

Briefing Note

Committee name: Licensing Committee

Date: 6 September 2025

Responsible officer: Head of Public Protection

This note provides information to keep Members informed of matters relating to the work of the Cabinet or a committee but where no decisions from Members are needed.

If Members have questions relating to matters shown, they are asked to contact the officer indicated.

This briefing note updates the committee on a range of licensing related issues of significance and note.

Licensing taskforce report and Government response

The licensing taskforce is a joint group between government, industry, police and local government, to make recommendations to improve the Licensing Act 2003 framework. [The taskforce concluded on 16 May 2025](#) and provided government with 10 priority recommendations to consider.

A summary of the recommendations and Government's response

1. National Licensing Policy Framework

The government supports the creation of a National Licensing Policy Framework to improve consistency and transparency across local authorities. It recognises the value of a framework that provides clear national direction while preserving local discretion and intends to consult further on how best to align licensing with broader government priorities.

2. Licence 'Amnesty'

The government agrees that a licence 'amnesty' could help modernise and streamline existing licences. It sees merit in reviewing and removing outdated or disproportionate conditions, particularly those inherited from the original implementation of the Licensing Act 2003 and will explore how best to target premises where conditions no longer reflect current operations.

3. Longer Licensing Terms for Pavement Areas

The government is open to extending the duration of pavement licences to give businesses greater certainty and support long-term planning. It acknowledges the benefits of stability for recurring events and will consider this recommendation as part of wider licensing reforms.

4. Temporary Event Notice (TEN) Limits

The government recognises the need for greater flexibility in the use of temporary event notices. It will review current limits and explore options to make the system more responsive to the needs of operators, while maintaining safeguards for public safety and local communities.

5. Agent of Change Principle

The government supports strengthening the agent of change principle in licensing decisions. It agrees that established venues should be protected from the impact of new developments nearby and will consider how to embed this principle more consistently across licensing and planning systems.

6. Hospitality and Night-Time Economy Zones

The government is interested in exploring the creation of designated hospitality and night-time economy zones. It sees potential in supporting local authorities to develop vibrant, well-managed areas that promote economic growth and cultural activity.

7. Licence Length and Fees for Festivals

The government acknowledges the value of reviewing licence durations and fees for festivals. It recognises the importance of providing certainty for recurring events and supporting long-term investment and will consider this area further in future reforms.

8. Grandfathered Conditions Review

The government agrees that reviewing grandfathered conditions is a timely and necessary step. It supports efforts to ensure that licensing conditions reflect current operational realities and do not unnecessarily constrain businesses.

9. Licensing Data and Transparency

The government supports improving access to licensing data to enhance transparency and accountability. It will explore how better data sharing between authorities and stakeholders can support more effective decision-making and public engagement.

10. Licensing Training and Capacity Building

The government acknowledges the importance of training and capacity building for licensing officers and decision-makers. It will consider how to support local authorities in developing the skills and resources needed to implement licensing policy effectively and consistently.

Primate Licensing

[New regulations](#) and [statutory guidance](#) was issued by the Government for new licensing requirements relating to primates kept in captivity or as pets.

Compliance with the licensing requirements will be fully implemented in April 2026. From this date, the authority will be under a new duty to license and regulate the keeping of primates in the borough.

Officers are currently working to implement the requirements (including forms, licensing procedures, fees, inspections regimes and enforcement). Unfortunately, there has been a long delay by DEFRA in issuing the required statutory guidance.

However, officers expect to be in a position to publish the required information shortly (before September) and to undertake a public awareness campaign to inform the public about of the new licensing requirements.

Regulation of Cosmetic Treatments

The Government recently [announced](#) that it will be implementing a licensing regime for cosmetic treatments. Included in the Government's plans are:

- Only suitably qualified healthcare professionals will be able to deliver high-risk procedures such as Brazilian Butt Lifts.
- Clinics administering fillers and Botox will need to meet strict standards to obtain a licence.
- Kids to be protected from dangerous beauty trends on social media through plans for new age restrictions on treatments
- Robust measures will protect people and save the NHS time and money fixing botched procedures.

The Government confirmed that "Priority will be given to introducing regulations to restrict the highest risk procedures first – such as fillers injected into breasts and genitals."

It confirmed that a public consultation will be published early next year. This will seek views on the range of procedures which should be covered in the new restrictions.

Tabacco & Vapes Bill

This Bill includes provisions for introducing a new regime for "licensing of retail sales and the registration of retailers". The new Act will place a new licensing duty on local licensing authorities to administer and enforce the licensing of retail sales of tobacco, vapes and other products.

There are notable concerns about the impact of the Act amongst local licensing authorities due to the substantial and additional workload a licensing and enforcement regime will place.

Locally there a likely to be several hundred businesses that may require a licence. Officers are aware that there will likely be some form of transitional arrangements that will result in all these businesses submitting licensing applications to the council.

Coupled with this is there will also be a requirement to enforce the new licensing regime.

The Bill is nearing its final stages in the House of Lords and is expected to receive Royal Assent in the coming months. We await further information from Government departments on burdens funding, implementation timescales and guidance.

The concerns about the impact of the Act amongst local licensing authorities is being addressed via the Institute of Licensing back to the relevant Government departments.

Licensing of Support Housing

The Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023 introduces new licensing requirements for supported housing providers in England, aiming to improve standards and protect vulnerable residents.

In February 2025, the Government [consulted](#) on its plans to introduce such a licensing scheme – again to be administered by local authorities. This authority responded to the consultation.

We are currently awaiting further information from the Government on this licensing scheme and the specific requirements and duties that will be placed on this authority.

Members will note that the bulk of this briefing note relates to new or additional licensing duties on the authority in the immediate to medium term. Officers continue to monitor these very closely, mindful of the potential significant impacts these will have on resources within the licensing and wider teams.

We will update the committee on further developments on this as necessary.

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