoming meeting of the Licensing and Safety Committee.

COUNCILLOR T RAFIQ
Chair

(Note: The meeting started at 7.00pm and ended at 8.15pm)

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