

Classification	Item No.
Open / Closed	6

Meeting:	Licensing and Safety Committee
Meeting date:	9 th July 2026
Title of report:	Update Report
Report by:	Executive Director (Corporate Core)
Decision Type:	N/A Report for information only
Ward(s) to which report relates	All

Executive Summary:

A report to advise members on operational issues within the Licensing service.

Recommendation(s)

That the report be noted.

Key considerations

Not applicable

1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 The report updates Members on matters that the Licensing service are or have been involved with:

2.0 PURPLE FLAG

Purple Flag is an accreditation process similar to the Green Flag award for parks and the Blue Flag for beaches. It leads to Purple Flag status for town & city centres that meet or surpass the standards of excellence in managing the evening and night time economy (ENTE).

Bury has held Purple Flag for over 10 years now and the town centres achieve a Purple Flag will be those that are safe, diverse, vibrant, appealing, well-managed and offer a positive experience to consumers.

Stakeholders believe a Purple Flag can bring the following benefits:

- Strong Partnership working relationships
- A raised profile and an improved public image
- Wider patronage
- Increased expenditure
- Increased footfall
- Lower crime and anti-social behaviour
- A more successful mixed-use economy
- Stronger Diversification (enticing a wide and varied consumer offering)
- Regeneration and Development to an area
- Positive perceptions

There are five core standards which are as follows:

1. THE POLICY ENVELOPE

An after-hours policy that shows a clear strategy based on sound research, integrated public policy and a successful multi-sector partnership

2. WELLBEING

Successful destinations are all safe and welcoming with all sectors playing their part in delivering high standards of customer care.

3. MOVEMENT

Getting home safely after an evening out is crucial, as is the ability to move around the centre on foot with ease.

4. APPEAL

Successful destinations offer a vibrant choice of leisure and entertainment for a diversity of ages, groups, lifestyles and cultures.

5. PLACE

Successful areas are alive during the day, as well as in the evening. They contain a blend of overlapping activities that encourage people to mingle and enjoy the place. They reinforce the character and identity of the area as well as flair and imagination in urban design for the night.

Officers from the Licensing Service took part in the internal assessment for the Purple Flag Assessment with other colleagues within the Council. The internal assessment will be sent to the ATCM (Association of Town and City Management) for review and approval.

Whilst undertaking the internal assessment, the officers visited the Street Pastors who work in the Town Centre providing support to patrons in the town and have a good links

with the Council, Greater Manchester Police and other partners to ensure that core standards are upheld.

3.0 **DRAFT TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE (PHV) BILL – KEY REFORMS AND LOCAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Government has announced a draft Bill representing the most significant overhaul of taxi and private hire legislation in more than a century. The reforms aim to modernise an outdated system, strengthen public safety, and introduce a consistent national framework across England.

The Bill responds to longstanding concerns about safeguarding, inconsistent enforcement, and cross-border working, including recommendations from Baroness Casey's review into child sexual exploitation.

3.1 **Key Proposals**

The draft legislation will:

- Introduce a single, consistent national framework replacing outdated and fragmented laws.
- Strengthen public safety and safeguarding, including clearer licensing requirements.
- Provide enhanced enforcement powers for licensing authorities.
- Mandate a national database of licensed drivers, vehicles, and operators.
- Improve information sharing between authorities.
- Strengthen accessibility protections for disabled passengers.
- Ensure a consistent passenger experience nationwide.
- Support a fair and sustainable licensing environment for the sector.

3.2 **Local Context – Bury**

Figures as of 15 June 2026 Bury's licensed taxi and private hire sector is characterised by:

- Hackney carriage drivers: 43
- Private hire drivers: 834
- Hackney carriage vehicles: 29
- Private hire vehicles: 717

This reflects a predominantly private hire-led market, consistent with national trends driven by app-based bookings and cross-border activity.

3.3 **Implications for Bury Council**

Operational

- Increased expectations for proactive enforcement activity.
- Requirement to integrate with a mandatory national licensing database.

- Potential changes to licensing processes, policies, and conditions.

Regulatory

- Greater consistency may reduce current challenges linked to cross-border licensing.
- Increased accountability and scrutiny of licensing decisions.

Resourcing

- Potential pressure on enforcement and compliance teams.
- Possible new burdens funding, though detail is yet to be confirmed.
- Opportunities for efficiency through improved data sharing and reduced duplication.

Safeguarding

- Strengthened statutory expectations around public protection.
- Focus on closing gaps identified in previous safeguarding reviews, particularly in cross-authority working.

Risks and Considerations

- Capacity constraints if enforcement responsibilities increase without sufficient funding.
- Implementation challenges transitioning to a new national system.
- Continued complexity where journeys cross into Wales, as reforms apply to England only.

Strategic Significance

The reforms represent a major shift toward:

- A nationally aligned licensing system
- Stronger public protection and safeguarding frameworks
- Improved passenger confidence and service standards

They also provide an opportunity to address longstanding concerns in Bury around cross-border working and regulatory consistency.

3.4 NEXT STEPS

- Monitor the publication of the full draft Bill and consultation.
- Review current licensing policies and enforcement capacity.
- Engage with regional partners and professional bodies (e.g. Institute of Licensing).
- Prepare for implementation planning and resource assessment.

3.5 Key notes for Members

The Licensing Service request members to note the following points:

- Note the proposed reforms and their potential impact on Bury.
- Support early engagement with the legislative process.
- Request a further detailed report once the draft Bill and consultation are published

4.0 CCTV

Bury Council does not currently have an adopted policy mandating CCTV or covering the installation or standard/requirement(s) of CCTV systems within licensed Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles.

The Council has previously explored the introduction of a CCTV trial which requires funding. Application for ARIS funding to support a pilot scheme, working in partnership with Greater Manchester Police was unfortunately unsuccessful and consequently there are no opportunities to run a pilot scheme.

During the implementation of the Greater Manchester Common Minimum Licensing Standards (CMLS), the issue of mandating CCTV was considered. Views within the licensed trade were polarising. A proportion of drivers and proprietors recognise the potential benefits of CCTV, particularly in relation to driver and passenger safety, crime prevention and evidential value. However, others within the trade expressed strong concerns regarding necessity, cost, and privacy. It was also indicated that introducing a mandatory requirement could result in significant opposition, including the potential for industrial action.

The issue has been discussed at length at Trade Liaison Meetings with membership indicating equally strong polarising views on either side of the argument to mandate/not mandate CCTV.

4.1 Current Position

The Greater Manchester Licensing Network has identified that, following the adoption of CMLS, a specific CCTV policy has not yet been developed across authorities. However, there is an awareness that national standards for taxi and private hire licensing are currently under review.

Given the potential for forthcoming national guidance or statutory standards, it is considered prudent not to introduce a local CCTV policy at this stage which could risk being unaligned and inconsistent with potential future national requirements/standards.

The Licensing Service will continue to monitor developments and await the outcome of the national review and liaison with Greater Manchester Licensing Network before progressing any formal policy proposals.

4.2 Cost Implications

The installation of CCTV systems within licensed vehicles would represent a significant financial commitment for the trade.

Based on current market estimates:

- The cost of a compliant taxi CCTV system typically ranges between £500 and £900 per vehicle
 - Hardware: approximately £350 – £600

- Professional installation: approximately £120 – £200

The current number of licensed vehicles within Bury is:

- Hackney Carriages: 30
- Private Hire Vehicles: 720
- Total: 750 vehicles

Based on the upper estimated cost (£900 per vehicle), the total potential cost to the trade in Bury collectively could be in the region of £675,000. This cost would fall primarily on vehicle proprietors unless an external funding source or subsidy were identified. The licensing service and Council is unable to cover any costs associated with CCTV implementation or management.

4.3 Key Considerations

In determining any future approach to CCTV, a policy would need to consider:

- Public and driver safety benefits, including deterrence and evidential support
- Financial impact on the licensed trade, particularly smaller operators
- Data protection and privacy obligations, including compliance with ICO guidance
- Consistency with Greater Manchester Authorities/Region and future National Standards
- Explore any potential funding opportunities or phased implementation options

4.4 Next Steps

The Licensing Service will:

- Monitor the outcome of the national review of taxi and private hire standards
- Engage with the Greater Manchester Licensing Network to ensure a coordinated approach
- Report back to Members with further recommendations once national guidance is clarified

5.0 Trade Liaison Meeting

5.1 Purpose of Report

To provide Members with an update on the key matters discussed at the Trade Liaison Meeting held on 1 June 2026 and outline relevant operational, policy and strategic issues impacting the licensed trade.

5.2 Background

The Trade Liaison meeting forms part of ongoing engagement between the Licensing Service, elected Members, Greater Manchester Police and representatives of the hackney carriage and private hire trade. The meeting considers operational issues, policy development and emerging risks affecting the sector.

5.3 Key Issues and Updates

- EV Charging Infrastructure: Progress remains dependent on GMCA procurement timelines, which are currently delayed. A Cabinet report is not expected before September 2026. Approximately 300 potential sites have been identified for feasibility assessment.
- National Taxi Review: Government consultation is ongoing following the King's Speech. Potential national standards may include vehicle specifications, CCTV, accessibility and enforcement. Work is being aligned with Greater Manchester policy development.
- GMP Update: 14 taxi-related incidents have been recorded, largely linked to fare disputes. One assault on a driver was reported. Increased risks are anticipated during major events. Reporting remains essential to support enforcement activity.
- DBS Compliance: Significant improvements have been achieved with only minimal non-compliance cases remaining.
- Enforcement and Taxi Rank Issues: Continued concerns regarding misuse of taxi ranks. Intelligence-led reporting is critical to support enforcement.
- CCTV Policy: Work is progressing on a Greater Manchester-wide approach, which will not mandate CCTV but provide consistency but need to be mindful of the proposed national standards
- Convictions Policy: The GM Licensing Network will be reviewing current policies across to align with Institute of Licensing guidance.
- Website Improvements: following a request from a member of the Licensing and Safety Committee, the Licensing Service have updated the Council's Website to assist licence holders to report convictions to the Licensing Service.
- Accessibility: All hackney carriage vehicles are wheelchair accessible. Only two private hire WAVs are currently licensed. Barriers include cost and viability.
- Clean Air Funding: All eligible hackney carriage licence holders have applied for funding. Private hire funding options continue to be explored. Funding remains ringfenced.

5.4 Governance and Engagement

The Terms of Reference for Trade Liaison meetings are under review to formalise quarterly meetings and reflect the current officer-led model. Updated Terms will be circulated for comment prior to adoption. An update was also provided regarding member training arrangements.

5.6 Next Steps

A further update will be provided following the next Trade Liaison meeting scheduled for 7 September 2026.

Community impact / links with Community Strategy

Not applicable

Equality Impact and considerations:

24. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to -

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;*
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;*
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.*

25. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services.

Equality Analysis	<i>Please provide a written explanation of the outcome(s) of either conducting an initial or full EA.</i>
<i>The Licensing Service have considered the Equality Act 2010 and due to each application being dealt with on its own merits there is no positive or negative on any of the protected characteristics.</i>	

Assessment of Risk:

The following risks apply to the decision:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
None	.

Consultation:

Not applicable

Legal Implications:

Not applicable

Financial Implications:

Not Applicable

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Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.

Term	Meaning
None	