

Minutes of a meeting of the **COMMITTEE OF THE LICENSING AUTHORITY** held in the Meeting Room 1, Council Offices, Priory Road, Spalding, on Thursday, 22 May 2025 at 6.30 pm.

PRESENT

J Tyrrell (Chairman)
A Harrison (Vice-Chairman)

H J W Bingham
A Casson

N Chapman
M Geaney

J Whitbourn

In Attendance: The Senior Licensing Officer, the Licensing Officer and the Democratic Services Support Officer.

Apologies for absence were received from or on behalf of Councillors A C Beal, M D Booth, J L King, I Sheard, J Le Sage and S-A Slade.

1. MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 10 September 2024.

DECISION:

That the minutes be signed as a correct record.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were none.

3. LICENSING ACT 2003 LICENSING POLICY STATEMENT

The Chairman introduced the Licensing Officer to present the Licensing Act 2003 Draft Statement of Licensing Policy to enable the members to review the Draft Policy in preparation for public consultation.

The Licensing Officer detailed that the report highlighted the proposed revised statement of Licensing Policy for South Holland District Council. The policy was being presented to the committee as part of the Councils statutory duty to carry out a review of the Licensing Policy every 5 years.

The policy set out the process that the council would apply when determining applications under the Licensing Act 2003, this would ensure that the licensing objectives were suitably promoted and upheld. The objectives under the Licensing Act 2003, were:

- The prevention of crime and disorder;
- Public safety
- The prevention of public nuisance
- The protection of children from harm

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The purpose of the policy was to assist applicants in understanding what the authority sought to achieve and to advise on measures that applicants could implement to promote those objectives. The policy also served as a reference document for all decisions made by the Licensing Authority.

The policy would not undermine the rights of any person who wished to apply for a licence, submit representation on an application, or apply for a review of a licence under the Provisions Act. Each individual request would be considered on its own merits.

Whilst licensing law was a key element of controlling certain aggravation along with anti-social behaviour, the policy made it clear that it should not be used as the primary mechanism for regulating instances away from the immediate vicinity of the licensed premises.

Several amendments had been made to the existing policy. Those amendments had been detailed within the body of the document. Some amendments were non-material, including updates of population statistics and the number of licensed premises.

The material amendments were:

- Additions to section 4.3 to provide general information and guidance for applicants and licence holders on measures they may consider adopting, to promote the public safety licensing objective, this included advice on how to protect patrons from drink spiking.
- Incidents of drink spiking were on the increase to an extent that the Home Office had published a national strategy on tackling the issue.
- The policy advises the promotion of.
 - Staff training,
 - Employment of door supervisors/security.
 - Awareness of local taxi providers.
 - Safe spaces for customers.
 - Preventative measures to prevent drugs entering the premises.
 - CCTV.
 - Promoting consumer materials and products such as informative posters, anti-spiking bottle tops, to help mitigate related incidents.
- The policy also provided advice on the action to be taken when a suspected incident had occurred, for example, recording relevant details, contacting emergency services, and securing the spiked drink so it could be analysed by the police.
- In addition to those practices the revised policy encouraged licence holders along with new applicants to promote several established schemes to advocate public safety.

Suggested schemes include:

- Ask for Angela – a non-profit scheme that would provide licensees with the knowledge and tools they require to effectively safeguard customers who felt unsafe or threatened. The customer invokes the implementation of the

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scheme when they “ask for Angela” at the bar. The protections included keeping the customer in a safe place until they could either contact a friend to arrange transport home or contact the police.

- Enrollment in the National Best Bar None awards scheme – an accredited scheme that would assess licensed premises and award those for their commitment to safety, customer service and responsible alcohol management.
- Use of the police backed self-assessment tool - Licensing Security and Vulnerability Initiative, which was designed to help licensed premises provide a safer and more secure environment for their managers, staff, customers and local communities.
- Promoting membership on local retailer led Community Alcohol Partnership boards – which focused on tackling issues of underage drinking within the area.

An addition to paragraph 4.5, was to encourage licence holders and applicants to ensure they and their staff were fully aware of the signs of child exploitation and to notify the relevant authorities if they suspected such activities occurring within their premises.

A new section to the policy had been added relating to Safeguarding. This was detailed in paragraphs 5.7 and 5.8 of the document and offered general advice on promoting the welfare of both children and vulnerable adults when in licensed premises.

- The recommendation was that licence premises carry out risk assessments, and ensure their staff had sufficient knowledge to recognise signs of abuse and neglect and know the measures to take when issues were identified.

Additionally, the policy laid out the general principles that the licensing authority would apply where concerns had led to the review of a premises licence, regardless of whether any convictions had been brought against a licence holder for safeguarding issues.

A new paragraph had been added to the licensing policy document to address the issue of modern-day slavery and provide general advice on why applicants and licence holders should have due regard to the matter.

A new paragraph had been added at 5.9 to address Counter Terrorism. This had been introduced following the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025.

- The legislation, commonly known as Martyn’s Law was planned to improve security and organisational preparedness across the UK.
- The Act would not come into force until 2027 and at this stage the exact implication for venues was unknown, however, certain venues and events would be required to take steps to ensure that they reduce their vulnerability to terror attacks, be prepared for potential attacks, and were ready to safeguard people in the event of any such attack.
- Until further information was distributed on the implementation of Martyn’s Law, the policy provided licensees with links to relevant resources i.e. Protect

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UK website and app and signposted them to the counter terrorism annex of the Statutory Guidance issued under Section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003.

A new section had been added to reflect the Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) that was in force for certain areas of Spalding Town Centre.

- This section, and the associated appendix, provided information for applicants and licensees advising them of the PSPO, the reason why it was in force, and provided suggestive measures they may wish to consider which would promote the reduction of street drinking within the PSPO area.
- When an applicant applied for a licence in the defined area, the Council would expect the applicant to hold a regard for the order and offer appropriate conditions to mitigate any detrimental impact their business operation may have on the licensing objectives.
 - Those conditions included not selling high strength lagers or ciders.
 - Restricting sales of single cans and bottles.
 - Follow good practice, such as staff training and a robust challenge 25 scheme.

Following the committee's consideration of the amendments and approval of the draft policy, the authority was duty bound to carry out a public consultation.

- The Act prescribed several partners that must be consulted with, including a list of mandatory consultees, the details of those consultants was provided at paragraph 2.2.1 of the report.
- It was proposed that the consultation would run for an eight-week period, commencing on 02 June 2025.
 - It was a requirement that any responses to the consultation were given appropriate weight when determining the policy.
 - To meet this requirement, it was proposed to present a schedule of responses to the committee in September.
 - The committee would be able to integrate any amendments into the policy and approve the final draft policy before referral to Council for adoption.

In conclusion:

- The Council had a statutory duty to review, consult on, adopt and publish the statement of licensing policy by January 2026.
- It was recommended that the draft policy be consulted on as required under the provisions of the act.
- Following consultation, the committee would be asked to consider any responses prior to the policy's referral to council for adoption.

The Licensing Officer asked if the members had any questions or comments.

The members responded.

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How was the “Ask Angela” scheme promoted and monitored? Did customers use this incentive?

- Although the Ask Angela Scheme was not compulsory for public houses and clubs, many adopted the scheme and promoted within their establishments with posters. Staff would be trained to act accordingly to deal with any situations that arose.
- It was highlighted that feedback could be sought from the “Ask Angela Scheme” to assess how often it had been used.

It was raised by the members to add a licensing condition to the policy to recommend that a clear line of sight should be maintained on retail store windows, with a limitation on the amount of vinyl coverings used.

- The Licensing Officer responded that an additional consideration would be added to the Statement of Licensing Policy, ensuring that at least 50% of the windows into retail areas should be clear from signage, decoration, or obstruction, providing a clear view inside the premises.
- The licensing Officer added that Lincolnshire Police recommended that all licensees read and adhere to all recommendations.

It was raised that the committee were concerned with the reported increase of spiked drinks in licensed premises.

- The Licensing Officer responded that although the suggested increase of spiked drinks was difficult to monitor, any instance should be reported to the police in the first instance.

Members discussed the potential burden that would be placed on licence holders with the future implementation of the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025. It was noted that the number of current rules, regulations and procedures that were aimed at licensed premises were onerous and difficult to implement and the Act could result in a number of conditions which would require landlords to retrain staff and place extra responsibilities on them whilst unable to increase the basic wage.

- The Licensing Officer, reiterated that many of the new regulations would be implemented for larger size venues, football grounds and concerts and would not directly affect small public houses.

The members raised the question of licensed premises responsible serving of alcohol. Did this regulation include supermarkets and home deliveries?

- The Licensing Officer responded that all licensed premises had a duty of care to its customers.
- It was recommended that shop owners followed correct procedures for training employees and should adopt the Challenge 21 or Challenge 25 policy.
- CCTV should be provided to the police if required.
- The Licensing Officer said she would contact Lincolnshire Police to ascertain their stance on supermarkets selling and delivering large quantities of alcohol, and where the responsibility lay.

DECISION:

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The Committee members agreed that with the inclusion of the recommendation for the reduction in shop frontage vinyls to enable a clear line of sight, they were satisfied with the Licensing Act 2003 Draft Statement of Licensing Policy.

4. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT.

The Chairman requested that if any member of the Committee of the Licensing Authority noted any grammatical or spelling issues within the reports or the minutes, could this be raised with the officer prior to the meeting.

(The meeting ended at 7.35 pm)

(End of minutes)