



Licensing and Regulatory Committee	Thursday, 10 March 2022	Matter for Information
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Report Title:

Licensing Team Plan (2022-2026)

Report Author(s):

Tracey Aldwinckle (Licensing Enforcement Officer)

Purpose of Report:	To raise awareness of the Licensing Service and set out clear priorities for the period 2022 – 2026.
Report Summary:	<p>The Licensing Team are responsible for the administration and enforcement of a wide range of licenses, permits and regulations.</p> <p>This report clarifies the key work areas and sets out five clear priorities to help drive the service forward following the pandemic with clear performance measures to track progress.</p>
Recommendation(s):	That the content of the report be noted.
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	<p>David Gill (Head of Law & Democracy / Monitoring Officer) (0116) 257 2626 david.gill@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Jon Wells (Senior Strategic Development Manager) (0116) 257 2692 jon.wells@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Tracey Aldwinckle (Licensing Enforcement Officer) (0116) 257 2689 tracey.aldwinckle@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p>
Corporate Objectives:	<p>Building, Protecting and Empowering Communities (CO1)</p> <p>Growing the Borough Economically (CO2)</p> <p>Providing Excellent Services (CO3)</p>
Vision and Values:	<p>Accountability (V1)</p> <p>Customer Focus (V5)</p>
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	<p>Local authority licensing is a statutory function, its purpose rooted in public safety. The majority of licensing in local government is not optional, requiring the Council to fulfil a statutory process which then enshrines the licensing function within its remit and responsibilities. The licensing function is essential to enable businesses and individuals to work within the law. The Council must continue to operate the licensing function in all areas. Failure to do so is an abrogation of statutory duties with far reaching consequences for individuals and businesses. A robust action plan in this respect is essential.</p>
Financial:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	Decreasing Financial Resources / Increasing Financial Pressures (CR1) Regulatory Governance (CR6)

Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications arising from this report. EA not applicable
Human Rights:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Statutory Officers' Comments:-	
Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees:	None.
Background Papers:	None.
Appendices:	None.

1. Background

- 1.1 During the pandemic, one member of the team was seconded to provide support for the COVID-19 response work for a period of 18 months. The post was temporarily back-filled for a short period to ensure continued delivery of statutory functions, albeit under extraordinary circumstances.
- 1.2 Many businesses suffered, with many either not allowed to open or only open with restrictions and limitations in place. The taxi-related workload area significantly increased given they provided an essential service to so many at that time. Following the announcement of the living with COVID-19 plan, this report highlights one of the Council's statutory services and sets out a clear focus for the future to ensure the service can continue to thrive and perform.
- 1.3 The Council's Licensing Team is based within Regulatory Services. Its primary aim is the safety, well-being and protection of the general public. There are two full time members of staff. Duties include inspection and enforcement to ensure compliance with licensing conditions and legislative requirements, offering advice and guidance, as well as the administrative functions of processing and issuing licenses.
- 1.4 The Licensing Team are responsible for the granting of licences under various legislation on people, places and taxis. The work includes:
- Ensuring all licence type applications received are processed and issued within statutory timescales.
 - Ensuring fees are received for each licence type for applications, renewals and annual fees.
 - Ensuring allegations and complaints made to the Council in connection with licensable activities are investigated and appropriate action is taken.
 - Taking appropriate enforcement action in relation to breaches of licence conditions and statutory duties.
 - Preparing and presenting reports for any Licensing hearings.
 - Offer support and guidance to applicants, licensees and members of the public.
 - Working in partnership with the responsible authorities and other relevant organisations to protect public safety.

- Formulation of policies and procedures and reviewing conditions of licences.

1.5 There is a huge variety of work illustrated by the caseload from the last year:

- Hackney and private hire – this includes renewals, new applications, transfers, operators licenses, competency tests for drivers, DBS checks and any mandatory training such as child sexual exploitation – a total of 537 requests
- Hairdressers premise licenses and personal licenses issued – 10
- Street trading, street collection, house to house – 37
- Tattoo parlours – 3 issued
- Premises licenses (variations, new, temporary event notices, change in DPS) – 76
- Animal welfare licenses – 2
- Close contact businesses (ear piercing, electrolysis etc.) – 7

2. Licensing Priorities

2.1 The service works closely with other regulatory bodies to ensure effective coordination and collaboration to secure necessary regulatory compliance and outcomes. By setting out clear priorities and being clear on what success looks like it will:

- Provide clarity to both our commitment and approach to securing effective public and environmental protection for those who reside, work or visit in our area,
- Provide support to businesses trading in the Borough.
- Improve regulatory outcomes without imposing unnecessary burdens

2.2 Table 1 below outlines the priorities for the period 2022-2026.

Table 1

Priority	Why is this important	Description	Performance measure
Administer licensing functions efficiently and effectively.	To ensure licence applications and associated tasks are dealt with in a timely and accurate manner. Using our online system will allow people to make payments and upload documents at a time suitable for them, which will also afford greater flexibility in our resourcing needs.	Applications will be processed within statutory deadlines and service standards requirements.	Time taken to process and issue licenses by category.
Ensuring compliance with licensing requirements by delivering a programme of inspections of premises, people and vehicles.	To protect the safety of people using licensed premises or vehicles and to ensure the licensed trade operates fairly. Improved compliance levels.	Annual inspection schedules will be prepared, we will prioritise premises under the Licensing Act 2003. We will continue to carry out stop checking exercises for	Achievement of compliance checks and outcomes. Minimum of 10% proactive checks and inspections in each category – for example

		vehicle/driver compliance. Officers will attend all joint enforcement initiatives, such as Taxi operation held at East Midlands Airport, with other Local authority officers, Police, DVLA, VOSA, HMRC and immigration. Joint working with Food Safety Officers in licensed premises.	400 drivers licensed and 40 will be randomly inspected One stop and search multi agency exercise per year
Responding to customer enquiries and complaints.	To ensure the licensed trade operates fairly and safely.	Ensure the public and businesses receive a 'right first time' response in a timely way. Complaints will be dealt with in a timely manner in accordance with our service standards. Outcomes will be used to inform service delivery going forward.	All customer enquiries will be responded to within 5 working days. Complaints handled in accordance with our corporate complaints policy.
To deliver effective enforcement action against those contravening licensing requirements.	To reinforce public confidence and protect the trade.	In accordance with our enforcement policy, we will take appropriate enforcement action against those found to be in breach of regulatory requirements. This could be prosecution or referral to Committee or both.	Number of contraventions recorded and action taken.
All policies, conditions and processes are reviewed and kept up to date.	To ensure the work we do remains relevant and legally compliant, reacting to changes in legislation and the wider economy.	Outdated policies can leave the Council at risk given they may become unenforceable.	All policies reviewed annually or as required by statute.

2.3 Updates will be provided through future Licensing and Regulatory Committee reports.