

Agenda

General Purposes Licensing Committee

This meeting will be held on:

Date: **Monday 20 May 2024**

Time: **6.15 pm**

Place: **Long Room - Oxford Town Hall**

For further information please contact:

Celeste Reyeslao, Committee and Members Services Officer, Committee Services Officer

☎ 01865 252946

✉ democraticservices@oxford.gov.uk

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Committee Membership

Councillors: Membership 15: Quorum 5: No substitutes are permitted.

Membership will be confirmed at the Annual Council on Thursday, 15th May 2024.

Apologies and notification of substitutes received before the publication are shown under *Apologies for absence* in the agenda. Those sent after publication will be reported at the meeting. Substitutes for the Chair and Vice-chair do not take on these roles.

Agenda

	Pages
1 Appointment of Chair for the Council Year 2024-25	
2 Appointment of Vice-Chair for the Council Year 2024-25	
3 Apologies for absence	
4 Declarations of interest	
5 Appointment of Sub-Committees	7 - 10
<p>The Head of Law and Governance has submitted a report to establish four sub-committees for the 2024-25 Council Year to deal with casework flowing from the Committee's own responsibilities.</p> <p>Recommendations: That the General Purposes Licensing Committee resolves to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Agree that the casework hearings for taxi, private hire or other driver or vehicle licences, street trading licences and sex establishment licences should be determined by sub-committees on the basis of the Powers and Duties of GPL Sub-Committees at Appendix A.2. Establish four politically-balanced sub-committees of three members, and agree the membership, each to undertake the casework of the General Purposes Licensing Committee as set out in Appendix A:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sub-Committee A: GPL Chair (Councillor 1), Councillor 3, Councillor 4• Sub-Committee B: GPL Vice Chair (Councillor 2), Councillor 5, Councillor 6• Sub-Committee C: GPL Chair (Councillor 1), Councillor 7, Councillor 8• Sub-Committee D: GPL Vice Chair (Councillor 2), Councillor 9, Councillor 103. Agree that substitution is permitted on each of the four sub-committees but that substitutes must be from the General Purposes Licensing Committee and must maintain political proportionality.4. Agree the meeting dates and time listed below.	
6 Update for the General Purposes Licensing Committee	11 - 12
<p>The Supervising Senior Licensing Officer has drafted a report to update Committee Members on the updates to previous General Purposes</p>	

Licensing Committee recommendations.

The Committee are asked to **note** the report.

7 Miscellaneous Licensing Update Report

13 - 18

The Principle Lead Officer has drafted a report to update Committee Members on Miscellaneous Licensing.

The Committee are asked to **note** the report.

8 Minutes of the previous meeting

19 - 24

Recommendation: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2024 as a true and accurate record.

9 Dates and times of meetings

The Committee is scheduled to meet at 6.00pm on the following dates:

23 September 2024

10 February 2025

19 May 2025

Information for those attending

Recording and reporting on meetings held in public

Members of public and press can record, or report in other ways, the parts of the meeting open to the public. You are not required to indicate in advance but it helps if you notify the Committee Services Officer prior to the meeting so that they can inform the Chair and direct you to the best place to record.

The Council asks those recording the meeting:

- To follow the protocol which can be found on the Council's [website](#)
- Not to disturb or disrupt the meeting
- Not to edit the recording in a way that could lead to misinterpretation of the proceedings. This includes not editing an image or views expressed in a way that may ridicule or show a lack of respect towards those being recorded.
- To avoid recording members of the public present, even inadvertently, unless they are addressing the meeting.

Please be aware that you may be recorded during your speech and any follow-up. If you are attending please be aware that recording may take place and that you may be inadvertently included in these.

The Chair of the meeting has absolute discretion to suspend or terminate any activities that in his or her opinion are disruptive.

Councillors declaring interests

General duty

You must declare any disclosable pecuniary interests when the meeting reaches the item on the agenda headed "Declarations of Interest" or as soon as it becomes apparent to you.

What is a disclosable pecuniary interest?

Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to your* employment; sponsorship (ie payment for expenses incurred by you in carrying out your duties as a councillor or towards your election expenses); contracts; land in the Council's area; licenses for land in the Council's area; corporate tenancies; and securities. These declarations must be recorded in each councillor's Register of Interests which is publicly available on the Council's website.

Declaring an interest

Where any matter disclosed in your Register of Interests is being considered at a meeting, you must declare that you have an interest. You should also disclose the nature as well as the existence of the interest. If you have a disclosable pecuniary interest, after having declared it at the meeting you must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

Members' Code of Conduct and public perception

Even if you do not have a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter, the Members' Code of Conduct says that a member "must serve only the public interest and must never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person including yourself" and that "you must not place yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned". The matter of interests must be viewed within the context of the Code as a whole and regard should continue to be paid to the perception of the public.

*Disclosable pecuniary interests that must be declared are not only those of the member her or himself but also those member's spouse, civil partner or person they are living with as husband or wife or as if they were civil partners.

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To: General Purposes Licensing Committee
Date: 20 May 2024
Report of: Head of Law and Governance
Title of Report: Appointment of General Purpose Licensing Sub-Committees

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	To establish four Sub-Committees for the 2024-25 Council Year to deal with the casework flowing from the Committee's own responsibilities.
Corporate Priority	None
Recommendations: That the General Purposes Licensing Committee resolves to:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree that the casework hearings for taxi, private hire or other driver or vehicle licences, street trading consents and sex establishment licences should be determined by sub-committees on the basis of the Powers and Duties of GPL Sub-Committees at Appendix A. 2. Establish four politically-balanced sub-committees of three members, and agree the membership, each to undertake the casework of the General Purposes Licensing Committee as set out in Appendix A: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sub-Committee A: GPL Chair (Councillor 1), Councillor 3, Councillor 4 • Sub-Committee B: GPL Vice Chair (Councillor 2), Councillor 5, Councillor 6 • Sub-Committee C: GPL Chair (Councillor 1), Councillor 7, Councillor 8 • Sub-Committee D: GPL Vice Chair (Councillor 2), Councillor 9, Councillor 10 3. Agree that substitution is permitted on each of the four Sub-Committees but that substitutes must be from the General Purposes Licensing Committee. 4. Agree the meeting dates and time listed below. 	

Appendices	
Appendix A	Powers and Duties of General Purposes Licensing Casework Sub-Committees

1. The General Purposes Licensing Committee (GPL) is asked to establish four Sub-Committees to deal with casework with terms of reference as set out in the Council's Constitution and in Appendix A of this report.
2. The objective of the structure is to broaden membership and allow the development of skills and experience deficit while retaining consistency in decision making. Local Government legislation requires that the sub-committee

needs to be politically balanced. The current composition of the Council means that each sub-committee of 3 should comprise 1 member from the largest group (Labour), 1 member from the second largest group (Liberal Democrats) and 1 member from the third largest group (Green).

3. The Council's Constitution (14.2) requires that when appointing to Sub-Committees where political balance requirements apply, the Council or Committee making the appointment will have regard to the nominations made by political groups and will only deviate from appointing those members in exceptional circumstances with reasons.
4. Sub-Committees would be established as below, with 10 out of 15 GPL members able to participate and all 15 able to act as substitutes on any sub-committee of which they were not a member. Members must complete the compulsory training in order to sit or substitute in the Sub-Committee.

Sub-Committee	Chair	Membership
A	GPL Chair (Councillor 1)	Councillor 3 Councillor 4
B	GPL Vice-Chair (Councillor 2)	Councillor 5 Councillor 6
C	GPL Chair (Councillor 1)	Councillor 7 Councillor 8
D	GPL Vice-Chair (Councillor 2)	Councillor 9 Councillor 10

5. The Sub-Committee is chaired by the Chair (Councillor A) and Vice-Chair (Councillor B) of the GPL Licensing Committee in turn. In the absence of the Chair or Vice-Chair, one of the three Sub-Committee Members chosen by the Sub-Committee will act as Chair.
6. Allocating meeting dates for each sub-committee means that members can diarise their meetings. If a meeting is cancelled, it would mean that the particular sub-committee would not meet and the next meeting would be as scheduled.
7. Meetings of the sub-committees are scheduled to start at 6.00pm on:

Date	Sub-Committee	Date	Sub-Committee	Date	Sub-Committee
28 May 2024	A	2 Sep 2024	A	13 Jan 2025	A
3 June 2024 (extraordinary)	B	14 Oct 2024	B	18 Feb 2025	B
10 Jun 2024	C	26 Nov 2024	C	10 Mar 2025	C
22 Jul 2024	D	17 Dec 2024	D	14 Apr 2025	D

Report author	Celeste Reyeslao
Job title	Committee and Member Services Officer
Service area or department	Law and Governance
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Powers and Duties of General Purposes Licensing Sub-Committees

Powers and Duties

1. To deal with cases concerning applicants for or holders of taxi, private hire or other drivers or vehicle licences brought to the sub-committee by officers
2. To decide taxi and private hire and other vehicle, driver and operator licence applications when the applicant has been issued with a “minded to refuse notice” and has requested a hearing
3. To withdraw and suspend licences for taxis and private hire and other vehicles and their drivers and operators
4. To decide sex establishment licence applications when there are objections
5. To decide new street trading applications
6. To decide applications to renew street trading permission when there has been a complaint about the trader or the trader has broken the conditions of their street trading permission in the past year or where there is competition for a vacant approved site
 - a. Where a trader is in breach of condition as a result of being in arrears, the Head of Planning & Regulatory Services has discretion only to refer significant debt that they feel is not being managed to the General Purposes Licensing Casework Sub-Committee for determination of Consent renewal
7. To decide whether to suspend, extend a period of suspension, end a suspension, vary or revoke a Street Trading Consent for cases referred to the Sub-Committee by the Head of Planning & Regulatory Services

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Update for the General Purposes Licensing Committee on Monday 20th May 2024



During its meeting on 5th February 2024 the General Purposes Licensing Committee resolved to:

1. Request that the Chair of the General Purposes Licensing Committee calls on the Cabinet Member for Citizen Focused Services and Council Companies on behalf of the Committee:
 - i. Urging the provisions of services and mechanic staffing required to carry out maintenance and service work for low emission and/or electric vehicles;
 - ii. **Delegate the Licensing Officers to deliver a report setting out key actions undertaken for update at the Committee's next meeting.**

Key Actions:

- *ODS now have two LEVC certified technicians who can complete the maintenance, service, or any other works on the OCC licenced LEVC (ULEV) Hackney Carriage Vehicles.*
- *With the currently 34 licenced LEVC Hackney Carriages and two certified technicians, there is no substantial waiting time compared to any other licenced Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Vehicle.*

2. Request that the Chair of the General Purposes Licensing Committee calls on the Cabinet Member for Inclusive Economy and Partnerships on behalf of the Committee to:
 - i. Incorporate in the City Centre Action Plan (CCAP) a systematic dissemination of effective city-wide messaging to educate the public on useful taxi information (such as distinctions between Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles) and thereby bolstering support for the trade;
 - ii. **Request a report from Licensing Officers setting out key actions undertaken for update at the Committee's next meeting.**

Key Actions:

- *The Licensing officer met with the Oxford City Centre Manager to discuss the appropriateness of the CCAP for this information, and other methods of systematic dissemination of city-wide messaging.*
- *It was agreed that the CCAP is not the most appropriate location as it is focussed on specific projects, within specific timeframes with project leads, however, the General Licensing team will now liaise with project leads on the existing CCAP projects to advise on Hackney Carriage and Private Hire matters to ensure any information relating to public transport, Hackney Carriages or Private Hires are accurate.*

- *The appropriate location for systematic dissemination of information would be the 'Oxford City Centre Update – Oxford City Council's business newsletter'. Licensing officers will write articles on useful taxi information, such as the distinction between Hackney Carriages and Private Hires, and these articles will be published in the monthly newsletter.*

Author	Joshua Curnow
Job Title	Supervising Senior Licensing Officer
Service Area or department	Community and People
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Email	licensing@oxford.gov.uk

To: General Purposes Licensing Committee
Date: Monday 20 May 2024
Report of: Head of Planning and Regulatory Services
Title of Report: Miscellaneous Licensing Update Report

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	To update Committee on several matters within the Miscellaneous Licensing services group relevant to their delegated responsibilities
Corporate Priority	Enable an inclusive economy and Support Thriving Communities
Policy Framework	Street Trading Policy, Pavement Licensing regime.
Recommendation(s): That the General Purposes Licensing Committee resolves to:	
1. Note the current position and planned officer actions regarding the matters within this report	

1. This report is intended to inform the General Purposes Licensing Committee about progress with and plans regarding some key topics within the remit of the Council's "Miscellaneous Licensing" functions.

Pavement Licensing

2. On 31 March 2024, the temporary pavement licensing provisions introduced by the Business and Planning Act 2020 ("the 2020 Act") were amended by implementation of Section 229 and Schedule 22 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 ("the 2023 Act"). The amendments introduce a permanent pavement licensing regime in England, which retains the key features of the 2020 regime (which was intended to streamline processing and reduce costs) but also incorporates some changes, "*to ensure the long-term sustainability of the pavement licensing model.*" The main changes are shown in Appendix A.
3. The changes were brought about by The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 (Commencement No. 3 and Transitional and Savings Provision) Regulations 2024/389 ("the enabling Regulations"). Transitional Provisions in the enabling Regulations dictate which provisions apply to existing pavement licenses (those in place or subject to an application made before the 1st of April 2024), with new pavement licence applications (those made after 31st

March 2024) coming fully under the amended provisions. Certain new or amended powers, including those of enforcement, apply retrospectively to existing licenses as well as new ones.

4. Under the 2023 Act, it is no longer permissible to grant a Street Café Licence under Section 80 of the Highways Act 1980, except in very specific situations. Existing Street Café Licence holders have been advised that, upon expiry of their current annual licence they will need to apply for a pavement licence under the amended provisions.
5. All existing pavement licence holders have been notified of the changes and that, since their current pavement licence expires on 30th September 2024, they will need to apply for a new, 2-year licence before that date. However, Licensing Authorities should treat this as a renewal application if: it is made by the licence-holder; it is in respect of the same premises; and it is on the same terms as the expired licence (Regulation 5(3), Schedule 22 of the 2023 Act).
6. All web-based content referring to Pavement Licences and Street Café Licences has been updated in line with the changes, together with associated application forms and other documents.

Pavement Licence Smokefree Provisions

7. At its meeting of 5th February 2024, Committee requested “*the Business Regulations Team to prepare a report setting out the feasibility and implementation requirements for an amendment to the pavement licence provision to include an incentivised fee for smoke-free and vape-free establishments, for consideration of the Committee at its next meeting in May 2024.*”
8. The earlier than expected commencement of the 2023 Act has required Business Regulation Team officers to prioritise implementation measures over other work. It has not been possible to produce the requested report, though working towards a report for the 22nd September Committee meeting has begun.

Street Trading and Traffic Management Controls

9. In considering an application for renewal of a Street Trading Consent from James Sheriff, at its 25th March 2024 meeting, the General Purposes Licensing Casework Sub-Committee (“the Sub-Committee”) discussed the legal and policy status of street trading and traffic management controls, as implemented by the City and County Councils, respectively. Having done so, they resolved to:
 - a. **Grant** Mr Sherriff’s renewal application for Street Trading Consent, subject to the same conditions to that of his previous consent, enabling him to trade until 31 March 2025
 - b. **Refer** the matter of the review of the Council’s consultation processes and policy, including Section 6.4 of the Street Trading Policy, to the General Purposes Licensing Committee.
 - c. **Request** the Chair of the General Purposes Committee to call on the relevant Cabinet Members of both City and County Councils to review the traffic restrictions imposed on Frideswide Square and align this with the shared vision of both councils in relation to their policies on public realms.

10. Regarding item 8.b., officers have liaised with their County Council colleagues to amend the process for street trading application consultation, so that it ensures that all relevant teams within the Highway Authority are able to comment upon each application.
11. Regarding consultation policy, including Section 6.4, officers consider that a review would need to take account of the outcomes from any actions taken in response to the request in item 8.c. A further update on this matter will therefore be submitted to the next Committee Meeting of 23rd September 2024.
12. In support of elected Members as they engage with Item 8.c., officers have raised the matter of Frideswide Square traffic restriction review with the City-County Active Transport Group (CCAT). Officers consider that the principles and process for such a review would also apply to the wider review of 20 other street trading sites in the city, which are located in or near to traffic management-controlled areas.

Street Trading Consent numbers

13. As of 1st May 2024, 35 Street Trading Consents are in place. These result from 35 renewal applications, including 5 from traders who started up in 2023-24. In the same period, 4 consent holders ceased trading, with 1 closing one of 2 sites. This represents an overall increase in consents issued of one, compared to 2022-23.
14. One new application is in hand, awaiting referral to Sub-Committee for decision.
15. The St Aldate's fixed site (previously occupied by Gore's Van) has not been advertised, pending the outcome of the wider site review. A vacant site in High Street will be advertised shortly.
16. Overall, the demand for street trading sites continues to exceed the number of suitable sites available.

Finance Issues

17. The Fees & Charges scheme recommended to Budget Council by the Committee, came into effect on 1st April 2024. This includes the scheme provisions for the new maximum pavement licence fees allowed under the 2023 Act.

Legal Issues

18. The enforcement of legal requirements made under national legislation is subject to the Council's Corporate Enforcement Policy. Licensing officers have regard to this Policy for example in using education, encouragement, and enforcement to uphold statutory requirements and encourage good practice.

Equality impact

19. There are no adverse impacts anticipated on anyone with protected characteristics.

Environmental implications

20. There are no environmental considerations arising directly from this report overall. Though environmental impact and preventive measures form part of the Council's Street Trading Policy 2023.

Report author	David Stevens
	Principal Lead Officer Business Regulation Team Planning and Regulatory Services dstevens@oxford.gov.uk

APPENDIX A

1. On 31 March 2024, the pavement licensing provisions laid out in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (LURA 2023) amended the temporary provisions introduced by the Business and Planning Act 2020 (BPA 2020). The new and amended provisions introduce a permanent pavement licensing regime in England, which retains the key features of the 2020 regime (which was intended to streamline processing and reduce costs) but also incorporates some changes, *“to ensure the long-term sustainability of the pavement licensing model.”*
2. Section 229 and Schedule 22 of the LURA 2023 contain amendments to Part 1, Section 1 of BPA 2020, thereby creating a permanent and slightly varied pavement licensing regime. These changes are brought about by [The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 \(Commencement No. 3 and Transitional and Savings Provision\) Regulations 2024](#)
3. The key changes
 - a. The application fee is no longer capped at £100 but instead but at £500 for first time applications and £350 for renewal applications, subject to each local authority deciding the level of fee up to the cap.
 - b. Local authorities may now grant pavement licences for a length of their choosing up to a maximum of two years.
 - c. The 7-day consultation and 7-day determination periods provided under the temporary regime, are now extended to 14 days for each.
 - d. Local authorities will now, with the consent of the licence-holder, be able to amend the licence in certain circumstances.
 - e. Local authorities are now able to serve notice on businesses who have placed furniture on the relevant highway without the required licence. If furniture continues to be placed on the highway, in contravention of the notice, the authority may remove and store the furniture, recover the costs from the business for the removal and storage of the furniture, and refuse to return the furniture until those costs have been paid. If within three months of the notice being served, the costs are not paid, the authority can dispose of the furniture by sale or other means and retain the proceeds.
 - f. Any licence application for activities in England licensable under pavement licensing legislation in the Business and Planning Act 2020 must now be granted under that Act (as amended by section 229 of and schedule 22 to the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act). It (therefore) should not be granted under the Highways Act 1980 (which applies to Street Cafes)
4. There are also some significant changes to the [Guidance](#) on the interpretation of the national *no obstruction* condition, including:
 - a. that when considering the needs of disabled people, under normal circumstances a width of 2000mm is the minimum that should be provided. In cases where this is not possible, a width of 1500mm could be regarded as the

minimum acceptable distance. Though, local authorities should take a proportionate approach when measuring this.

- b. when considering the no obstruction condition licencing officers should be mindful of the cumulative impact of multiple pavement licences and the potential impact this could have on disabled pavement users

Minutes of a meeting of the General Purposes Licensing Committee on Monday 5 February 2024



Committee members present:

Councillor Mundy (Chair)	Councillor Clarkson (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Lygo	Councillor Humberstone
Councillor Upton	Councillor Waite
Councillor Miles	Councillor Muddiman
Councillor Rawle	Councillor Thomas
Councillor Coyne	

Officers present for all or part of the meeting:

Alison Daly, Legal Adviser
David Stevens, Principal Team Lead
Joshua Curnow, Supervising Senior Licensing Officer
Jonathan Malton, Committee and Member Services Manager
Celeste Reyeslao, Committee and Member Services Officer
Tanaka Merralls, Trainee Solicitor

Also present:

Councillor Anna Railton, Cabinet Member for Zero Carbon Oxford and Climate Justice

Apologies:

Councillor(s) Hunt, Smowton and Sandelson sent apologies.

18. Election of Chair for the remainder of the Council Year 2023-24

Councillor Edward Mundy was elected Chair for the remainder of 2023-24 Council Year.

19. Declarations of interest

Item 4: Licensed Vehicles Emission Standards Amendment

Councillor Rae Humberstone stated he had met with the secretary of City of Oxford Licensed Taxicab Association (COLTA) in relation to this subject matter; it was not a pecuniary interest; the Councillor made the declarations for reasons of transparency and indicated he would leave the room during the consideration of this item.

Councillor Edward Mundy stated he had met with members of COLTA in relation to this subject matter; it was not a pecuniary interest; the Councillor made the declaration

for reasons of transparency and indicated that he would consider the application with a free and open mind.

20. Licensed Vehicles Emission Standards Amendment

Cllr Humberstone left the meeting having declared an interest on this item.

The General Purposes Licensing Committee considered a report from the Executive Director for Communities and People to delay the introduction of new emission standards for Hackney Carriage Vehicles licensed by this Authority.

Joshua Curnow, Supervising Senior Licensing Officer, reminded the Committee that it had approved the roadmap for emissions standards in January 2019, highlighting the next stages of the roadmap including the requirement for all new and renewal Hackney Carriage Vehicle applications to meet the ultra-low emission vehicles standard beginning 1 January 2025. The Committee was asked to consider options set out in the report which had been included in the agenda pack and circulated prior to the meeting.

The Licensing Officer informed the Committee that COLTA had submitted a request for an adjournment following the publication of the agenda and explained that Mr Sajad Khan, Secretary of COLTA, was in attendance to present this request before the Committee.

Mr Khan addressed the Committee and clarified that COLTA had decided to retract its request for an adjournment. In the absence of questions for the Licensing Officer, the Chair invited Mr Khan to speak.

Mr Khan provided an overview of the challenges faced by the taxi trade in Oxford, highlighting the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic between March 2020 and July 2021, and the cost of living crisis that followed where drivers expressed difficulties in sustaining their livelihoods. He further highlighted the substantial impacts of the recent industrial action and the implementation of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, stating that the lessened sources of fares due to train strikes, prolonged routes and increased fares all had resulted in the challenges that the drivers currently faced.

Mr Khan also raised concerns regarding Oxford Direct Service' (ODS) inability to provide services for Low Emission Vehicles or carry out warranty work for electric cars which forced drivers to seek services outside of Oxford, impacting the affordability of electric taxis. It was emphasised that the taxi trade did not contribute significantly to carbon emissions compared to other sectors.

In response to questions from members of the Committee, Mr Khan provided the following points:

- A second-hand electric vehicles scheme was introduced which offered drivers £5,000 grant including waiving of licensing application and MOT fees. Approximately 20 drivers took part in the scheme. It was pointed out that whilst some drivers opted for brand-new vehicles simply due to personal preference and financial capability, the majority of the trade were not afforded this option.
- Oxford had a Hackney Carriage limit of 107 vehicles. Some proprietorships that were in 2019 had changed through private transfers which were often within families.

- COLTA had met with Clipper Cab regarding a technology which converted diesel vehicles to zero-emission products however these vehicles offered limited electric mileage that were not suitable for the trade.

Mr Khan further elaborated on the issue relating to the unavailability of LEVC qualified mechanics at ODS, explaining that when electric vehicles fail its compliance test, they would immediately be removed from commission until repairs were undertaken. Mr Khan further stated that LEVC vehicles could only be repaired by LEVC approved mechanics, prompting drivers to seek repairs outside of Oxford, resulting in longer wait time and temporary loss of income for affected drivers. Despite discussions with ODS, no definitive resolution had been reached.

The Licensing Officer and Mr Khan answered final questions from the Committee.

Having discussed with the relevant Cabinet Member prior to this meeting, the Chair wished to put on record that the Council's current rate of progression in electric vehicle uptake exceeded 30%.

The Committee acknowledged the challenges voiced in the representations made at this meeting. The Committee reflected on the reasons that led to the introduction of the policy in 2019 and recognised the pressing issues of climate change and the general health and well-being of the city.

The Committee thanked Mr Khan and members of COLTA for their valuable contributions.

Councillor Lois Muddiman, on being seconded by Councillor Mark Lygo, proposed to delay the requirement for all Taxis to be ULEV by January 2026, and put to the vote.

The General Purposes Licensing Committee resolved to:

1. **Request** that the Chair of the General Purposes Licensing Committee calls on the Cabinet Member for Citizen Focused Services and Council Companies on behalf of the Committee:
 - i. Urging the provisions of services and mechanic staffing required to carry out maintenance and service work for low emission and/or electric vehicles;
 - ii. Delegate the Licensing Officers to deliver a report setting out key actions undertaken for update at the Committee's next meeting.
2. **Request** that the Chair of the General Purposes Licensing Committee calls on the Cabinet Member for Inclusive Economy and Partnerships on behalf of the Committee to:
 - i. Incorporate in the City Centre Action Plan (CCAP) a systematic dissemination of effective city-wide messaging to educate the public on useful taxi information (such as distinctions between Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles) and thereby bolstering support for the trade;
 - ii. Request a report from Licensing Officers setting out key actions undertaken for update at the Committee's next meeting.
3. **Agree** to delay the introduction of ultra-low emission standards for Hackney Carriage Vehicles licensed by this Authority by:
 - Delaying the requirement for all Taxis to be ULEV by one year (January 2026)
4. **Agree** the amendments be recommended to Council for adoption.

Cllr Humberstone re-joined the meeting.

21. Commercial Events, Hackney Carriage and Private Hire, Road Closure Orders, Scrap Metal Dealers, Sex Establishments and Street Parties: Licence Fees and Charges for the 2024/25 financial year

The General Purposes Licensing Committee considered a report from the Executive Director for Communities and People seeking agreement of the licence fees for 2024/25 where the Council has discretion over the level of fee charged.

Joshua Curnow, Supervising Senior Licensing Officer presented the report, highlighting the changes in fees to cover the authority's costs with inflation, namely an 8% uplift for commercial events and events with no commercial element, including street parties, sex establishments and sexual entertainment venues, and a 7% to 8% uplift for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licensing. It was noted that where an application met the test of being a community or charitable event with no commercial gain, the fee could be waived by the authority to support the event. He further advised that licensing for scrap metal dealers and collectors was an executive function and had been submitted to Cabinet for consultation in December 2023 for Council approval in February 2024.

In response to a question from the Committee, the Licensing Officer clarified that fees indicated in red text within the appended report signified a reduction, removal or introduction of new charges which had replaced outdated services. These adjustments were made to some fees, including Right to Work (RTW) and Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) online checks, to streamline administrative processes for the benefit of both the authority and applicants.

Councillor Louise Upton asked a question relating to road closures for temporary events such as the Christmas Market. The Licensing Officer clarified that one fee was required for the closure of a road, while licensable fees related to activities of trader stalls were subject to legislation outside the scope of the recommendations proposed.

Councillor Katherine Miles raised a question regarding school street closure for timed period. The Licensing Officer indicated that this matter was outside the remit of the authority as it fell under the responsibility and control of the County Council.

The General Purposes Licensing Committee resolved to:

1. **Agree** the licence fees and charges for 2024/25 as set out in the Appendix 1 and recommend them to Council.

22. Miscellaneous Licensing: Fees and Charges for the 2023/24 financial year

The General Purposes Licensing Committee considered a report from the Executive Director for Communities and People seeking agreement of the licence fees for 2024/25 where the Council has discretion over the level of fee charged.

David Stevens, Principal Team Lead, introduced the report.

Councillor Katherine Miles proposed an amendment to the pavement licence provision, suggesting the addition of a discretion to incentivise establishments committed to maintaining a smoke-free environment.

Councillor Mark Lygo endorsed the proposed reduction in pavement licence fees for smoke-free establishments. He raised concerns regarding its enforcement within the authority. The Legal Adviser responded that this was a matter of debate for the General Purposes Licensing Committee. The Principal Team Lead raised a point regarding the short-term feasibility of the proposed amendment and the need for fee approval by Council at its Budget meeting in February 2024. He suggested a future report setting out the necessary steps and requirements for implementing the proposed amendments for the consideration of the Committee.

Councillor Lois Muddiman expressed her support for the proposal and suggested extending the provision to include vape-free environments.

Following further discussions, the General Purposes Licensing Committee resolved to:

1. **Agree** the licensing fees and charges for 2024/25 as follows:
 - i. Approve the proposed Fees & Charges for Miscellaneous Licensing Services, with the exception of Pavement Licenses and Street Café Licenses, as set out in Appendix 1.
 - ii. Set future Fees under the new pavement licence provisions in the Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (when they come into force) at the upper limits of £500 and £350, as set out in Appendix 2.
 - iii. To continue to charge £100 for Street Café Licenses, and to increase the annual fees for new licence to £250 and annual fees for existing licence to £175.
 - iv. Apply increases made in iii. above from a date consistent with that set by the pavement licence implementing legislative provisions.
2. **Request** the Business Regulations Team to prepare a report setting out the feasibility and implementation requirements for an amendment to the pavement licence provision to include an incentivised fee for smoke-free and vape-free establishments, for consideration of the Committee at its next meeting in May 2024.
3. **Recommend** the agreed fees and charges for 2024/25 to Council for adoption.

23. Minutes of the previous meeting

The Committee agreed to **approve** the minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2023 and extraordinary meeting held on 4 December 2023 as true and accurate records.

24. Dates and times of meetings

The Committee noted the dates and times of future meetings.

The meeting started at 6.15 pm and ended at 7.48 pm

Chair

Date: Monday 20 May 2024

When decisions take effect:

Cabinet: after the call-in and review period has expired

*Planning Committees: after the call-in and review period has expired and the formal
decision notice is issued*

All other committees: immediately.

Details are in the Council's Constitution.