

Minutes

of a meeting of the

General Licensing Committee



held on Thursday, 6 February 2025 at
6.00 pm in Meeting Room 1, Abbey
House, Abbey Close, Abingdon,
OX14 3JE

Open to the public, including the press

Present in the meeting room:

Councillors: Jo Robb (Chair), Axel Macdonald, Leigh Rawlins, Anne-Marie Simpson

Officers: Luci Ashbourne (Democratic Services Officer), Laura Driscoll (Licensing Team Leader), Diane Foster (Licensing and Community Safety Manager)

Remote attendance:

Officers: Susie Royce (Broadcasting Officer)

25 Chair's announcements

The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, outlined the procedure to be followed and advised on emergency evacuation arrangements.

26 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Peter Dragonetti, Mike Giles, Ali Gordon-Creed, Sam James-Lawrie and Katharine Keats-Rohan.

27 Minutes

RESOLVED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 18 December 2024 as a correct record and agree that the Chair sign them as such.

28 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

29 Urgent business

There was no urgent business.

30 Public participation

There were no registered speakers.

31 Review of the Street Trading Policy

Officers presented the consultation results on the revised joint street trading policy to the committee, which was to consider approving the revised policy with potential amendments. The consultation received 49 responses, showing broad support for the changes, which mainly clarified existing matters.

A notable proposal suggested extending the restriction on new traders near schools to 8.00am-5.00pm within 200 metres, from the current 8.00am-4.00pm within 100 metres. This proposal, emerging from the consultation, was brought to the committee for a decision.

The proposed implementation date for any approved changes was 1st April, allowing time to update forms, produce guidance, and inform existing consent holders. Members discussed extending the distance from schools and trading hours, with officers confirming the policy applied daily and not just Monday to Friday.

The Chair opened the floor for questions.

Members enquired if there had been complaints about ice cream vans operating too close to schools. Officers confirmed that there had been some complaints, though not regularly. These were primarily from members of the public who were concerned about the proximity of ice cream vans to schools, particularly during busy times when children were arriving or leaving. It was noted that the issues were likely more about parking than the 100-metre rule itself. Officers expressed concern about unintended consequences of extending the restricted area, particularly in urban environments. The committee agreed to continue with the current policy.

Members raised the issue of single-use plastics, expressing concern that the policy wording might be interpreted as requiring the use of glass containers, which could pose health and safety risks. Officers clarified that street traders usually serve soft drinks in cans, and that the policy would not apply to festival sites where alcohol might be sold. They agreed to include guidance on the use of plastic glasses where appropriate to provide clarity on this.

A question was raised about the requirements for street trading consent applications, specifically regarding DBS checks and proof of the right to work in the UK. Officers clarified that these requirements applied only to the consent holder and not to every individual working for them. However, they emphasised the importance of ensuring that the person running the business had undergone the appropriate checks and training and confirmed that the policy prohibits a subcontracting agreement to ensure the applicant is the person on site running the business.

Members enquired about the possibility of applicants applying for a single licence to cover both councils. The officer explained that this was not legally possible as the councils were separate entities.

The committee thanked the officers for their work on the consultation and policy amendments.

A motion, moved and seconded to approve the revised policy and agreed guidance was carried on being put to the vote.

RESOLVED: That the revised street trading policy as set out and amended be approved.

The meeting closed at 6.25pm

Chair

Date