BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE LICENSING COMMITTEE

7TH SEPTEMBER 2026, AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors A. M. Dale (Chairman), S. Ammar, R. Bailes, J. Clarke, D. J. A. Forsythe, D. Hopkins, B. McEldowney, P. M. McDonald, S. A. Robinson and P. J. Whittaker

Also Present: Councillor R. J. Hunter (Observing).

Officers: Mrs. V. Brown, Ms. H. Powell, and Mr. J. Swann.

11/26 **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J. Elledge (Vice-Chairman), B. Kumar and C. A. Hotham.

12/26 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

13/26 **TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LICENSING COMMITTEE HELD ON 20TH JULY 2026**

The minutes of the Licensing Committee meeting held on 16th March 2026 were received.

In relation to Minute No. 6/25 (Hackney Carriage Rank Review), an alteration was proposed, namely: 'Members consensed that a taxi rank at Bromsgrove Train Station would be desirable, and queried whether this was feasible and if there was demand amongst rail commuters' be substituted for: 'Members stated that there was a taxi rank at Bromsgrove Train Station, and queried whether this was used and if there was demand amongst rail commuters'. This was duly seconded and put to the vote accordingly.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Licensing Committee meeting, as amended above, held on 20 July 2026 be approved as a correct record.

14/26 **REVISED STREET TRADING POLICY**

Further to Minute No. 7/26 (meeting held on 20th July 2026), Members considered the revised street trading policy.

The Council's street trading policy had been in effect since Dember 20217 and set out how the Council administered applications for street trading licences. The policy had been refreshed following input from Members to remain current.

In drafting the revised policy, officers had endeavoured to balance the benefits of street trading, such as consumer choice and a thriving local economy, with the needs of the wider community, such as protecting existing businesses, residents, pedestrians and road users.

Proposed changes to the policy included additions in relation to local exemptions, applicant suitability criteria and temporary or occasional street trading licences. Other amendments were related to the complaints and enforcement processes and the introduction of additional conditions for mobile traders and food operators.

It was proposed that should Members be content with the revised street trading policy, a public consultation on the proposed draft street trading policy be undertaken for a twelve- week period.

It was envisaged that the consultation would include engagement with key stakeholders including West Mercia Police, Hereford and Worcestershire Fire and Rescue Service, Worcestershire County Council as the responsible authority for public health and individuals with existing street trading licences.

Members of the public would also be able to feed into to the consultation exercise and would be able to comment via the Council's website. Officers in attendance explained that the consultation would be promoted via social media channels and regional press to boost participation.

It was proposed that the results of the consultation would be reported back to the Committee at its meeting in March 2027 to enable the proposed draft policy to be finalised and approved.

The Principal Licensing Officer outlined that the proposed draft policy was included within the main agenda pack for review.

From the comments and questions by members of the Committee, the following responses were made, and issues highlighted:

- Assurance was provided to Members that various typographical errors in the proposed draft policy would be corrected before the consultation commenced.
- The sale of goods by pedlars, as part of a market, or in trunk road picnic area, did not constitute street trading.
- Members raised concerns about street traders not having the right to work in the UK. Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) colleagues did not check the right to work in the UK for those applying for or holding a street trading licence, as the right

to work regulations were handled by employers under guidance from the Home Office.

- Trading standards officers carried out joint operations with West Mercia Police to ensure businesses were not breaking the law and were complying with relevant pieces of legislation.
- Members consensed that applications for street training licences should be accompanied by a copy of the Applicant's photographic identification.
- WRS officers responded to all complaints raised in relation to street traders, however did not routinely proactively inspect street trading operations due to resource limitations.
- Restrictions to street trading capabilities in the proposed draft policy included a 50 metre exclusion zone in a number of instances. Member outlined that the draft policy may be improved by amending the policy to ensure the 50 metre exclusion zone was in effect only in relation to school entrances and religious buildings.
- When determining an application for a street trading licence, the applicants criminal history was considered to ensure that the applicant was a suitable person to hold such a licence.

RESOLVED that

(a) The draft street training policy be amended as follows:

i. Applicants for street trading licences must provide photographic identification to the Council.

ii. The 50 metre exclusion zone for Street Traders in the categories of Annual Street Trading Consent (Single Commercial Pitches) or Peripatetic/ Mobile Street Trading be in effect only in relation to school entrances and religious buildings.

(b) The undertaking of a twelve- week public consultation in respect of the draft street trading policy be approved.

15/26 **HACKNEY CARRIAGE RANKS - FEEDBACK FROM THE TRADE**

Further to Minute No. 6/26 (meeting held on 20th July 2026), Officers had surveyed the trade in relation to the demand and utilisation of existing taxi ranks in the district. The survey sought the views on the provision of authorised taxi ranks across the District, including which ranks were best used by hackney carriage drivers.

Members considered the responses to this survey which had been completed by hackney carriage and private hire drivers.

The survey had been cascaded via an internet link to hackney carriage and private hire drivers licenced by the Council, which had taken place between 11th- 25th August 2026.

The responses from the survey detailed:

- 72.22% of the respondents stated they used the taxi ranks daily.
- 45% of the respondents stated they were satisfied with the current taxi rank provision.
- 78% of the respondents stated that they did not feel that any of the current taxi ranks could be better utilised as parking spaces.
- The Crown Close (Market Street Service Road) near the Bus Station rank was the best used rank in the District.

95% of respondents were licenced hackney carriage drivers.

The Principal Licensing Officer outlined that the full responses to the survey, including comments from licenced drivers was included within the main agenda pack for review.

'Taxi rank' at Bromsgrove Train Station

The Principal Licensing Officer also outlined the state of affairs with regards to the 'taxi rank' at Bromsgrove Train Station.

Whilst there was what appeared to be a Hackney Carriage Rank at the train station, with markings on the carriageway and signage which stated 'taxi rank', it was not an authorised Hackney Carriage Rank.

This meant that officers could not carry out enforcement at the location or direct vehicles that were not Hackney Carriage's licenced by Bromsgrove District Council to leave the 'rank'. Hackney Carriage driver's which were licenced by the District, could ply for hire at this location, as they could do throughout the District.

Furthermore, a Hackney Carraige Rank could not be authorised at this location, as the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 specified that an authorised rank could be approved on designated highways land only. The train station and surrounding roads were privately owned and could not be designated as highways land by Worcestershire County Council as the highways authority.

From the comments and questions by members of the Committee, the following responses were made, and issues highlighted:

- Issues related to enforcement were raised by respondents, including the usage of the ranks by private hire drivers and members of the public for parking.
- Enforcement at the taxi ranks could be carried out by West Mercia Police, Parking Civil Enforcement Officers and WRS colleagues.
- Licensed drivers encountering misuse of the ranks were encouraged to photograph the offending vehicles and send them to WRS colleagues via email to enable them to build an evidence picture and respond.

- The Council licenced 71 hackney carriage drivers and 9 private hire drivers.
- 25% of all licenced drivers within the District had responded to the survey.
- Signage at the ranks could be enhanced to advertise the hackney carriage provision and support enforcement objectives.
- Private hire drivers licenced by the Council could work anywhere in the country providing the journey was pre- booked.
- The nature of the survey was that respondents were anonymous, so WRS could not respond to those who had completed it.

The Principal Licensing Officer outlined that an update could be provided to the Committee later in the municipal year of 2026/ 27.

RESOLVED that

(a) WRS colleagues explore matters related to the enhancement of signage and enforcement at Hackney Carriage Ranks within the District.

(b) Messaging be cascaded to licenced drivers directing them to photograph vehicles misusing the hackney carriage ranks and send them to WRS colleagues.

(c) An update on the enforcement of Hackney Carriage Ranks would be provided to the Committee in March 2027.

16/26 **LICENSING COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2026/ 27**

The Work Programme set out the items which were to be considered by the Committee for the 2026/ 27 municipal year.

It was agreed that the Work Programme 2026/ 27 be updated to incorporate future items, namely:

- Fees and Charges
- Street Trading Policy Consultation Response
- Animal Licensing Policy Amendments.

RESOLVED that the Licensing Committee Work Programme 2026/ 27 be updated and noted.

The meeting closed at 7.20 p.m.

Chairman