

Item No	Referred from:	Licensing & Regulation Committee
6A	Date:	13 October 2025
	Title of item:	Adoption of a Statement of Licensing Policy Required by Virtue of Section 5 of the Licensing Act 2003
To be considered alongside agenda item:		Referral only

The report considered by Licensing and Regulation Committee at the meeting held on 13 October 2025 can be viewed here: [Agenda for Licensing and Regulation Committee on Monday, 13th October, 2025, 7.30 pm | North Herts Council](#)

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL: That the Statement of Licensing Policy, as amended, be adopted.

REASONS FOR REFERRAL:

- (1) Licensing authorities are required to publish a policy every five years by virtue of section 5 of the Licensing Act 2003 (“the Act”).
- (2) A new policy must be published by 7 January 2026 to comply with this statutory requirement.
- (3) The proposed policy builds on the success of the previous and existing versions of the policy, whilst reflecting legislative changes and the Council’s priorities.
- (4) Responses to the public consultation were limited and raised no significant opposition to any of the proposals.

Audio recording – 1 hour 1 minute 08 seconds

The Licensing and Community Safety Manager presented the report entitled ‘Adoption of a Statement of Licensing Policy Required by Virtue of Section 5 of the Licensing Act 2003’ and advised that:

- A new Licensing Policy was required to be considered by this Committee, before adoption by Full Council.
- The government had launched a consultation on changes to the Licensing Act, which may require a review of this proposed new Policy, but it was not expected that these would be especially onerous changes, as some of the proposals were already covered in the Policy.
- There were no significant changes proposed from the previous Policy, as it was felt that it currently worked well.
- The Council had never lost a licensing appeal and the Policy, as well as training provided, was important in maintaining this.
- A vision for licensing across the district had been included in the Policy, but many other changes were to tidy up the Policy following recent hearings.
- There was clarification on noise nuisance added, confirmation that CCTV was not required in all licensing situations and the conflict between licensing and planning policy had been resolved.

- The Policy continued to promote virtual Sub-Committee hearings as the default position, with the ability to hold in person for specific cases.
- The summarised consultation responses were included at Appendix A, alongside Officer comments, and the full responses to the consultation were included at Appendix B.
- There were no major changes to the Policy following the consultation.
- The proposed Policy was included at Appendix C.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Tim Johnson
- Councillor Ian Albert

In response to questions, the Licensing and Community Safety Manager advised that the reference to the weight applied to the contribution of the Environmental Health officer was to strike a balance between lack of formal evidence and still allowing an expert opinion to be considered. However, it was agreed that the word 'substantial' would fetter the discretion of the Committee and could be amended.

Councillor Amy Allen proposed the recommendations and Councillor Ian Albert seconded.

As part of the debate, Councillor Ruth Brown proposed an amendment to remove the final sentence from paragraph D11.10 of the Policy at Appendix C. This was seconded by Councillor Sean Prendergast.

Councillor Amy Allen confirmed, as proposer, that she would accept the amendment into the substantive motion. This was confirmed by Councillor Ian Albert, as seconder, and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee:

- (1) Considered the responses to the public consultation.
- (2) Supported the proposed Statement of Licensing Policy attached as Appendix C, with an amendment to remove the final sentence from paragraph D11.10.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL: That the Statement of Licensing Policy, as amended, be adopted.

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