

Public
Key Decision - Yes

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Licensing Act 2003-Statement of Licensing Policy

Meeting/Date: Licensing Committee – 22 October 2025
Council – 17 December 2025

Executive Portfolio: Executive Councillor for Resident Services and
Corporate Performance – Councillor Stephen
Ferguson

Report by: Michelle Bishop – Licensing Manager

Ward(s) affected: All Ward

Executive Summary:

The Council is required to produce a Licensing Act 2003 Statement of Licensing Policy on which it will base its decisions. The production of the document required the Council to undertake a period of public consultation which commenced on 28th July 2025 and ended on 07 September 2025. This report provides the Licensing Committee with a final draft of the document to be approved and recommended to Full Council for adoption.

If approved by the Committee, the final policy will go forward for approval by full Council and adoption by no later than 7th January 2026

The costs of reviewing the statement will be set against the income from the application and annual licence fees received under the Licensing Act 2003 regime.

The draft Statement was considered and endorsed by the Licensing Committee at their meeting on 22nd October 2025 and it was recommended that it should be referred to the Council for approval.

Recommendation(s):

THE COUNCIL IS

RECOMMENDED

- I. To approve and adopt the Council's Licensing Act 2003 Statement of Policy for a 5 year period ending no later than 7th January 2031.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The Licensing Act 2003 (the Act), requires that for each five-year period, the Council must determine its policy on how it will exercise its statutory duties relating to its licensing function and publish a statement of that policy before the beginning of the period. The Statement of Licensing Policy must be kept under review and approved by Full Council.
- 1.2 The current Huntingdonshire District Council policy expires on 6th January 2026, and the Council is required to determine the policy for the period 7th January 2026 to 6th January 2031, having undertaken public consultation and considered any feedback. If the Council fails to do this, then it will be unable to fulfil its licensing duties under the Act. It is vital therefore after conducting a consultation that subsequent approval and adoption of the draft document is undertaken to enable us to meet the statutory timeframe.
- 1.3 The purpose of this report is to invite Members to recommend the approval of the draft document, for approval by full Council.
- 1.4 New content added throughout the document is indicated using bold italics. A change log summarising all additions and revisions is provided in **Appendix A** of this report.

2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY/BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council is the 'Licensing Authority' for the purposes of the Act, having taken on its licensing responsibilities in 2005, when the Act came into effect. The Act requires the Licensing Authority to prepare and publish a 'Statement of Licensing Policy' that it proposes to apply in exercising its functions under the Act. The policy statement must be kept under review and reviewed at least every five years.
- 2.2 The Council is now undertaking a review of its policy. The policy has been subject to public consultation prior to this report being made. 6 comments were received and are attached as **Appendix B**.

The comments made by Public Health have been considered and where relevant have been added into the draft policy.

- 2.3 The current policy, prepared in 2021, reflected the legislation and Government Guidance at that time. Since this date, there have been some minor changes to the legislation and a number of updated versions of the Government Guidance have been issued, the latest being in February 2025.
- 2.4 The policy has therefore been re-drafted and considers the relevant legislative changes and provisions as they now apply to Huntingdonshire District Council. The document is attached as **Appendix C**.

3. OPTIONS CONSIDERED/ANALYSIS

- 3.1 The Council has a statutory duty to adopt and publish a Statement of Licensing Policy before 7th January 2026 in order to fulfil its legal obligations under the Act.

4. KEY IMPACTS / RISKS

- 4.1 Failure to adopt a policy will result in Huntingdonshire District Council being unable to fulfil its statutory duties under the Licensing Act 2003

5. WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN/TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- 5.1 The draft policy and any comments arising from the consultation will be considered by the Licensing Committee and then forwarded to Full Council for final approval on 17th December 2025

6. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN, STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND/OR CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

- 6.1 This Policy plays a vital role in supporting Huntingdonshire District Council's Corporate Plan to 2028, which is centred around three key priorities: improving the quality of life for local people, creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations, and delivering our core work effectively
- 6.2 In line with the Council's commitment to Do, Enable, Influence, this policy promotes collaboration among businesses, residents, and the Council. By fostering this partnership approach, we aim to create a supportive environment where both new and established businesses can thrive responsibly, contributing to the local economy and enriching our nighttime economy.

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 Before determining or revising its policy, legislation requires the licensing authority to consult with bodies prescribed in the Act. These include the police, fire and rescue and persons/bodies representative of local holders of personal and premises licences, club premises certificates and persons/bodies representative of businesses and residents in the area.
- 7.2 The consultation took place between 28th July and 7th September 2025 in accordance with guidelines. Wide consultation was undertaken in accordance the legislation by a variety of means, including our website, social media and direct notification to as many interested parties as possible.
- 7.3 The final policy must comply with the Act and Statutory Guidance. For this reason, it is not always possible to adopt all suggestions put forward, but consideration will be given to all representations and where they cannot be given consideration, reasons will be recorded.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Should the Council fail to have a policy in place by 7th January 2026, then it will be unable to fulfil its licensing duties under the Act, with possible additional financial and legal consequences arising as a result. The Licensing Act sets out key principles of:-

- the prevention of crime and disorder,
- public safety,
- prevention of public nuisance, and.
- the protection of children from harm.

These principles clearly align with our Corporate Priorities, reinforcing the need to maintain the Licensing Act 2003 regime as a continued priority

- 8.2 The Licensing Act 2003, Section 5 places a statutory obligation on the Council to prepare its Statement of Licensing Policy

9. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The cost of implementing the policy is covered from fees income generated under the Licensing Act 2003.

10. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 No other implications are envisaged. The legislation sets out four licensing objectives to be followed and provides a number of checks and balances to protect the local environment and community.

11. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- 11.1 The present Statement of Licensing Policy must be replaced for a further maximum period of five years.

12. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix A – Change Log
Appendix B – Consultation Responses
Appendix C – Draft Statement of Licensing Policy

13. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Revised guidance issued under S.182 of the Licensing Act 2003 February 2025

[Revised guidance issued under section 182 of Licensing Act 2003 - GOV.UK](#)

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