

## **DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND OPERATIONS**

**ORIGINATING SECTION: PUBLIC PROTECTION SERVICE**

**REPORT TO : LICENSING COMMITTEE 18 July 2023**

**TITLE : UPDATE ON THE WORK OF PUBLIC PROTECTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICE**

### **1. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the work of the Council's Public Protection and Environmental Health Service (PPS) where there is a connection with businesses and persons who require a licence from the Council. It also provides an update for members on national policy changes and proposals affecting licencing work.

### **2. RECOMMENDATION**

That members note the report.

### **3. KEY ISSUES**

#### **3.1 Officer revocations/refusals**

In quarter 4 of 2022/23, 2 drivers have had their drivers' licences revoked by officers under delegated powers.

In quarter 1 of 2023/24, 1 driver had their licence revoked and 2 had applications refused by officers under delegated powers.

#### **3.2 Appeal results**

Since the last Licensing Committee 3 appeals against the decision of officers or general licensing sub-committees to revoke or refuse to grant driver licences have been concluded. The Magistrates Court upheld each of these decisions and awarded a total of £2,513 costs to be repaid to the Council.

#### **3.3 Blackburn with Darwen Taxi Forum meeting**

At February's meeting of the Taxi Forum the main agenda item was a report back on the outcome of the consultation on the amendments to the Council's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy.

An update was also given on the new on-line licence application process.

#### **3.4 Complaints to Licensing Team**

In quarter 4 2022/23, 27 complaints had been made to the Licensing Team. 13 about licensed drivers, 3 about licensed vehicles, 3 about private hire operators, 7 about licensed premises and 1 about street trading.

In quarter 1 2023/24, 39 complaints had been made to the Licensing Team. 16 about licensed drivers, 3 about licensed vehicles, 2 about private hire operators, 6 about licensed premises, 2 about street trading, 2 about animal licensing and 3 about charitable collections..

The most common complaints about drivers relate to poor driving, inappropriate or aggressive behaviour towards people and refusing to carry assistance dogs. Complaints about licensed premises are generally either due to noise or disturbance, or for providing hot food after 11pm without the necessary licence.

**3.5 Routine work carried out**

The following table provides figures on some of the key work carried out from 1 January to 30 June 2023.

	<b>Q4 22/23</b>	<b>Q1 23/24</b>
Vehicle licences processed – hackney carriage and private hire	<b>428</b>	<b>385</b>
Driver licences processed – new and renewal applications	<b>87</b>	<b>75</b>
Licensing Act licences processed These are new licences, variations to existing licences and changes to designated premises supervisor	<b>34</b>	<b>23</b>
Temporary Event Notices processed	<b>15</b>	<b>42</b>
Animal Welfare Licences processed	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>
Street trader	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>

**3.6 National Issues**

**Information sharing**

Since April this year all licensing authorities have been mandated to check the National Database of Revoked, Refused and Suspended Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Driver licences (NR3S). This is to ensure that information is shared between licensing authorities about applicants where they have been deemed not fit and proper to hold a licence.

In Blackburn with Darwen the NR3S has been used for the last 18 months, before it became a mandatory requirement. The licensing team have uploaded details of 22 drivers who have been refused a licence, 15 who have had their licences revoked and 1 whose licence was suspended in that time.

**Pavement café licences**

Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities have laid the Regulations necessary to extend the Pavement Licensing regime under the Business and Planning Act 2020 for a 3<sup>rd</sup> time. Current licences must expire on 30 September 2023 at the latest, but when the amendments regulations are enacted, all new pavement café licences and renewals issued under the Business & Planning Act 2020 will expired on 30 September 2024.

**4. RATIONALE**

To inform members of the Licensing committee about the key work carried out by staff working within the Council’s Public Protection and Environmental Health Service where there is a connection with businesses and people needing a licence from the Council. It also provides an update on some national licensing issues.

**5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

None.

**6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

None

**7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

None.

**8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

None

**9. CONSULTATIONS**

None

**10 . CONTACT OFFICER**

Denise Andrews – Business Compliance and Licensing Manager  
Telephone 01254 585585