

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

REPORT OF THE ACTING DIRECTOR OF REGULATION AND ENFORCEMENT TO THE LICENSING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE

20 JUNE 2018
ALL WARDS

LICENSING AUTHORITY POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND DELEGATIONS

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report outlines the policies, procedures and delegations, which have been built up over a number of years in relation to licensing and registration issues, allowing the Licensing Authority to delegate the bulk of the administration associated with the licensing regime to be carried out by Officers.
- 1.2 It also ensures that the Committee itself acts in a manner which is as open and consistent as circumstances allow.
- 1.3 The report consolidates existing policy, procedures and delegations and updates those policies in line with current working practices.
- 1.4 The report also details the process followed in the event of an immediate suspension or revocation of a driver's licence. This is not a new process, but the documentation of an existing system for transparency.
- 1.5 The report proposes alterations to the scheme of delegations in relation to General Licensing matters.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Committee notes the policies approved by City Council:
 - relating to the Gambling Act 2005 and approved in 2016;
 - regarding Sexual Entertainment Venues and approved in 2014;
 - relating to the Licensing Act 2003 and approved in 2015.
- 2.2 That the Committee approves the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy (including delegations) at Appendix 1.
- 2.3 That the Committee approves the General Licensing Policy (including delegations) at Appendix 2.

Contact Officer: Emma Rohomon, Acting Head of Licensing
Telephone: 0121 303 6111
E-mail: emma.rohomon@birmingham.gov.uk

3. Background

- 3.1 The City Council has a number of licensing, regulatory and registration powers and duties and the exercise of these powers and duties is delegated to the Licensing and Public Protection Committee. The granting and issuing of specific licences, permits and registrations is delegated to the Director of Regulation and Enforcement on the understanding that any applications giving rise to concern or difficulty may be referred to the Licensing and Public Protection Committee or its sub-committees for determination where appropriate.
- 3.2 The Licensing Service is responsible for the administration of grants, renewals and transfers as appropriate of hackney carriage and private hire vehicles, drivers and operators licences and for issuing licences under the Licensing Act 2003 and Gambling Act 2005, sex establishment and animal welfare legislation, and issuing permits for charitable collections and massage and special treatments etc. as well as the associated variations, amendments and transfers, which are carried out under policies delegated by your Committee.
- 3.3 The office of the Licensing Service is situated at 1-3 Ashted Lock, Birmingham Science Park, Dartmouth Middleway, Birmingham, B7 4AZ.

4. Licensing and Public Protection Committee

- 4.1 The licensing function of the City Council is disposed of through the processes and procedures of the Licensing and Public Protection Committee, sub-committees and officers by virtue of the Local Government Acts and other relevant statutory provisions.
- 4.2 The Court of Appeal stated in the “Hope and Glory” case (2011) that the licensing function of the licensing authority is an administrative function, by contrast with the function of the magistrates, which is a judicial function. The Court of Appeal said this:

“The licensing authority has a duty, in accordance with the rule of law, to behave fairly in the decision-making procedure, but the decision itself is not a judicial or quasi-judicial act. It is the exercise of power delegated by the people as a whole to decide what the public interest requires.”

This means that it must act in accordance with the two rules of natural justice. These are firstly that everyone has a right to be heard and secondly the rule against bias.

- 4.3 The right to be heard requires that a person directly affected by the matter under consideration must be given a fair opportunity both to state his/her case and to know of and to respond to any objections.

- 4.4 The rule against bias prohibits members participating in any decision if they have a financial or other interest in the outcome. Members will be familiar with this requirement from their general duties as Councillors.
- 4.5 Further guidance on the determination of matters concerning licensing appears at Annexe 1.
- 4.6 In September 2016 Members of the Licensing and Public Protection Committee agreed a Code of Conduct for its members, when sitting as the Licensing Committee. A copy of this code is attached at Annexe 2.
- 4.7 The provisions as set out in the appendices to this report summarise your Committee's policies in respect of the activities it licences.

5. General Licensing – Delegations to Sub-Committees

- 5.1 It is proposed that some of the decisions currently assigned to full committee be delegated to sub-committee for consideration. These are issues relating to sex establishments and charitable collections. The amendments are identified within the
- 5.2 Delegating these matters to sub-committee brings them in line with other legislative regimes such as the Licensing Act 2003 and Gambling Act 2005.
- 5.3 The move to sub-committees will enable much greater flexibility for both officers and applicants in terms of scheduling matters for determination, and will enable applications to be dealt with in a more efficient and timely manner.

6. Consultation

- 6.1 This report seeks to reproduce in one document a number of policies which have been implemented over a number of years. It does not seek to introduce any new policies, nor revise any existing policies.

7. Implications for Resources

- 7.1 It is the responsibility of the Committee Chairman and the Director of Regulation and Enforcement to ensure the services provided by the Committee are contained within the approved budget.
- 7.2 The proposals to delegate certain decisions to sub-committees will enable applications to be dealt with in a more expedient manner and will reduce the administrative burden.

8. Implications for Policy Priorities

8.1 The issues addressed in this report relate to the City Council priorities associated with creating a cleaner, greener and safer city and providing excellent services.

9. Public Sector Equality Duty

9.1 This report seeks to reproduce in one document a number of policies which have been implemented over a number of years. It does not seek to introduce any new policies, nor revise any existing policies. Therefore, no new equality analyses have been produced.

ACTING DIRECTOR OF REGULATION AND ENFORCEMENT

Background Papers: nil

APPENDIX 1

HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING	
Policy Document	
<p>This document details the policies of the Licensing and Public Protection Committee applicable to Hackney Carriage and Private Hire.</p> <p>Policies are codified for ease of reference, and legislative requirements are also cited for completeness and clarity.</p>	
<p>The legislation impacting on hackney carriage and private hire vehicles is the Town Police Clauses Act 1847, Birmingham City Council Hackney Carriage Byelaws 2008, the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, Transport Act 1985, and the Equalities Act 2010.</p>	<p>TPCA 1847, LGMPA 76, TA 85, EA 2010</p>
<p>Although both hackney carriages and private hire vehicles are licensed to carry passengers, there is a distinct difference in the way vehicles can be made available for hire.</p>	<p>TPCA s45</p>
<p>Hackney carriages (“black cabs”) are the only vehicles licensed to ply for hire, which means that they may stand on taxi ranks, respond to a flag down in the street, and are generally available for immediate hiring.</p>	<p>TPCA s45</p>
<p>Private hire vehicles must be pre-booked in advance, through a licensed private hire operator and may not use taxi ranks, respond to a flag down in the street, or be offered for immediate hiring.</p>	<p>TPCA s45</p>
<p>Hackney carriage vehicles must be fitted with a taximeter which calculates the fare according to time and distance travelled.</p>	<p>TPCA s68</p>
<p>The meter is tested and sealed to ensure accuracy and compliance with the fare structure agreed by the Licensing and Public Protection Committee.</p>	<p>(byelaw 6)</p>
<p>The current table of fares must be displayed in the vehicle.</p>	<p>TPCA s68 (byelaw 10)</p>
<p>There is no power for the licensing authority to control the fares charged for private hire journeys, the fare structure for each company being set by the licensed operator.</p>	
<p>Conditions of licence require the operator’s table of fares to be displayed inside each private hire vehicle.</p>	<p>Conditions (Vehicle 23)</p>
<p>Although both hackney carriages and private hire vehicles are commonly referred to as taxis, the word “taxi” has a statutory definition, by virtue of the Transport Act 1985, and may only be applied to a licensed hackney carriage.</p>	<p>TA 1985 s13</p>
<p>For this reason Birmingham’s licensing conditions prevent private hire operators, vehicles or drivers from using the words “taxi” or “cab” in relation to their business.</p>	<p>Conditions (Operator 21)</p>
<p>The hackney carriage fleet is made up exclusively of purpose-built cabs, all of which are equipped for wheelchair accessibility.</p>	<p>Policy HCV1</p>
<p>At present there is a moratorium on the issue of new hackney carriage vehicle licences which was agreed by the former Licensing Committee in September 2008. This moratorium was reviewed in September 2010 and again in September 2014 whereupon it was extended for a further three years. The Committee has the authority to revert to the previous arrangements, whereby no limits were imposed, if that is considered appropriate. Officers are presently in the process of procuring a further survey for 2017.</p>	<p>Policy HCV2</p>

In addition to the requirements for an annual vehicle inspection and meter test, vehicle owners must also produce insurance for the vehicle, covering its use for public or private hire as appropriate before a licence can be issued. Further, the insurance for licensed vehicles must be maintained continuously throughout the duration of the licence.	Policy Veh1
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Licensing Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers	
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Individuals must satisfy the authority that they are fit and proper to be licensed drivers.	LGMPA 76 s51
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<p>The following application process is designed to ensure services delivered within the City are of a good standard and is subject to the appropriate fees being paid:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • application received • entitlement to drive in the UK checked • entitlement to work in the UK checked • knowledge test • criminal record check • medical • driving test • disability and safeguarding awareness course ('The awareness course') • licence fee paid • licence issued • (It may be necessary for an application to be referred to Committee at any stage of this process.) 	
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Application Received:	
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The application form will be checked and details entered onto the Licensing Service computer system.	
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Entitlement to drive in the UK Checked:	
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An EU or EEA licence is acceptable as long as the counterpart licence issued by DVLA (for EU and EEA drivers) accompanies it. However, vocational drivers may not drive indefinitely on an EU or EEA licence and must produce a United Kingdom DVLA driving licence if they have been resident in the UK for five years or more. An applicant for a hackney carriage or private hire driver's licence must have held a full DVLA driver's licence for at least two years.	Policy DVLA1
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Entitlement to work in the UK checked	
The Immigration Act 2016 (the 2016 Act) amended existing licensing regimes in the UK to seek to prevent illegal working in the private hire vehicle (PHV) and taxi sector. With effect from 1 December 2016, the provisions in the 2016 Act prohibit any licensing authorities across the UK from issuing to anyone who is disqualified by reason of their immigration status. This duty is discharged by conducting immigration checks. Birmingham City Council has been checking a new applicant's right to live and work in the UK since 2009, so the impact of this new legislation has been minimal.	IMMIGRATION ACT 2016
Knowledge Tests	
Knowledge folders are prepared annually for hackney carriage licences and should remain current for three years from the date of first issue (in exceptional circumstances it may become necessary to amend this duration).	Policy KT1
An applicant may take the test associated with a knowledge folder at any time after issue, up to and including the expiry date subject to test appointment availability.	Policy KT2
Candidates failing to attend or making a third test cancellation without an adequate and evidenced reason should be required to wait twelve months before being allowed to take the test.	Policy KT3
Candidates absent or cancelling, within five clear working days, without an adequate and evidenced reason will forfeit their test fees.	Policy KT4
Knowledge folders contain a combination of legal, licence condition, route and two point location questions applicable to the licence type. Candidates must identify and memorise the answers to those questions and answer a selection of questions as detailed below.	Policy KT5
Knowledge Test - Hackney Carriage	
The hackney carriage knowledge test is conducted in-house and under normal test conditions (no communication with another person except the examiner, no reference to any material during the test except the test paper).	PolicyHCKT1
The test must be completed within two hours if conducted verbally, and three hours if written. (If a candidate wishes to take a written knowledge test, they must also complete the verbal communications test (VCT).)	PolicyHCKT2
The test consists of 106 questions (6 legal, 80 two-point locations and 20 routes) selected at random from the relevant knowledge folder.	PolicyHCKT3
All six legal questions must be answered fully and correctly.	PolicyHCKT4
The applicant must answer 90% of the remaining routes and two point location questions correctly in order to pass the test.	PolicyHCKT5
The applicant must pass this test to progress their application and is allowed three attempts.	PolicyHCKT6
The application process is terminated if the applicant fails the third test. The applicant can re-apply after a period of twelve months from the date of the last failed knowledge test.	PolicyHCKT7

Knowledge Test Private Hire	
The private hire knowledge test is conducted in-house and under normal test conditions (no communication with another person except the examiner, no reference to any material during the test except the test paper and A to Z).	Policy PHKT1
The test is intended to check basic English and communication skills and understanding of Law and licence conditions applicable to a private hire driver. The test does not require any geographical knowledge. The test consists of an A to Z based navigation test, twenty questions on The Law, conditions of licence and customer service and a further four questions about plying for hire.	Policy PHKT2
The test must be completed within 25 minutes and must be taken verbally.	Policy PHKT3
There are twenty questions forming the main part of the test, These are divided into three sections, The Law, conditions of licence and customer service. A candidate must attain a minimum 80% pass mark requiring a candidate to score 16 out of a possible 20, However, no more than two wrong answers are allowed for any single section and a candidate giving three wrong answers in a single section will fail the test outright.	Policy PHKT4
The A to Z based navigation exercise must be answered correctly. Failure to do so is an outright failure of the test.	Policy PHKT5
The four plying for hire questions must be answered correctly. Failure to do so is an outright failure of the test.	Policy PHKT6
An applicant is allowed three attempts at a test.	Policy PHKT7
The application process is terminated if the applicant fails the third test. The applicant can re-apply after a period of twelve months from the date of the last failed knowledge test.	Policy PHKT8
Criminal Record Check	
All applicants and drivers are required to undertake an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. Hackney carriage and private hire drivers are exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 by virtue of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exemptions) (Amendment) Order 2002 and convictions are, therefore, never spent.	PolicyDBS1
On initial application, and every three years thereafter, where a licence is granted a driver will be subject to a criminal record check facilitated by the DBS.	PolicyDBS2
Where the DBS check reveals cautions or convictions relating to drugs, dishonesty, violence, or offences of a sexual nature, or reveals any information giving cause for concern, the applicant, or licensed driver will be referred to the Licensing Sub-Committee where the individual's fitness to hold a licence will be considered, unless those matters have already been taken into consideration and passed by Committee.	PolicyDBS3
All new applicants who have been resident abroad as adults must produce evidence of good conduct in that country or the equivalent of a DBS disclosure before their application can be considered. Any matters revealed will be dealt with in the same way as any revealed by the DBS check.	PolicyDBS4
An applicant who has fled an oppressive regime or has other reasonable grounds to believe that obtaining such documentation would be impossible or dangerous may apply to the Licensing Sub-Committee for an exemption and should support that application with a Statutory Declaration and a verifiable character reference from an individual employed in a Prominent 'Regulated Occupation'. Further details in this respect are available on request.	PolicyDBS5
Drivers' licences are currently renewed at the choice of the licensee for one, two or three years, to coincide with the DBS check.	

On renewal, applicants are required to show their current DVLA driving licence for any possible endorsements. This is done by producing their (valid) photocard AND a check code issued by DVLA. This can be obtained at https://www.gov.uk/view-driving-licence	Policy DVLA1
Where a DVLA driving licence check reveals matters or information that gives cause for concern the application can be referred to the Licensing Sub Committee for determination (unless previously considered and passed by Committee).	Policy DVLA2
Medical	
All applicants for the grant of a driver's licence are required to undertake and pass a Group II medical examination for vocational drivers before a licence can be issued. The medical is conducted at Birmingham City Council's Occupational Health Service.	Policy Med1
Once licensed, drivers remain subject to further medical checks as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drivers aged 45 and under - every 5 years • Drivers between 45 and 64 - every 3 years • Drivers 65+ - every year. (unless otherwise specified by Occupational Health)	Policy Med2
Driving Test	
Qualified examiners based within the City Council's Driver Training Service conduct the driving test.	Policy DT1
The applicant must pass the test in order to progress their application and is allowed three attempts.	Policy DT2
The application process is terminated if the applicant fails the third test.	Policy DT3
The applicant is eligible to re-apply after a period of twelve months from the date of the last driving test.	Policy DT4
Disability and Safeguarding Awareness Training	
All new applicants for the grant of a driver's licence must undergo the Birmingham City Council approved awareness training. The course is mandatory and subject to a fee, payable by the applicant.	Policy AT1
Fee Paid and Licence Issued	
An application will not be considered complete until such time as all fees have been paid. A licence is issued with attached conditions and the licensee is considered to have accepted those conditions unless appealed to Magistrate's Court within 21 days of issue, or granted exemption /alternative by a Licensing Sub-Committee.	LGMPA 76 s53
Whilst an application for the grant of a licence is pending the applicant will undertake such tests and checks as the Licensing and Public Protection Committee deem appropriate and this may include new tests introduced whilst the application is in progress.	Policy APP2
An incomplete application on which there has been no activity for a period of twelve months or more, will be deemed abandoned and treated as withdrawn. Where an applicant returns to the Licensing Service to pursue an application deemed abandoned they will be required to submit new forms and undertake all tests with the exception of the awareness course if already taken.	Policy APP3
Driver Licence- Renewal	
A driver's licence is eligible for renewal from a date ten weeks prior to the expiry of the licence. The renewal of a licence will be subject to the policies relating to medicals, DBS checks, outstanding enforcement issues, and DVLA licence checks. An expired driver's licence may be renewed up to one calendar month after the expiry date.	Policy DREN1

Late renewal	
The period of one month after the licence has expired is referred to as the “late renewal period” and any renewal application submitted within the late renewal period will attract the fee associated with the grant of a licence. Any application submitted more than one month after expiry will be considered a new application and will be required to include all tests and checks applicable to a new application. Where there are exceptional circumstances which may warrant an exemption from that requirement, Officers may refer the matter to the Licensing Sub Committee for determination or to agree a later renewal.	Policy DREN2
Multiple Driver Licence Types	
If a driver already holds one type of licence and applies for another type of licence they must undergo all the relevant tests that were either not applicable or not in force at the time the first licence was granted.	Policy MultiBadge 1
In any case where a medical or DBS check on the original licence is more than 12 months old, an applicant will be required to undertake another, the new check becoming current for both licences.	Policy MultiBadge 2
Driving test and Disability Awareness course passes can be carried over to the new application.	Policy MultiBadge 3
Knowledge test passes will not be carried over or exempted except where agreed by Committee.	Policy MultiBadge 4
Any person may request their application be referred to the Licensing Sub Committee for determination; however, the Head of Licensing or their nominated deputies, in consultation with the Chair of the Licensing and Public Protection Committee, may refuse such a request where the request is considered to be frivolous, vexatious or repetitious.	Policy- SubRefusal
Lost or Stolen Driver Licence (Badge)	
In the event a badge is lost or stolen this information must be reported to the Licensing office within three working days (not including Saturday and Sunday).	Policy LossBadge1
If the badge has been stolen the Police must be informed and a Police report number obtained.	Policy LossBadge2
If the badge has been lost a declaration to this effect must be made to the Licensing Offices.	Policy LossBadge3
A replacement badge will be issued on payment of a fee and production of a current DVLA driving licence.	Policy LossBadge4
A person may not legally work as a hackney carriage or private hire driver without being in possession of a current badge.	LGMPA 76 s54(2)(a)

Licensing Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles	
The Law states no-one can drive a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle licensed by Birmingham City Council unless they are licensed to do so i.e. they hold a current valid hackney carriage or private hire driver's licence, as appropriate, issued by Birmingham City Council.	LGMPA 76 s46
Insurance	
Vehicle proprietors must produce current, valid, insurance covering the use of the vehicle for public or private hire as applicable, before a licence can be issued.	LGMPA 76 s48(1)(b)
Transfer of vehicle licence	
Transfer of interest in a licence shall be completed only when the old identity plate(s) and licence are returned to the Licensing Office.	Policy Transfer1
If this cannot be done, the previous owner must sign a declaration informing the Licensing Office of the whereabouts of the vehicle identity plates or the reason the identity plates cannot be produced. This declaration will be used to assist in progressing with the transfer application.	Policy Transfer2
The transfer fee will be charged where interest in a vehicle licence is transferred to another proprietor. Where a renewal or replacement is conducted simultaneously both fees will be due.	Policy Transfer3
Vehicle Replacement	
The replacement fee will be charged when a vehicle is replaced during the life of a licence. Where a renewal or transfer is conducted simultaneously both fees will be due. If transfer, replacement and renewal transactions are conducted simultaneously the replacement fee will be waived.	Policy REP1
Lost or Stolen Vehicle Licence (Plate)	
In the event a vehicle identity plate is stolen the Police must be informed and a Police report number obtained. If the identity plate is lost a signed declaration must be made to this effect. This information must be reported to the Licensing Office within three working days. A replacement plate will be issued on payment of a fee and production of a valid insurance document and DVLA driving licence.	Policy LossPlate1
Licensing a vehicle registered to another keeper:	
Where an applicant for a vehicle licence provides a registration document indicating that the registered keeper is another individual, or legal entity, the applicant will be required to provide a letter from the registered keeper indicating that use of the vehicle as a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle by the applicant, is done with their full knowledge and consent.	Policy Keeper1
Where an applicant for a vehicle licence provides a registration document indicating that the registered keeper is another individual, or legal entity, the applicant will be required to provide a letter from the insurers indicating that they are aware of the arrangement and content to provide appropriate insurance cover in those circumstances.	Policy Keeper2

Expired Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence	
When a hackney carriage vehicle licence has expired and more than one calendar month has elapsed any attempt to re-licence the vehicle must be referred to the Licensing Sub Committee for determination.	Policy ExpHack1
Approved Vehicle Types – Hackney Carriage	
The Licensing Authority has set down a series of specifications that a vehicle will need to comply with prior to it being accepted as a licensed vehicle:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vehicles specifically adapted for wheelchair carriage which meet the M1 European standard. 	Policy HCVSpec1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any M1 vehicle adapted to be a hackney carriage where the adaptations are approved by the Vehicle Certification Agency (VCA) and the adaptations have VCA certification to European Whole Vehicle Type Approval (EWWTA) or G/B/ Low Volume (Small Series) Type Approval. 	Policy HCVSpec2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The front seat of a hackney carriage vehicle will not be included in the seating capacity indicated on the vehicle licence. 	Policy HCVSpec3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any MPV or van derived M1 class vehicle to be licensed as a hackney carriage must be black in colour and must not be fitted with full-body advertising livery. 	Policy HCVSpec4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purpose built Hackney Carriage vehicles cannot be licensed for the purposes of private hire. 	LGMPA 76 s48(1)(a)(ii)
Approved Vehicle Types – Private Hire	
The private hire licensing provisions apply to a variety of vehicles ranging from four-door saloon vehicles to people carriers, however, those vehicles should be:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> built to M1 specification. 	Policy PHVSpec1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> have a minimum engine size of 1600cc (1500cc for second-generation Toyota Prius.) 	Policy PHVSpec2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> be capable of carrying a minimum of four average sized adults in comfort. 	Policy PHVSpec3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All vehicles must be right hand drive and must not have fewer than four road wheels. 	Policy PHVSpec4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cars must have a minimum of four doors giving adequate access to and egress from the vehicle. The design of the car can be saloon, hatchback or estate. 	Policy PHVSpec5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Larger vehicles (MPV, minibus, or people mover types) must have sufficient doors of sufficient size to allow passengers to get in and out quickly and safely. 	Policy PHVSpec6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where exit from the rear seats in vehicles equipped with three rows of seats requires operation of a tip seat mechanism, passengers must be able to exit from either side of the vehicle and the tip seats at either end of the middle row must be capable of independent operation. 	Policy PHVSpec7

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where a vehicle is equipped with pop-up, or auxiliary seats intended for occasional use only, those seats must not be included in the licensed capacity of the vehicle. 	Policy PHVSpec8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where the vehicle configuration requires a whole bench seat to slide and/or tip for access/egress to the rear seats, the rear seats should not be included in the seating capacity and should be removed to avoid pressure from passengers to carry numbers in excess of the licensed capacity. 	Policy PHVSpec9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All vehicles must have a wheelbase (when measured from the centre of the front wheel to the centre of the rear wheel) of at least 2540mm (100 inches). 	Policy PHVSpec10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cars must have a back seat width (when measured in a continuous line from edge to edge) of at least 1220mm (48 inches). 	Policy PHVSpec11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Larger capacity vehicles (MPV, minibus, or people mover types) which are fitted with individual seats, or which do not have full width bench seats, must have a minimum 407mm (16 inches) of seat space per passenger across the width of the seat. 	Policy PHVSpec12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seat belts must be provided for all passengers according to the licensed capacity of the vehicle. 	Policy PHVSpec13
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vehicles equipped with soft tops, removable hard tops and people carriers (MPV types) described as black on the log book, will not be licensed for the purpose of private hire. 	Policy PHVSpec14
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vehicles fitted with darker tints and privacy glass can be licensed where the glass is to factory standard and vehicles are presented to licensing in an unmodified state, vehicles fitted with films, foils, or any other aftermarket tinting will be refused a licence, unless the tinting is removed and the vehicle returned to the manufacturer's standard specification. 	Policy PHVSpec15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vehicles identified as stretched limousines, or novelty vehicles will be considered outside the scope of this definition, in line with current practice. 	Policy PHVSpec16
Transfer of Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence	
A proprietor of a hackney carriage vehicle may replace, swap or change their vehicle with another licensed hackney carriage vehicle of any age.	Policy HCVTran1
In this policy it is understood that the licence and its related vehicle will remain together and not be separated.	Policy HCVTran2
Transfer of Private Hire Vehicle Licence	
Private hire vehicle licences may only be transferred to a vehicle that is less than 8 years old.	Policy PHVTran1
The licence to be transferred into the proprietor's name must relate to a vehicle, that is less than 8 years old. Failure to comply with this policy will result in the private hire vehicle licence being transferred for the duration of the life of the licence; however, the Council will refuse to renew that licence when it expires.	Policy PHVTran2

Replacement of Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence	
A hackney carriage vehicle licence may only be transferred to another vehicle (that is to say separated from its related vehicle and moved to another vehicle) that is younger/newer than the age of the vehicle currently licensed.	Policy HCVRRep1
Replacement of Private Hire Vehicle Licence	
A licensed private hire vehicle can only be replaced, swapped or changed with a vehicle that is less than 8 years old.	Policy PHVRep1
Failure to comply with this policy will result in the vehicle or the private hire vehicle licence being transferred for the duration of the life of the licence, however, the Licensing Service will then refuse to renew this.	Policy PHVRep2
Age Limit – Hackney Carriage Vehicles	
No vehicle over the age of 14 years will be granted a licence.	Policy HCVAge1
No vehicle over the age of 14 years will have its licence renewed unless the vehicle is able to pass the Supplementary Test Plus, in which case the vehicle licence may be renewed on a year by year basis, subject to passing the Supplementary Test Plus on each occasion.	Policy HCVAge2
Age Limit - Private Hire Vehicles	
No vehicle over the age of 8 years will be granted a licence.	Policy PHVAge1
No vehicle over the age of 8 years will have its licence renewed unless the vehicle is able to pass the Supplementary Test Plus, in which case the vehicle licence may be renewed on a year by year basis, subject to passing the Supplementary Test Plus on each occasion.	Policy PHVAge2
Vehicle Testing – ALL Vehicles	
All vehicles are subject to a standard MOT test to determine its mechanical fitness and a more stringent supplementary test dealing with the vehicle's condition, appearance and suitability prior to licensing.	LGMPA 76 s48
An MOT certificate presented for the purpose of replacement of a vehicle or the renewal or granting of a licence must be less than ten weeks old at the time of the transaction, that time period to be calculated from the date of inspection.	Policy Veh2
The law provides that a private hire vehicle cannot, in its type, design or identification, lead anyone to believe that it is a hackney carriage.	LGMPA 76 s48(1)(a)(ii)
Private Hire Operators	
All Birmingham licensed operators must operate from premises within the City boundaries.	LGMPA 76 S46
Operators' fares are not regulated but each operator is required to ensure that their particular charges are displayed or available on request to each person travelling in a private hire vehicle.	Conditions (Vehicle 23)
An applicant for the grant of or renewal of an operator's licence will be asked to disclose details of any previous convictions and also an applicant for the grant of an operator's licence will be asked for details of any previous experience of working within the private hire industry including any other licences held, either currently or previously and whether any such licence has ever been revoked or suspended for any reason..	Policy Op1
Planning permission must be obtained for the premises where the operation is to be based, unless the applicant can provide confirmation from the Planning Department that such permission is not required.	Policy Op2

The records to be maintained include records of all journeys undertaken, and information and documentation relating to the vehicles and drivers operated, together with their "call signs".	LGMPA 76 s56
The fee payable for an operator's licence reflects the structure of the operation and the number of drivers and vehicles managed, in that it is set according to the officer time afforded to the licence. This fee is payable at the time the application is submitted.	Policy Op3
Renewal applications for operator licences must be submitted to the Licensing Office at least 14 days before expiry, fully completed and with all necessary accompanying paperwork.	Policy Op4
Failure to comply with this requirement may prevent a new licence from being issued on or before the expiry of the old licence.	Policy Op5
Committee Policies Relating to Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers	
An applicant for a hackney carriage or private hire driver's licence must have held a full DVLA driver's licence for at least two continuous years.	Policy Dri1
Disqualification from Driving	
The Licensing Sub Committee will not be disposed to grant new applications or applications for renewal of hackney carriage or private hire driver's licences from persons who have been disqualified from driving until such time that such applicants have gained sufficient recent driving experience and become re-acquainted with driving conditions following reinstatement of DVLA licences; further that the period of further driving experience should be at least equivalent to the period of disqualification. For example, a driving disqualification of six months will mean a rehabilitation period of six months from the date the DVLA licence is reinstated. However, a rehabilitation period may be reduced at the discretion of the Committee where an applicant has successfully completed an approved driving course as part of the sentence.	Policy Dri2
Driving Offences Associated with Drink or Drugs	
The Licensing Sub Committee will not be disposed to grant or renew applications for licences to drive hackney carriage or private hire vehicles where the applicant has been convicted of a driving offence associated with drink or drugs under the Road Traffic Acts for the following periods, following reinstatement of the DVLA driving licence In the case of disqualification a minimum of two years if the period of disqualification is longer Policy Dri2 will apply. two years where there is no disqualification.	Policy Dri3

Plying For Hire: First and Any Subsequent Offences	
Drivers convicted of a first offence of plying for hire, and driving with no insurance should be revoked.	Policy Dri4
Drivers convicted only of plying for hire should be subject to suspension for a minimum period of six months for the first offence.	Policy Dri5
For any subsequent offence, consideration should be given to the ultimate penalty of revocation of a drivers licence.	Policy Dri6
Refusal of Applicants with a Conviction for any Sexual Offence	
An applicant with a conviction for any sexual offence should normally be refused.	Policy Dri6
An Applicant Refused or Revoked by another Authority	
Where an applicant has had a licence refused or revoked by another local authority, that application shall be referred to and determined by the Licensing Sub-Committee.	Policy Dri7
Further Applications from Applicants or Drivers Refused or Revoked	
An application for the grant of a hackney carriage or private hire driver's licence must be referred to the Licensing Sub-Committee for determination under any of the following circumstances:	Policy Dri8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • application previously refused; 	Policy Dri9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • licence previously revoked or refused upon renewal; 	Policy Dri10
Further, an application will not be considered within 12 months of the date of refusal, revocation or unsuccessful appeal, whichever is the later.	Policy Dri11
Refusal of Applicants with a Conviction for a Drugs Related Offence	
An applicant with a conviction for a drug-related offence should normally be refused.	Policy Dri12
Failure of Three or More Knowledge Tests per Application	
Where an applicant has failed three knowledge of the city tests in connection with an application for a hackney carriage or private hire driver's licence, that application will be refused on the grounds that the person is not considered to be a fit and proper person to hold such a licence.	Policy KT6
An applicant may re-submit an application for the grant of a driver's licence one year after the date of the third knowledge test. This application will be treated as a new application and the applicant must undertake and pass the appropriate tests.	Policy KT7
Failure of Three Driving Tests per Application	
Where an applicant has failed three driving tests in connection with an application for a driver's licence that application will be refused on the grounds that the applicant is not considered to be a fit and proper person to hold such a licence.	Policy DT3
An applicant may re-submit an application for the grant of a driver's licence one year after the date of the third driving test, however, should a further failure occur this application will be presented to the Licensing Sub Committee for determination.	Policy DT4

Working Dogs	
<p>Since March 2001 licensed hackney carriage and private hire drivers in England have been under a duty to carry guide, hearing and other prescribed assistance dogs in their vehicles without additional charge. Drivers can apply for an exemption from the duty on medical grounds if they have a condition that is aggravated by contact with dogs to allow them to continue in the trade. Drivers must comply with the requirements of the exemption.</p>	EA 2010 s168-171
Wheelchair Accessibility	
<p>licensed hackney carriage and private hire drivers must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • transport wheelchair users in their wheelchair • provide passengers in wheelchairs with appropriate assistance • charge wheelchair users the same as non-wheelchair users 	
Suspension, Revocation and Refusal to Renew Licences	
<p>A hackney carriage or private hire vehicle licence may be subject to suspension, revocation or refusal, or renewal, by the Licensing Sub- Committee, on the following grounds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The vehicle is unfit for use as a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle. • Any offence or non-conformity with the legislative provisions by either the operator or the driver. • Any other reasonable cause. 	
<p>A hackney carriage or private hire driver's licence may be suspended, revoked or refused on renewal by the Committee on the following grounds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since the grant of the licence the driver has been cautioned or convicted of an offence involving drugs, dishonesty, indecency or violence. • Any offence or non-compliance with the legislative provisions by the driver. • Any other reasonable cause. 	LGMPA 76 s61
<p>In all the above cases, and where applicants for the grant of a licence have been refused, there is a right of appeal against the Committee's decision to the Magistrates' Court. The outcome of all appeals is reported to the Licensing and Public Protection Committee on a regular basis.</p>	LGMPA 76 s61-63

Immediate Action on the grounds of Public Safety:

Where information is received regarding a licensed driver which indicates there may be an immediate risk to public safety, that information will be shared with the Chair of the Licensing and Public Protection Committee to consider the immediate revocation of the driver's licence. Such action to be reported to the next available Licensing and Public Protection Committee as part of the Actions Taken by the Chair between Meetings report.

Any decision to revoke will be communicated to the driver as soon as is reasonably practicable by way of a letter, ordinarily hand delivered by Enforcement Officer(s).

It is not possible to reinstate a licence after revocation without a successful appeal. In the event that the allegations are found to be completely unproven, i.e. a case of mistaken identity or other verified information which exonerates the driver completely, the matter will be put to the Chair to consider a 'fast-track' grant application, in order to grant a 'new' licence, for the duration of the remainder of the previous licence, and negating the requirement for additional tests etc. This negates the need for a costly and time-consuming appeal, and enables the driver to be back on the road in the shortest possible time. Matters which are less definitive will be referred to a sub-committee for consideration, notwithstanding the driver's right to appeal to the courts.

Document	Link	Notes
Hackney Carriage Byelaws	 HC Byelaws	Revised 2010 Currently under review
Private Hire Driver Conditions	 Private Hire Driver Conditions	Revised 2010 (2017 revision agreed –pending implementation date)
Hackney Carriage Vehicle Conditions		
Private Hire Vehicle Conditions	 Private Hire Vehicle Conditions	Revised 2010 (2017 revision agreed –pending implementation date)
Private Hire Operator Conditions	 Private Hire Operator Conditions	Revised 2010 (2017 revision agreed –pending implementation date)

SCHEME OF DELEGATIONS (HCPH)

Hackney Carriage / Private Hire	Decision to be made by:		
Matter to be dealt with:	Full Committee	Sub-Committee	Officers (Senior Licensing Officer or above)
Setting of Fees and charges	All Cases		
Approval of Hackney Carriage Fares	All Cases		
Agree standard conditions i.e. vehicle / driver/operator etc.	All Cases	Requests for exemption may be considered by sub committee	
When a hackney carriage vehicle licence has expired and more than one calendar month has elapsed		any attempt to re-licence the vehicle	
AUTHORITY TO SUSPEND, REVOKE OR REFUSE TO RENEW OR REFUSE TO GRANT ANY LICENCE OR APPLICATION:			
in the case of a licensed vehicle being found to be in contravention of legislation,			Officers delegated this authority are those authorised for the purpose of the LGMPA 76 and TPCA 1847
if the officer is not satisfied as to the fitness of the vehicle, or			Officers delegated this authority are those authorised for the purpose of the LGMPA 76 and TPCA 1847
if the officer is not satisfied as to the accuracy of the taximeter, or			Officers delegated this authority are those authorised for the purpose of the LGMPA 76 and TPCA 1847
if the vehicle does not have adequate insurance cover, or			Officers delegated this authority are those authorised for the purpose of the LGMPA 76 and TPCA 1847
if the vehicle is unroadworthy or in a dangerous condition.			Officers delegated this authority are those authorised for the purpose of the LGMPA 76 and TPCA 1847
if an officer is not satisfied as to the fitness of a driver following a medical report from the Occupational Health Service.			Officers delegated this authority are those authorised for the purpose of the LGMPA 76 and TPCA 1847

Hackney Carriage / Private Hire	Decision to be made by:		
Matter to be dealt with:	Full Committee	Sub-Committee	Officers (Senior Licensing Officer or above)
Where the applicant has 11 points on their DVLA licence or a conviction or caution for an offence that does not fall within the category of drugs, violence, dishonesty or of a sexual nature.			All Cases
Where an applicant has cautions over two years old, such application will be granted.			All Cases
Where an applicant has a conviction(s) for dishonesty, whatever the sentence, including a prison sentence, then such application will be granted provided at least ten years has lapsed since the last conviction for dishonesty.			All Cases
Where an applicant has an absolute discharge for any offence, with no other offences, such application will be granted.			All Cases
Where an applicant has failed 3 verbal communication tests, or 3 Knowledge tests, or 3 driving tests, then such application will be refused.			All Cases
Where an applicant has previously been refused or his/her licence revoked, whether by Birmingham City Council or another Local Authority, any further application will be refused within a 12 month period starting from the date of the refusal/revocation of the previous licence.		All Cases	
Where a private hire driver is convicted for plying for hire (first offence), then their private hire driver's licence will normally be suspended for a minimum period of 6 months.		All Cases	
Where a private hire driver is convicted for plying for hire and no insurance, then their private hire driver's licence will normally be revoked.		All Cases	
Grant/renewal of a licence where a driver is convicted of a drink/drug related driving offence or has been subject to a driving ban		All Cases	
Renewal of a drivers licence after the late renewal period where the circumstances for the lateness are on medical grounds only. (late renewal fee applies)			All case

Hackney Carriage / Private Hire	Decision to be made by:		
Matter to be dealt with:	Full Committee	Sub-Committee	Officers (Senior Licensing Officer or above)
Where a driver pays any fee by cheque and that cheque is not honoured and following chasing letters to be sent to the driver at his/her last known address, the drivers licence or vehicle licence will be suspended until such time as the requisite fee is received.			All Cases Removed – we do not accept cheques as payment
When confirmation is received to the effect that the holder of the licence has been banned from driving by a Court of Law and is no longer in possession of a valid DVLA driving licence.			All Cases
Approval of the installation of safety screens in private hire vehicles, where MIRA testing and approval, or an equivalent European test certificate can be produced for the proposed screen			All Cases
Approval of certain standard exemptions to the current licence conditions for private hire operators and vehicles, where the applicant can demonstrate that the exemption is justified (limousines, stretched and special event vehicles carrying out private hire work within the city)			All Cases
Grant of licence where the applicant has 6 points on their DVLA licence or a conviction or caution for an offence that does not fall within the category of drugs, violence, dishonesty or of a sexual nature.			Licensing officer and above
Consideration of suitability of evidence as to good character where applicant is from a failed state and cannot comply with requirement to provide a DBS.			All cases

GENERAL LICENSING POLICY DOCUMENT

(Matters not addressed by Statement of Licensing Policy, Statement of Gambling Principles or Sexual Entertainment Policy)

The General Licensing Team is responsible for a wide range of licensing functions, which include sales of alcohol, late night refreshment, regulated entertainment, sex establishments, charitable collections, scrap metal and gambling premises.

Administration of the Animal Welfare licensing function is under the remit of Environmental Health. The Senior Animal Welfare Officer and the administration team are located at Garretts Green. Inspection and enforcement is carried out by the Senior Animal Welfare Officer.

Massage and Special Treatment Establishments

Birmingham City Council Act 1990.

- Only a very small number of local authorities in the country have similar powers. The legislation was originally aimed at controlling massage and various treatments which could carry a health and safety risk to the public, e.g. water borne disease and exposure to UV rays. The Act has led to a whole range of premises being included, from health and fitness centres to hairdressing salons.
- Anyone conducting an establishment for treatment by way of massage is required to be licensed; other forms of treatment also include Solaria, Therapeutic Spa Baths, Sauna, Turkish Baths, Aromatherapy massage and Herbal Baths.
- Each licensed premises is subject to an annual visit by a Licensing Enforcement Officer.
- When considering applications for licences consultation is carried out with West Midlands Police. There are also statutory requirements placed on applicants to post notices on the premises giving passers-by opportunity to comment or object.
- All licences are subject to a set of conditions which regulate the manner in which the premises must be operated.



BCCA90 MST
Standard Conditions

Sex Establishments

Schedule 3 to the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 (the “Act”).

The Act gives local authorities the adoptive powers to control sex establishments which are defined as a sex shop, a sex cinema or a sexual entertainment venue (SEV)

Sex Shops and Sex Cinemas

A sex shop is a premises used for a business, which consists, to a significant degree, of selling what are termed sex articles. These commonly include magazines, DVDs and different forms of sex aids.

A sex cinema is any premises used to a significant degree for showing of films, which are concerned primarily with, or relate to, or are intended to stimulate or encourage sexual activity.

The key words in the statutory definition are the words “to a significant degree”. This is not defined by the Act but case law suggests ‘significant’ implies a higher standard than ‘more than trifling’. In almost all cases the ratio between the sexual and other aspects of the business would be material: the absolute quantity of sales, the character of the remainder of the business, the nature of the display and the nature of the articles themselves are all considerations. No single factor is decisive and the Committee must decide which considerations are material and what weight to attach to them.

When considering applications for licences consultation is carried out with West Midlands Police, Ward Councillors and the Licensing Enforcement Team. There are also statutory requirements placed on applicants to advertise in the local press and post notices on the premises giving passers-by opportunity to comment or object.

The criteria for consideration are:

- the suitability of the applicant;
- whether the person applying will actually be responsible for operating the business
- the location and suitability of the premises; and
- whether the number of sex establishments within that locality is equal to or exceeds the number which the Council considers appropriate for the area.

Other than where the suitability of the applicant is concerned, there is no automatic right of appeal against a decision to refuse a licence and, therefore, an applicant’s only remedy would normally be by way of judicial review.



Sex Shop Conditions



Sex Cinema
Conditions

Sexual Entertainment Venues

A Sexual Entertainment Venue (SEV) is defined as “any premises at which relevant entertainment is provided before a live audience for the financial gain of the organiser or the entertainer”.

The meaning of ‘relevant entertainment’ is “any live performance or live display of nudity which is of such nature that it must reasonably be assumed to be provided solely or principally for the purpose of sexually stimulating any member of an audience (whether by verbal or other means)”.

These definitions would apply to the following forms of entertainment as they are commonly known: lap dancing; pole dancing; strip shows; peep shows; and live sex shows.

The legislation provides exemptions from the definitions of SEVs as follows:

- Sex shops and sex cinemas (these are separately defined in Schedule 3 to the 1982 Act).
- Premises which provide relevant entertainment on an infrequent basis.

These are detailed as premises where:

- no relevant entertainment has been provided on more than 11 occasions within a 12 month period
- no such occasion has begun within a period of one month beginning with the end of the previous occasion; and
- no such occasion has lasted longer than 24 hours.

On 12th October 2010, Birmingham City Council resolved to adopt the provisions to control SEVs. A separate Sexual Entertainment Venue Policy, to apply to the whole of Birmingham, was published and became effective from 3 January 2011. This Policy is was revised in October 2014 and was effective since 1 November 2014. The policy is currently under review.

The Sexual Entertainment Venue Policy document contains full details of the licensing regime applicable to Birmingham including application procedures, standard conditions and delegations. The Standard conditions were revised with effect from 1st November 2014 (on all licences granted or renewed after that date).



SEV Policy

Charitable Street Collections

Police, Factories etc., (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1916.

The Act prescribes Regulations, which govern the conduct of collections being made for charitable or other purposes in any street or public place.



This could include a collecting box or tin, or even the sale of any articles or magazines where there is a representation at the point of sale that part of the proceeds are being applied to charitable or other purposes.

Organisations do not have to be a registered charity but checks are made to ascertain that the organisation is genuine, and for new organisations or charities, copies of the latest accounts may be requested. Details of the promoter are forwarded to the West Midlands Police to afford them the opportunity to comment on the suitability of the applicant. The promoter of the collection or permit holder is also required to submit a return within one month of the collection taking place to show the amount collected and details of how the proceeds have been applied particularly on expenses.

In September each year, an advertisement is placed on the Birmingham City Council website inviting applications to be lodged by 1 November for the following year. In order to allow for a fair opportunity of collection dates for all prospective charitable organisations, applications are restricted to either one collection that covers the “whole city” or two separate dates for a selection of districts.

All applications received by 1 November each year are given priority for dates and areas and efforts are made to allocate preferred dates to each of the individual organisations. To avoid any clash of interest permits are not granted to two separate organisations to collect in the same place on the same day. For those organisations applying later than 1 November, applications are allocated on a first come first served basis provided that the requested date and area is still available.

“Face to face” fundraising usually relates to the collection of direct debits / standing orders from shoppers/pedestrians. Such appeals are normally conducted by professional fundraising companies that are remunerated by charities. Where a professional fundraiser is involved in a charitable street collection on behalf of a charity, our procedures require that a copy of the statutory fundraising agreement is submitted with the application as this gives details of the costs of the fundraising.

Under the Model Street Collection Regulations, “no payment shall be made out of the proceeds of a collection, directly or indirectly, to any other person connected with the promotion or conduct of the collection other than payments which have been specifically approved by the Council.”

All such face-to-face street collection applications are, therefore, referred to Committee for consideration with the expectation that an applicant demonstrates how any potential donors are made fully aware of the remuneration costs involved and the relationship between the company and the charity.

There is no right of appeal against the refusal to grant a street collection permit.

The Charities Act 2006 was introduced to change the way in which charitable collections were

regulated, however, the Act was implemented in phases and to date the provisions relating to public charitable collections have still not been introduced.

It should be noted that a part of the Charities Act 2006 that was introduced, amended the Charities Act 1992 in relation to the statement required to be made by professional fundraisers when raising money for particular charitable institutions. The statement must give the method by which the fundraiser's remuneration in connection of the appeal is determined and the notifiable amount of that remuneration.

House to House Collections

House to House Collections Act 1939.

Whereas street collection permits are normally issued to cover a period of one or two days, a house to house collection licence can be granted for any period up to one year.

With regard to vetting and checking to ascertain whether the organisation applying is genuine or not, the same procedures apply as for street collections.

There is a requirement for the promoter of the collection to make a return following the collection.

Collections generally take place from door to door or from one public house to another.

Some of the larger well-known charities such as British Red Cross, Christian Aid, Shelter, RNLI etc., have a Government exemption from having to apply for a licence, but most of the smaller, and particularly local groups and organisations need a licence before they can collect money (or articles which they intend to give away or sell later), from door to door.

As with the procedure for street collections, where a charitable organisation is utilising the services of a professional fundraising company, our procedures require that a copy of the statutory fundraising agreement is submitted with the application.

Unlike street collections, there is a statutory right of appeal against the refusal to grant a house to house collection licence. In this case, the right of appeal is to the Secretary of State, and the grounds for refusal are set out in the Act.

Skin Piercers

Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 Part VIII

Local Government Act 2003

Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 Part VIII applies to the registration of persons operating at premises to provide the following types of skin piercing: Acupuncture, Tattooing

 [acupuncture byelaws](#)

 [Tattoo byelaws](#)

and Electrolysis.	 electrolysis byelaws
Byelaws were introduced in 1985 to regulate these activities.	
The Local Government Act 2003 came into effect on 1 April 2004 and introduced the registration and inspection of all businesses which carry out cosmetic skin piercing and semi-permanent skin colouring.	
Byelaws were introduced in 2006 to regulate these activities.	 cosmetic skin piercing byelaws  Semi-perm skin colouring byelaws
Inspection and enforcement is carried out by officers of Birmingham's Environmental Health Service.	
This is purely a registration function, with no provision for objection or refusal. Registration Certificates are issued by Senior Licensing Officers or above.	

Village Greens	
The Commons Act 2006	
The Local Authority is the 'Registration Authority' for the purposes of the legislation.	
Applications can seek the inclusion in the register of town and village greens of land which is claimed to have qualified for registration by virtue of continuous usage by inhabitants of the locality for lawful sports and pastimes as of right over a period of 20 years. In order for an application to succeed it must satisfy all parts of the statutory test.	
Applications are reported to the Licensing and Public Protection Committee.	
In cases where objections give rise to a serious dispute of fact between the applicant and the objectors, a public inquiry may be held before an independent inspector, who will then put forward a recommendation to the Registration Authority.	
The final decision will be taken by the Licensing and Public Protection Committee, or a Licensing Sub-committee if so delegated.	

Animal Welfare
Animal Boarding Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963
Anyone involved in the business of providing accommodation for other peoples animals (being cats or dogs),is required to obtain a licence form the local authority. Inspections are undertaken by the Senior Animal Welfare Officer, prior to licence approval. Licensed premises now include home dog boarders, where individuals board dogs in their own home and also dog day care centres.
Dog Breeding Breeding of Dogs Acts 1973 and 1991
Legislation prescribes standards of management and accommodation in relation to the business of breeding dogs. In addition to the inspection by the Senior Animal Welfare Officer the Act requires that the services of an independent veterinary surgeon or practitioner is used for inspecting prospective establishments in respect of applications for the grant of a new licence
Pet Shops Pet Animals Act 1951.
The Act regulates the sale of pet animals which includes a provision that a pet animal cannot be sold to a person under the age of 16. Conditions which are applied to premises promote animal health and welfare.
Performing Animals The Performing Animals (Regulations) Act 1925
The Act covers the use of animals in film and stage performances, at circuses, and as part of exhibitions etc. More recently these provisions are applied to persons who use animals during educational talks and demonstrations at children’s parties. It is an offence for anyone to train or exhibit a performing animal unless they are registered.
Dangerous Wild Animals The Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976 (as amended)
The Act contains a schedule detailing a variety of animals for the purposes of the Act e.g. venomous snakes and certain monkeys etc. Zoos, pet shops and circuses are exempt from the provisions of the Act. There are no current licences, however, the Act provides powers to the Council to seize any animal being kept on premises which are unlicensed. There is a requirement for an independent report to be obtained from a veterinary surgeon or practitioner before a licence can be granted.
Riding Establishments Riding Establishments Acts 1964 and 1970
Stables which hire out horses or ponies for riding or instruction must be licensed under the provisions of the Riding Establishments Act 1964 and 1970. When considering applications there is a requirement for an independent report to be obtained from a veterinary surgeon or practitioner. An applicant for the grant or renewal of a licence must undergo or present an enhanced criminal record check (not more than 3 months old) with the submission of an application form. Once licensed, a licence holder must ensure that an enhanced criminal record check is conducted for any person in their employ that may come into contact with any persons under the age of 17 years that will be using the services of the riding establishment.

Zoos**Zoo Licensing Act 1981**

This Act classes any establishment, other than a circus or pet shop, where animals are kept for public exhibition as a Zoo.

Licences are initially granted for four years and then renewable every six years.

Zoos must observe standards of modern zoo practice which have been specified by the Secretary of State.

Inspections are carried out annually by the Senior Animal Welfare Officer, however, at least twice during the term of the licence; a formal inspection must be carried out by a veterinary surgeon or practitioner in addition to an inspector appointed by the Secretary of State.

Notices

Where applications carry a requirement to advertise in the local press, it is recommended advertisements are placed in The Birmingham Mail, The Birmingham Post, or, for applications relating to premises in Sutton Coldfield, the Sutton Observer.

Policy
Notice1

Should applicants wish to use an alternative publication they are advised to consult with officers at the Licensing Service.

In circumstances where Birmingham City Council Licensing Service is required to publish notices in the local press such notices will be placed in the Birmingham Mail or the Birmingham Post.

Policy
Notice2

Film Classification

On 21st March 2012 Birmingham City Council's Licensing Committee agreed a formal procedure for dealing with requests to exhibit films that have no certificate from the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC).

Requests for film classification must be submitted 28 days prior to the proposed screening, be made in writing and give details of the following:

- where and when the film is to be exhibited,
- intended audience profile,
- suggested film classification,

All requests must be accompanied by a brief synopsis and a copy of the film in standard DVD format.

Where Birmingham City Council has determined the classification of a film it will be subject to the following standard conditions:

- *A notice must be displayed both inside and outside of the premises to ensure that persons entering are readily aware of the classification attached to any film or trailer.*
- *No person is to be admitted to any part of the programme unless they are of the age permitted by the relevant classification. This condition does not apply to members of staff under the relevant age provided that the prior written consent of the person's parent or legal guardian is obtained.*

General information

If a premises licence, issued under the Licensing Act 2003 authorises film exhibitions, the licence holder **must** comply with any recommendation by the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC), or if the film has no classification, then in accordance with any recommendation by the Licensing Authority.

A Licensing Authority can either determine the appropriate classification of any film which has not been the subject of classification by the BBFC; or determine a different classification to that determined by the BBFC to apply generally in Birmingham.

The BBFC classifies films in the following way:

- | | |
|-----|--|
| U | Universal (suitable for all). |
| PG | Parental Guidance (some scenes may be unsuitable for young children). |
| 12 | Suitable for age 12 years and over. |
| 12A | Suitable for age 12 years and over, or younger when accompanied by an adult. |
| 15 | Suitable for age 15 years and over. |
| 18 | Suitable for 18 years and over. |

Exemptions

The Licensing Act 2003 sets out exemptions for the provision of regulated entertainment from requiring a licence under the Act:

- Film exhibitions for the purposes of advertisement, information or education; if the sole main purpose of the exhibition is to demonstrate any product, advertise any goods or services, or provide information, education or instruction, even if they simultaneously entertain;
- Film exhibitions in museums and art galleries; if the exhibition consists of or forms part of an exhibition put on show for any purpose of the museum or art gallery, even if they amount to the provision of entertainment.

Enforcement

Licensing Enforcement Officers and Licensing Compliance Officers are issued with an identity card and authorisation. They enforce the provisions of the legislation for which they are authorised. This includes but is not limited to:

- Birmingham City Council Act 1990
- Equalities Act 2010
- Gambling Act 2005
- House to House Collections Act 1939
- Licensing Act 2003
- Local Government Act 1972 (Section 222)
- Local Government Act 2003
- Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 Part II
- Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 Part I, II, VII
- Police Factories, etc. (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1916 (Street Collections)
- Private Hire Vehicles (Carriage of Guide Dogs etc.) Act 2002
- Private Security Industry Act 2001
- Town Police Clauses Act 1847 and 1889
- Hackney Carriage Byelaws,

Officers undertake inspections, offer advice, deal with requests for assistance, investigate complaints and take part in planned exercises including operations with other enforcement agencies.

The premises and individuals licensed under the above Acts will be risk rated and inspected as and when appropriate in line with that rating, to ensure compliance with the legislation and any conditions attached to their licences. Inspections may also take place upon the grant, renewal or transfer of a licence or upon the receipt of a complaint.

Private hire operators will be risk rated and inspected an appropriate number of times during the year. Officers will check that the documents and records relating to drivers, vehicles and bookings are as prescribed by their conditions of licence. All operators will receive at least one inspection during the course of the operational year.

Stop check exercises are regularly undertaken with the assistance of the Police. Licensed vehicles are stopped and inspected to ensure that they and their drivers are complying with conditions of licence and are safe to carry members of the public. If defects on the vehicle are noted such as loose radios, bald tyres or defective lights, the plate licence may be suspended until the issues are rectified.

As well as routine inspections and high visibility exercises, Officers undertake exercises, where they pose as members of the public and make test purchases. Again this is to check licensees are complying with the legislation and their conditions of licence.

Officers also work jointly with agencies such as the Police and DVSA (formerly VOSA).

Further information can be found within the Regulation and Enforcement, Enforcement Policy.

SCHEME OF DELEGATIONS

(For matters not addressed in individual policy documents)

Miscellaneous	Decision to be made by:		
Matter to be dealt with:	Full Committee	Sub-Committee	Officers (Senior Licensing Officer or above)
Massage & Special Treatment Licence	If objection received	If objection received	If no objection received
Skin piercing registration			All Cases
<u>face-to-face</u> street collection applications	All cases where collectors are paid, or where fundraisers are paid directly or indirectly from proceeds of collection	All cases where collectors are paid, or where fundraisers are paid directly or indirectly from proceeds of collection	All other cases
House to House collections applications	Cases referred by Licensing Officers for determination	Cases referred by Licensing Officers for determination	All cases (unless application raises concerns i.e. allocation of proceeds)
Village Green Consideration of application	All cases		
Village Green – instruction of independent inspector	All cases		
Village Green – determination of application	All Cases		

DELEGATION OF FUNCTIONS REGARDING THE LICENSING ACT 2003**(Extract from Statement of Licensing Policy)**

Subject	Sub Committee	Officers
Application for personal licence.	If a Police objection is made.	If no objection.
Application for personal licence with relevant unspent convictions.	If a Police objection is made.	
Application for premises licence/ club premises certificate.	If a relevant representation is made.	If no relevant representations.
Application for provisional statement.	If a relevant representation is made.	If no relevant representations.
Application to vary premises licence/club premises certificate.	If a relevant representation is made.	If no relevant representations.
Request to vary designated premises supervisor.	If a Police objection is made.	All other cases.
Request to be removed as designated premises supervisor.		All cases.
Application for transfer of premises licence.	If a Police objection is made.	All other cases.
Application for interim authorities.	If a Police objection is made.	All other cases.
Application to review premises licence/club premises certificate.	All cases.	
Decision on whether a complaint is irrelevant, frivolous, vexatious, etc.		All cases.
Decision to object when Local Authority is a consultee and not the relevant authority considering the application.		All cases.
Determination of application to vary premises licence at community premises to include and alternative licence condition	If a Police objection is made.	All other cases.

Determination of a Police objection to a STANDARD temporary event notice.	All cases.	
Application for minor variation of premises licence/club premises certificate		All cases (for decision whether to consult other Responsible authorities and for Determination)
Determination of a Police / EH objection to a temporary event notice.	All cases except where objection requires inclusion of conditions from existing premises licence and applicant is in agreement	Where objection requires inclusion of conditions from existing premises licence and applicant is in agreement
Attachment of Conditions from existing premises licence to TEN	Where applicant objects to conditions	If applicant is in agreement
Issuing of Counter notice for STANDARD TEN	Following determination hearing	Where limits are exceeded
Issuing of counter notice for Late TEN		All cases
Suspension of licence for non payment of fees		All cases
Requests for a change to the film classification awarded by the BBFC	All cases	
Requests for classification of films where there is no BBFC classification	Where there is concern about the content of any film submitted or the proposed exhibition of the film	Where appropriate procedure is followed and no concerns as to content
Request for implementation of Early Morning Restriction Order	FULL Committee	
Request for imposition of Late Night Levy	Full City Council	
Statement of Licensing Policy	Full City Council	
Cumulative Impact Assessment	??	??

DELEGATION OF FUNCTIONS REGARDING THE GAMBLING ACT 2005**(Extract from Statement of Gambling Principles)**

Subject	Full Council	Licensing & Public Protection Committee	Licensing Sub-Committees	Officers
Three year licensing policy	X			
Policy to permit casino	X			
Fee setting (when appropriate)		X		
Application for premises licence			Where representations have been received and not withdrawn	Where no representations received or representations have been withdrawn
Application for a variation to a licence			Where representations have been received and not withdrawn	Where no representations received or representations have been withdrawn
Application for a transfer of a licence			Where representations have been received from the Gambling Commission	Where no representations received or representations have been withdrawn
Application for a provisional statement			Where representations have been received and not withdrawn	Where no representations received or representations have been withdrawn

Review of a premises licence			X	
Application for a club/gaming club machine permits			Where representations have been received and not withdrawn	Where no representations received or representations have been withdrawn
Cancellation of club gaming/club machine permits			X	
Application for other permits			Where an application is received to operate more than 4 gaming machines on an alcohol licensed premises	Where an application is received to operate 4 or less gaming machines on an alcohol licensed premises
Cancellation of licensed premises gaming machine permits				X
Consideration of temporary use notice				X
Decision to give a counter notice to a temporary use notice			X	
Decision to attach/exclude a premises licence condition			X	
To administer and carry out all other functions not specifically mentioned in the delegation to the Licensing & Public Protection Committee, which are capable of being delegated to an officer as provided in the Gambling Act 2005 and any regulations made under that Act, together with any related functions				X

Sexual Entertainment Venues

(From SEV Policy)

SCHEME OF DELEGATION OF DECISION-MAKING AND FUNCTIONS

The Licensing and Public Protection Committee is responsible for making licensing decisions with Sub-Committees and officers having delegated powers to make some decisions. The table below describes how licensing decisions will be made. This scheme of delegations will be subject to regular review

Nothing within this scheme of delegations shall prevent matters being referred to a higher level where appropriate. E.g. officers may refer matters to a sub committee, or a sub-committee may refer a matter to full committee. Decision to be made by:			
Matter to be dealt with:	Full Committee	Sub-Committee	Officers (Senior Licensing Officer or above)
Application for grant or transfer	All cases		
Application for renewal or variation	If relevant objection made		If no relevant objection made
Minor variation application	If relevant objection made		If no relevant objection made
Revocation of Licence	All cases		
Cancellation of Licence			All cases
Make/amend regulations prescribing standard conditions, terms and restrictions	All cases		
Setting of fees	All cases		
Waiver	All cases		
To make and amend policy relating to the licensing of sex establishments	All cases		
To enforce the provisions of Part II and Schedule 3 of the Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions Ac 1982			All cases

GOOD PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE

The following are points that your Committee should bear in mind when making decisions concerning individual licences and should be read in conjunction with the Members' Code of Conduct and the Member/Officer Protocol. They are based on the large number of legal cases in which the courts, including the European Courts, have considered different aspects of a local authority's licensing functions. However, your Committee should be aware that in certain cases there are additional requirements resulting from specific legislation.

1. Political/Party Group Meetings

Group meetings should be concerned with policy reports, not the discussion of individual licence applications etc. The use of a party political whip is inconsistent with the rules of natural justice and should be avoided by Councillors sitting on the Licensing and Public Protection Committee.

2. Members

Members should be mindful of the requirements concerning the disclosure of interests and when it is necessary for a member to vacate a meeting. In cases of doubt the Director of Legal Services, or his representative, should be consulted. Details are set out in the Council Constitution.

3. Social Media

What are social media?

Social media is the term to describe websites and online tools which allow people to interact with each other by creating their own content. The content could, for example, be blogs, videos or short messages, known as tweets, via twitter.

On social media sites users share information, discuss opinions and may create interest groups or pages. Ultimately people use these sites and tools to build online communities and networks which encourage participation and engagement.

Types of Social Media:

- Blogging and microblogging – online journals – Twitter is an example of microblogging, where entries are limited to 140 characters
- Online Forums – people with similar interests sharing information and opinions – AccyWeb is an example
- Social networking sites – these facilitate connections between people who already know each other, often in a social context, but are increasingly used by businesses to promote their products or services- Facebook is an example
- Video and photo publishing – sharing videos and photographs worldwide – Flickr is an example

Some general legal issues:

- **Libel** – If you publish an untrue statement about a person which is damaging to their reputation, they may take a libel action against you. The same thing may happen if, for example, someone else publishes something libellous on your website, you know about it and don't take swift action to remove it. A successful libel claim could result in the award of damages against you,
- **Copyright** – Placing images or text on your site from a copyrighted source (for example extracts from publications or photos), without obtaining permission, is likely to breach copyright laws. Therefore don't publish anything you are unsure about, or obtain prior permission. A successful claim for breach of copyright would be likely to lead to an award of damages against you.
- **Data Protection** – Do not publish the personal data of individuals unless you have their express permission.
- **Bias and Predetermination** – if you are involved in making licensing decisions, do not say anything through social media (or indeed anywhere) that suggests you have completely and irrevocably made your mind up on an issue that is due to be formally decided upon. While your likely view on a particular application may be well known, you need to be able to show that you attended the committee or hearing prepared to take on board and weigh all the evidence and arguments, and were genuinely persuadable to a different view. If you weren't, the decision may be later challenged as invalid. If a person has suffered some sort of detriment as a result of such an invalid decision, they may have a claim against the council for damages.
- **Wednesbury Unreasonableness** – members must also always be seen to acting reasonably in relation to the Committee process and consideration of all applications; if detriment arises a Third Party may commence Judicial Review proceedings.

Use of Social Media by Members of Committee

- Although the use of Social Media can be an invaluable tool for a Member of the Council/Committee Member it is important that such usage is properly managed at all times and that particularly a clear distinction is maintained between Private usage and Member usage. It is important that Social Media is not perceived by any Third Party to interfere with the proper decision making process. Members are advised to exercise extreme caution before commenting on social media, or in the conventional press, on any licensing decisions which they are, or are likely to be involved in making. This is to ensure that their comments may not be interpreted to mean that members have already determined a licence application, which could be used against the local authority.
- The same applies to Council Members who are not members of the Licensing & Public Protection Committee, but whose comments or actions on social media could be misinterpreted. If elected Members make any comments when representing residents who are objecting to licence applications they must not link their comments in any way to members of the Committee.
- During Committee hearings it is particularly important that mobile communication devices, including telephones and tablet computers or Social Media are not used, whether for research or communication purposes. The use of any form of Social Media or mobile telephones at Committee may lead to an inference of bias, pre-determination or Wednesbury Unreasonableness.

4. The Applicant

Ordinarily the applicant should be given the opportunity of being heard by your Committee before the application is determined, even if this is not an express requirement of the relevant statute. The applicant should also be allowed to be accompanied by a legal or other representative if they so desire.

5. Third Parties to a Hearing

Any person or body wishing to make representations or objections in respect of an application or notice should be given the opportunity to do so. Subject to any statutory restriction the nature of the representations or objections should be disclosed to the applicant in advance of the meeting so that they may consider their

response. The identity of an objector should not be disclosed to the applicant without their consent, unless any statutory provision state otherwise.

6. Disclosure of Information

The applicant should be given prior knowledge of the nature of the Council's concerns, and of those of any objectors.

The extent of the disclosure should also be sufficient to avoid the applicant having to request an adjournment to allow time for proper consideration of the matters they are obliged to address.

7. Evidence

Each member of your Committee should be supplied with copies of every document that has been supplied both by and to the applicant and any third parties to the hearing. If any new documents are produced at the meeting, each party should have the opportunity to inspect them. In certain cases there may be statutory provisions which require another party's consent, if applicable, to new documentation being introduced at the meeting.

8. Adjournments

Any request for an adjournment should not be refused if to do so would effectively deny the applicant a fair hearing.

9. The Hearing

The procedure is intended as a general framework to ensure the rules of natural justice apply and that a fair hearing is presided over by an "independent and impartial tribunal". The conduct of individual hearings may vary slightly according to circumstances and the discretion of the Chairman. In all cases, however, this general framework will be followed:

- a. Members present should identify themselves so that the applicant may be satisfied that there has been no breach of the rule against bias.
- b. A licensing officer will outline the relevant details of the application or matter under consideration.
- c. Usually the applicant will present his or her case first, at the conclusion of which members may ask questions. A similar opportunity will then be

afforded to any third party to a hearing making representations or objections to the application.

- d. The applicant should be given the opportunity to ask questions of those third parties.
- e. Once the licensing officer, the applicant and any third party to the hearing have given evidence and answered any questions, the third party shall first be given an opportunity to make brief closing remarks, and then the applicant to make their final closing remarks on the application under question. All parties should leave the room, so that only the Committee, the Committee Manager and the Director of Legal Services' representative remain.

During the hearing members must not discuss the merits of the case. This should be left until the applicant, any objectors and officers involved in the case have left the room.

The only members who may participate in the decision making are those who have seen and heard all the evidence and have been present for the subsequent discussion.

Once the applicant, any third party and officers have left the meeting they may be recalled to provide further information or clarification but all of them must return, not just the person from whom further information is required.

10. The Decision

Once the Committee has reached its decision the parties must be recalled and informed verbally of the decision with the exception of applicants and drivers for a hackney carriage or private hire licence or personal licence who only receive the decision later in writing. If reasons for the decision are to be given, which will usually be the case, this will be done in writing at a later date. Notice of any right of appeal should also be given to the parties.

**LICENSING COMMITTEE CODE OF PRACTICE
FOR COUNCILLORS AND OFFICERS
(As agreed Sept 2016- amended 04/18)**

1. PURPOSE OF THIS CODE

- 1.1 This Licensing Code of Practice ('the Licensing Code') has been prepared to guide members and officers in the discharge of the City Council's statutory Licensing functions. This Code will also inform potential applicants and the public generally of the high standards of ethical conduct adopted by the Council in the exercise of its Licensing powers.
- 1.2 The Licensing Code is in addition to Birmingham's Code of Conduct for Members, which was adopted by the City Council in June 2012. For the avoidance of doubt, when an Executive Member attends and participates in the decision-making of the Licensing Committee, s/he does so as a Member of the Committee and not as a Member of the Executive. Accordingly, s/he must, along with other Members of the Committee, exercise an independent mind on issues before the Committee.
- 1.3 The provisions of this Licensing Code are designed to ensure that Licensing decisions are taken on proper grounds, are applied in a consistent and open manner and that Members making such decisions are held accountable for those decisions. The Licensing Code is also designed to assist Members and officers in dealing with approaches from applicants or those who already have a relevant Licence/permit, etc.
- 1.4 Throughout this Code, reference is made to the Licensing Committee. This refers to the Licensing and Public Protection Committee ("LPPC"), in the context of its determination of applications for licences i.e where the Committee performs the functions of the Licensing Authority, rather than in the context of non-Licensing Authority decisions.
- 1.5 Any reference to Licensing Committee equally refers to any Licensing Sub-Committee.

2. CONTEXT

- 2.1 This Licensing Code applies to both Councillors and officers– it is not therefore restricted to Licensing Committee members. The successful operation of the Licensing system relies on mutual trust and understanding of each other's role. It also relies on both Members and Officers ensuring that they act in a way which is not only fair and impartial but is also clearly seen to be so.

The Human Rights Act provides additional safeguards for citizens, and encourages the application of best practice. Article 6 is concerned with guaranteeing a right to procedural fairness, transparency and accountability in the determination of civil rights and obligations.

- 2.2 This code must be read in conjunction with (where appropriate):
- The LPPC Policies Procedures and Delegations.
 - The Statement of Licensing Policy

- Home Office Guidance (s182) – issued under S182 Licensing Act 2003
- The Statement of Gambling Principles and relevant guidance issued by the Gambling Commission.
- The Sexual Entertainment Venue Policy
- Code of Conduct for Members
- Code of Conduct for Officers

3. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 In relation to Hackney Carriage and Private Hire applications, (generally speaking) the Licensing Authority **MUST NOT** issue a licence to a driver, operator or vehicle proprietor unless they are satisfied the applicant is a fit and proper person.
- 3.2 In relation to Licensing Act matters, where an application has been properly made and no responsible authority or other person has made a relevant representation or where representations are made and subsequently withdrawn, the licensing authority **MUST** grant the application in the terms sought, subject only to conditions which are consistent with the operating schedule and relevant mandatory conditions under the 2003 Act.
- 3.3 If the licensing authority decides that representations are relevant, it must hold a hearing to consider them. The need for a hearing can only be avoided with the agreement of the licensing authority, the applicant and all of the persons who made relevant representations.
- 3.4 Birmingham City Council's Code of Conduct for Members (adopted June 2012) must be complied with throughout the decision making process, which includes mandatory requirements with regard to member interests.
- 3.5 The responsibility for declaring an interest rests with individual Members and Officers of the Council. This Licensing Code outlines further rules applicable to the Licensing process in Birmingham.
- 3.6 Councillors and Officers have different but complementary roles. Both serve the public but Councillors are responsible to the electorate, whilst Officers are responsible to the Council as a whole. This applies equally to traditional forms of political management based on Committees and to models based on forms of executives or elected mayors. Officers advise Councillors and the Council and carry out the Council's work. They are employed by the Council, not by individual Councillors, and it follows that instructions may only be given to Officers through a decision of the Council, the Executive or a Committee. A successful relationship between Councillors and officers can only be based upon mutual trust, respect, courtesy and understanding of each other's positions. This relationship, and the trust which underpins it, should never be abused or compromised.
- 3.7 Both Councillors and Officers are guided by Codes of Conduct. Birmingham's Code of Conduct for Members provides standards and guidance for Councillors. Employees are subject to the Employees' Code of Conduct. In addition to these codes, a Council's standing orders set down rules which govern the conduct of Council business. There is also a Member / Officer Protocol that assists in defining the relation with both.
- 3.8 Birmingham's Code of Conduct for Members sets out the requirements on Councillors in relation to their conduct. It covers issues central to the preservation of an ethical approach to Council business, including the need to register and declare interests, but also appropriate relationships with other

Members, staff and the public, which will impact on the way in which Councillors participate in the Licensing process. Of particular relevance to Councillors serving on the Licensing Committee or Executive, or who become involved in making a Licensing decision is the requirement that a Member must not use their position improperly for personal gain or to advantage friends or close associates.

3.8 The basis of the Licensing system is the consideration of private proposals against wider public interests. Much is often at stake in this process, and opposing views are often strongly held by those involved.

3.9 From time to time applicants may submit confidential information for example a financial appraisal in support of an application. Such appraisals will be taken into account in relation to determination of the application, but such information may be exempt from the requirement from disclosure.

3.10 Public Speaking

During public speaking at Licensing Committee, the following should not occur:-

- Members should not cross-examine members of the public at any time;
- Members should not ask leading questions of officers or members of the public as by way of introducing new facts to the debate;
- Members should only ask relevant questions; and
- Late evidence should not be introduced by speakers at Committee – unless authorised at the discretion of the Chairperson. with the agreement of all parties.

3.11 Conflicts of Interest

Some Members in general are more likely than others to be uncomfortable in the role of Licensing Committee Member owing to the combined pressures of their local business interests, the ward member advocate role, and the constraints of the Licensing system. Any potential licence-related background may also give rise to a perception by the public that they are more likely to be in favour of an application, even where they are determining cases completely impartially. In order to minimise the risk for the Council and the Member concerned, the Member in question should discuss their position carefully with the Director of Regulation and Enforcement and Monitoring Officer for the Council, of the Council to see whether it would be suitable for him/her to become a Member of Licensing Committee or if already a Member take part in the determination of any applications before them

4. LOBBYING AND ATTENDANCE AT PUBLIC MEETINGS

General

4.1 Given the requirement that Members of the Licensing Committee should exercise an independent mind to applications in accordance with the relevant considerations, Members must not favour any person, company, group or locality. Members can, of course, form and express a personal opinion on Licensing applications but they are advised to indicate that they will only form a final opinion about an application after full consideration of all the evidence, representations and submissions made. Members should be careful not to publicly commit themselves to a particular outcome on an application prior to its full consideration at Committee, as to do so could be perceived by others as the Member having closed his/her mind to hearing all the relevant

considerations. If that were to happen, he/she should be asked by the Chairman of the Committee, the Director of Regulation and Enforcement and/or the Monitoring Officer (or their representatives) not to:-

- (a) take any further part in the consideration of the application; and
- (b) vote on the application. This can only be transparently demonstrated by the relevant Member not attending the meeting or leaving the Committee Room in order to ensure the integrity of the whole decision making process. If the relevant Member wishes to speak at Committee then they should declare their pre-determined position and withdraw from the meeting. This is to ensure Members of the Licensing Committee do not, by their presence, influence or seek to influence the remainder of the decision making body. Members should always notify Committee of any approach by any group, person or company prior to the discussion of the relevant matter.

- 4.2 Members of the Committee who may be involved in the determination of an application are, of course, free to listen to a point of view about a proposal, give procedural advice and agree to forward any comments, but should then refer the person to Officers. Members in this situation may indicate (or give the impression of) support for or opposition to a proposal, but should avoid giving the impression of a closed mind.
- 4.3 Whilst Members involved in making decisions on applications may begin to form a view as more information and opinions become available, a decision can only be taken by the Committee after all available information is to hand and has been duly considered. In this regard, any political group meetings prior to the Committee meeting should not be used to determine how Councillors should vote. Decisions can only be taken after full consideration of the evidence, representations and submissions made.
- 4.4 The Chairman of the Committee should attend a briefing with Officers prior to a Committee meeting, to help give an effective lead in the Committee.
- 4.5 Councillors involved in decision making on Licence applications should not, whether orally or in writing, organise support or opposition to a proposal, lobby other Councillors, act as advocate or put pressure on officers for a particular recommendation. However, other Councillors (who are not part of the decision making process) within that Committee Member's Ward, can make written representations to the Licensing Committee.
- 4.6 A Member involved in determining applications may respond to lobbying by openly expressing an opinion prior to the full report of the Director of Regulation and Enforcement to a Committee meeting (and there may be particular local circumstances where this is considered appropriate) but should indicate they will not make a final decision until after full consideration of all the evidence, representations and submissions.
- 4.7 If a Member involved in determining applications goes so far as to make it clear beyond doubt that they have a completely closed mind which could not be shifted, this would amount to predetermination and the Member concerned should respond as in 4.1.
- 4.8 Where Members involved in the determination of applications are in attendance at public meetings or Ward meetings they may listen to the debate on current applications, provide advice about procedures involved in determining an application and express a view about an application but should respond as in 4.6.

4.9 Members Predetermination of Applications

Section 25 of the Localism Act 2011 states that prior indications of a view of a matter do not amount to predetermination in the following situations:

- (2) A decision-maker is not to be taken to have had, or to have appeared to have had, a closed mind when making the decision just because-
- (a) the decision-maker had previously done anything that directly or indirectly indicated what view the decision-maker took, or would or might take, in relation to a matter and
 - (b) the matter was relevant to the decision.

The advice provided by the Monitoring Officer is that this is the present position with regard to the Legislation but whilst Members are entitled to express a view in relation to an application Members should indicate they still have an open mind in relation to an application until they have had the opportunity to consider the report of the Director of Regulation and Enforcement and that the final decision in relation to the application can only be made by Committee. This caveat is intended to safeguard so far as possible the decision made by Committee from Judicial Review until further case law and guidance has assisted with the interpretation of Section 25 of the Localism Act 2011.

Dealing with Correspondence

- 4.10 Members of the Committee and Executive often receive correspondence from constituents, applicants and other interested parties asking them to support or oppose a particular proposal. Members should forward a copy of the correspondence to the Director of Regulation and Enforcement or inform him/her at the Committee if time is short. Merely forwarding the correspondence onto the relevant officer would not prevent the Member being involved in determining the application.

Pre-Application Discussions

- 4.11 When involved in pre-application discussions, Officers should always act fairly to all and completely impartially by providing accurate advice and assistance when required or requested by the general public, applicants or Members. A written record of all such discussions must be retained on the Licensing file.

Site Visits by Members with Officers

- 4.12 The deferral of a relevant application for a site visit should not be on the basis of exposing members of the Committee to local opinion, but should be on sound and proper Licensing reasons, which shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
- 4.13 Under the Chairman's guidance the role of the Licensing Officer attending the site visit will be:
- (a) to brief Members on the Licensing applications(s) the subject of the visit and explain the reasons why the application was deferred for a visit;
 - (b) to ensure that the views of all interested parties are heard by all Members on the site visit and accurately recorded. Officers will prepare a written report of the site visit which will be taken back to Licensing Committee to form the basis of a further discussion at a subsequent meeting.

- 4.14 The Chairman (or Member chairing the visit) shall explain the purpose of the visit and how it will be conducted to all persons present at the site visit.
- 4.15 Officers shall ensure, where practical, that applicants, Members and interested parties are invited to attend the visit and that they are able to view all key parts of the site, which is the subject of the Applications.
- 4.16 The purpose of a site visit conducted by Members and officers is to gain information relating to the land or buildings which are the subject of the Licensing application and which would not be apparent from the Licensing application to be considered by the Committee. A site visit may also assist Members in matters relating to the context of the application in relation to the characteristics of the surrounding area, and is an opportunity to hear the views of the members of the public, applicants and other interested parties. Discussions on site visits shall be confined to the application as currently submitted. A Member of Committee who has an interest in a Licensing application, or who has acted in a way that amounts to predetermination, cannot attend the site visit in his or her capacity as a Member of Licensing Committee. However, the Member concerned would be entitled to attend the site visit in his or her personal capacity as a member of the public.
- 4.17 Whilst on site visits, Members of Committee can express an opinion on the application or its merits, but should avoid making comments or acting in a way which makes it clear beyond doubt that they have a completely closed mind, as this would amount to predetermination. Whilst Members of Committee are not prevented from engaging individually in discussion with applicants or objectors, to ensure transparency of public dealing by Member and effective /orderly management of the site visit, it is recommended that any question of the applicant(s) / objector(s) by the Licensing Officer and/or Members should be made in the presence of the other parties (or their representatives if there is a large scale public interest).
- 4.18 Members and Officers are obligated not to waste Council resources and, as such, a site visit is only likely to be necessary if:
- the impact of the proposed application is difficult to visualise from the plans and any supporting material, including photographs taken by officers (although if that is the case, additional illustrative material should have been requested in advance); or
 - there is good reason why the comments of the applicant and objectors cannot be expressed adequately in writing, or the proposal is particularly contentious.
- 4.19 Where there is substantial public interest in a proposal and relevant representations have been made, the Council may invite all parties to visit the site so that they may point out all the areas of contention to Members of the Licensing Committee and give their views. A note of proceedings will be taken at these meetings and minutes kept as part of the official record.
- 4.20 Results of the site visit will be reported to the next available meeting of the Committee.
- 4.21 Once the results of a site visit have been reported back to Committee, Members of the Committee who were not present at the site visit can ask questions, offer opinions, take part in discussions and vote in relation to that Licensing application.

The Role of Ward Councillors and MPs on Site Visits

- 4.22 Where relevant representations have been made Ward Councillors and MPs may attend and participate in site visits putting forward their point of view. However, the determination of Licensing applications rests solely with the Licensing Committee and no indication should be given by Members of the Committee of the likely decision during the course of the site visit.

5. MEETINGS OF THE LICENSING COMMITTEE

- 5.1 A Member shall not vote in relation to any Licensing application unless he or she has been present in the meeting of the Licensing Committee for the whole of the deliberations on that particular application.
- 5.2 A senior legal officer should always attend meetings of the Licensing Committee to ensure the probity and propriety of the Licensing and decision-making processes.
- 5.3 Where there is any doubt as to the voting or of the actual counting of votes in relation to any particular application, clarification should be immediately sought by the Chairman prior to dealing with the next agenda item, by requesting from each member as to how they have voted, noting this and the member's name.
- 5.4 Chairmanship – The chairman should ensure
- 5.4.1 Members' comments at Committee only relate to the relevant merits of the application before them;
 - 5.4.2 reference at Committee to matters which are not relevant should be disregarded;
 - 5.4.3 the cross-questioning of speakers should only take place if there is need for clarification of what a speaker has already outlined; and done in accordance with the appropriate Procedural Rules for the Hearing in question.

6. TRAINING

- 6.1 Members dealing with Licensing issues will attend such training sessions as required each year to receive guidance in relation to Licensing matters and processes and on procedural matters such as declaration of pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests. Training will be conducted in accordance with the training for Councillors standard. Members who fail to attend such training will be excluded from meetings of Licensing Committee. This training should include a balance of the following:-

- • Short (half day) sessions on special topics of interest or where appeals have indicated problems with Licensing policy;
- • Special topic groups to consider thorny issues in depth;
- • Formal training by internal and external speakers;
- • Quick presentations by officers on hot topics, e.g. new legislation, white papers and their impacts, followed by a brief question and answer session;

7. LICENCE APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLORS AND OFFICERS

- 7.1 Serving Councillors or their relatives who act as agents for people pursuing a Licensing matter will not be permitted to play any part in the decision making process for that proposal. Similarly, should they or their relatives submit their

own proposal to the Council, they will take no part in its processing, as in both cases they will have an interest in the matters.

- 7.2 In cases where officers of this Department or members of their family submit a licence application, or where they have an interest in a particular application they should inform the Director of Regulation and Enforcement and Monitoring Officer accordingly. (eg- where an application is submitted by a limited company and an Officer is a director (or similar) of the company).

8. REGISTRATION AND DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

The Localism Act 2011 and the Birmingham Code of Conduct for Members place requirements on Members on the Registration and Declaration of their interests and the consequence for the Members participation in consideration of an issue in the light of those interests. These requirements must be followed scrupulously and Members should review their situation regularly. Guidance on the registration and declaration of interests is dealt with by the Birmingham Code of Conduct for Members.

9. COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE DETERMINATION OF LICENSING APPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Whatever procedures the City Council operates, it is likely that complaints will be made. However, the adoption of the advice in this guidance should greatly reduce the occasions on which complaints are justified. It should also provide less reason for people to complain in the first place.
- 9.2 There is a city-wide procedure for dealing with complaints, as well as customer comments and compliments. Complaints alleging a breach of the Birmingham's Code of Conduct for Members must be reported to the Monitoring Officer.
- 9.3 So that complaints may be fully investigated and, in any case, as a matter of general good practice, record keeping should be complete and accurate. Omissions and inaccuracies could, in themselves, cause a complaint or undermine the Council's case. The guiding rule is that every application file should contain an accurate account of events throughout its life. It should be possible for someone not involved in that application to understand what the decision was, why and how it had been reached. Particular care needs to be taken with applications determined under the powers delegated to the Director of Regulation and Enforcement, where there is no report to a Committee. Such decisions should be well documented and form part of the case file. It is preferable to use the complaints procedure prior to any recourse to the Local Government Ombudsman.
- 9.4 Where any right of appeal exists against a decision of the Licensing Committee, that right is to be communicated at the time of the notification of decision.

10. CONCLUDING REMARKS

- 10.1 Maintaining high ethical standards enhances the general reputation of the City Council, its Members and its officers. Open and transparent decision making enhances local democracy and should lead to better informed citizens. A common understanding of the various roles, responsibilities and accountabilities should also enhance citizen participation. This Licensing Code, along with Birmingham City Council's Code of Conduct for Members,

therefore, serves an essential part in the local and corporate governance of Birmingham City Council

- 10.2 The City Council's Head of Paid Service, the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer have been consulted over this Licensing Code.
- 10.3 If any person believes that a Member or Officer has breached any aspect of this Licensing Code, s/he should refer the matter to the City Council's Monitoring Officer.

Prepared by the (Joint) Acting City Solicitor and Monitoring Officer of Legal and Democratic Services and the Director of Regulation and Enforcement