

Committee: Licensing & Environmental Health

Date:

Title: Enforcement & Compliance Update

20 January 2026

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Item for decision:
No

Summary

1.1. This Enforcement Update report is to inform the Committee of the enforcement and compliance activities carried out by Licensing Officers during the period of 1 September to 31 December 2025.

Recommendations

2.1. It is recommended that Members note the contents of this report.

Financial Implications

3.1. There are no financial implications arising from this report. The Licensing service is unique compared to other teams within Regulatory Services in that the service charges fees for the various permissions administered with the aim for the Council to be able to recover its costs.

Appendices

- 4.1.** A – Copy of the ‘Get Home Safe’ leaflet
B – Promotional photograph from late night premises visits

Impact

5.1.

Communication/Consultation	None
Community Safety	Licensing matters must be dealt with within strict, statutory timescales with a clear separation of duties between the officer ‘administering’ an application and the officer acting as the responsible authority, with a view to avoiding corporate risk and more importantly protecting the public. In addition with respect to enforcement activity the Council must act in a fair and even handed manner.

<p>Equalities</p>	<p>Under the general equality duty as set out in the Equality Act 2010, public authorities are required to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation as well as advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.</p> <p>The protected grounds covered by the equality duty are: age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, and sexual orientation. The equality duty also covers marriage and civil partnership, but only in respect of eliminating unlawful discrimination.</p> <p>The law requires that this duty to have due regard be demonstrated in decision making processes. Assessing the potential impact on equality of proposed changes to policies, procedures and practices is one of the keyways in which public authorities can demonstrate that they have had due regard to the aims of the equality duty.</p> <p>Licensing Policies and Licensing decisions all have regard to the Council's equalities duties.</p>
<p>Health and Safety</p>	<p>Licensing matters must be dealt with within strict, statutory timescales with a clear separation of duties between the officer 'administering' an application and the officer acting as the responsible authority, with a view to avoiding corporate risk and more importantly protecting the public.</p>
<p>Human Rights/Legal Implications</p>	<p>Unlike most other areas of 'regulation' there are distinct responsibilities on the Council in its role as the 'licensing authority' under many different areas of licensing. This is not just simply relating to the processing of applications but also includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • setting the local framework through a statement of licensing policy • considering applications with a view to promoting the licensing objectives under

	<p>the Licensing and Gambling Acts, or the public protection and economic growth aspects of other licensing regimes. • undertaking inspection and enforcement activities to ensure conditions of licences are being met, and to ensure that any operator whom requires a licence has one • maintaining the required statutory registers.</p> <p>The principal work areas, the Licensing Act and Taxi and Private Hire regimes set out very clearly a legislated obligation for the Council to carry out its duties to promote the licensing objectives (preventing crime and disorder, preventing nuisance, public safety and protecting children). The statutory guidance also requires that the Council be sufficiently resourced to achieve this aim.</p>
Sustainability	None
Ward-specific impacts	None
Workforce/Workplace	None

Situation

6.1. This report provides an overview of the compliance and enforcement team's activities and statistical data for the period 1 September 2025 to 31 December 2025.

6.2. Licensing Officers have continued to proactively undertake a broad range of compliance activities both within the district and across neighbouring counties.

As part of the team's ongoing work at Stansted Airport, passenger information leaflets have been produced and distributed to help travellers identify and correctly book licensed taxis and private hire vehicles. The Airport has also agreed to display a digital version of the leaflet on noticeboards within the baggage reclaim areas. This initiative aims to help passengers avoid unlicensed or illegal taxis and thereby reduce associated risks. Leaflets have similarly been made available at Audley End Station, and Officers will distribute additional copies to selected licensed premises during forthcoming visits. A copy of the leaflet is attached at **Appendix A**.

In November, Licensing Officers participated in Uttlesford's *Safer Streets Programme*, delivered by the Community Safety Partnership in collaboration with Essex Police and the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner. The programme seeks to improve public perceptions of safety while reducing anti-social

behaviour, neighbourhood crime, and violence against women and girls. The Licensing Team supported the initiative by attending the Great Dunmow event and engaging with local businesses to raise awareness.

In December, Licensing Officers worked jointly with Essex Police Town Team Officers in Saffron Walden to visit licensed venues on a Saturday evening. The visits ensured compliance with licence conditions and provided an opportunity to share safeguarding advice and display materials designed to discourage drink and drug driving among patrons. A promotional photo is attached at **Appendix B**.

6.3. Approximately 40 proactive taxi and private hire visits were conducted at various locations, including schools, Stansted Airport, Audley End Station, and towns both within and beyond the district. These visits resulted in 56 driver checks and 65 vehicle checks of vehicles licensed by Uttlesford District Council (UDC).

6.4. No significant issues were identified with most drivers; however, one driver was found to be working while under suspension. This matter is currently under investigation, and appropriate action will be considered.

6.5. Vehicle inspections identified a small number of minor compliance issues, including a nail embedded in a tyre and another tyre close to the legal tread limit. One vehicle was suspended with immediate effect after being found with a tyre below the legal tread depth requirement.

6.6. A further six visits were made to private hire operator offices to assess record-keeping compliance with UDC licensing conditions. No concerns were identified. One visit included a training session delivered by Licensing Officers on basic vehicle inspection procedures, enabling the operator to incorporate this learning into driver induction training. This follows the recent successful completion of a City & Guilds Assured Basic Vehicle Inspection for Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Vehicles Certificate by a second Licensing Officer, providing them with the skills to undertake roadside inspections of vehicles and being able to make informed decisions about their roadworthiness.

6.7. Of the six visits to Stansted Airport, four were dedicated anti-touting operations conducted jointly with Transport for London (TfL) and Police colleagues. Five individuals were identified as suspected of touting; all were either unlicensed or licensed outside the district by TfL.

6.8. In relation to licensed premises, further Pubwatch meetings were held in the Saffron Walden, Great Dunmow, and Stansted Mountfitchet areas. The meetings continue to be well attended by Licensing and Community Safety Officers and provide valuable opportunities for information sharing between premises and partner agencies.

6.9. Officers also visited 75 licensed premises to assess compliance with licence conditions. Advice and guidance were provided where necessary. Visits were both proactive and reactive, in response to issues such as reports of underage sales and trading outside authorised hours. No significant breaches were identified, and minor matters were resolved through officer engagement.

6.10. In respect of hackney carriage and private hire drivers, there have been 11 licence revocations and 131 licence suspensions during the reporting period.

- Seven revocations were made by the Licensing Panels held on 18 September, 30 October, and 9 December 2025.
- The remaining four were made under delegated authority by the Environmental Health Manager (Commercial), in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Licensing and Environmental Health Committee.
- Approximately 72% of the 131 suspensions resulted from drivers failing to maintain an active subscription to the DBS Update Service. Most of the remaining suspensions were due to drivers failing to provide a current medical certificate. One driver was suspended for three days by the Licensing Panel on 18 September 2025.

6.11. In respect of licensed hackney carriage and private hire vehicles, there have been 155 licence suspensions.

- Approximately 89% of these were due to vehicles failing compliance tests, missing test deadlines, or failing to provide valid insurance documentation by the required date.
- The remainder were largely due to vehicles being declared off-road following accidents or mechanical repairs.

6.12. A total of 41 complaints were recorded during this period:

- 22 complaints related to drivers. Most were unsubstantiated; those substantiated were addressed through minor officer-level action. Seven complaints concerned parking issues. While Licensing Officers assist in mediating such matters with operators or proprietors, most are referred to the Planning or Highways Authority, which holds the enforcement powers in these areas.
- 12 complaints related to licensed premises. Some investigations remain ongoing, though at the time of writing, there is no evidence of licensing offences. This is except for one off-licence that was found to be selling alcohol beyond its licence hours. In the circumstances it was considered appropriate to issue a formal warning letter to the licence holder and designated premises supervisor.

6.15 It is considered good practice to provide an overview of such information to Committee Members to ensure they remain informed of enforcement actions, including suspensions and revocations, as well as planned future work within the licensing area.

6.16 This information enables Members to remain fully informed and to support effective decision-making in future licensing matters.