

Boston Borough Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **Licensing Committee** held in the Committee Room - Municipal Buildings, West Street, Boston, PE21 8QR on Tuesday 10th June 2025 at 2.00 pm.

Present:

Councillor Lina Savickiene, in the Chair.

Councillors John Baxter, Stuart Evans, Paul Gleeson, Chris Mountain, Jonathan Noble and Stephen Woodliffe.

Officers:

Senior Licensing Officer and Democratic Services Team Leader.

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Richard Austin, James Cantwell, Anne Dorrian, Neil Drayton, Helen Staples and Suzanne Welberry (Vice-Chairman).

In the absence of the Vice-Chairman, Councillor Paul Gleeson sat at the top table to assist the Chairman.

2 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

3 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 24th September 2024 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4 Public Questions

No questions were received.

5 Licensing Act 2003 Draft Statement of Licensing Policy

The Senior Licensing Officer presented a report outlining proposed revisions to the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy, in accordance with the Licensing Act 2003. The revised draft policy, attached as Appendix 1, included both minor and material amendments, with new sections addressing safeguarding, modern slavery, counter-terrorism (in light of the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, also known as Martyn's Law), and the Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) applicable to parts of Boston town centre. Following consultation, a schedule of responses would be brought back to the committee for consideration and for a final draft to be approved, with a recommendation for it be referred to Full Council for adoption.

Members discussed the report and commented as follows:

- Members queried the enforceability of suggested conditions under the PSPO, such as restrictions on high-strength alcohol and single-can sales. The Senior Licensing Officer clarified that these were advisory conditions that applicants are encouraged to offer voluntarily and could only be mandated if imposed via a Licensing Sub-Committee following formal representations, typically from Lincolnshire Police.
- The Senior Licensing Officer informed members of the origin of “Martyn’s Law”, which was named after Martyn Hett, a victim of the Manchester Arena bombing.
- The Senior Licensing Officer confirmed the current population of Boston was 70,500, based on recent ONS data.
- Members praised the clarity of the report. The Senior Licensing Officer clarified that the last review had taken place in 2020.
- It was requested that the Council’s corporate enforcement policy be circulated to Committee Members.
- A query was raised regarding the relevance of legacy licensing signage in parish halls, which the Senior Licensing Officer confirmed was no longer required under current legislation. Further questions were asked regarding charity bingo events (confirmed to fall under gambling legislation) and the licensing of barbershops, which the Senior Licensing Officer advised were outside the scope of the Licensing Act 2003 and may be subject to planning controls.
- Concerns were raised that the PSPO boundary excluded a major supermarket known to sell high-strength alcohol, thereby limiting the order’s effectiveness. The Senior Licensing Officer advised that the PSPO boundaries were determined by the Community Safety Team, often based on crime data, and undertook to pass the comments on.
- Members questioned the enforceability of conditions, particularly in relation to larger retailers. It was noted that while the policy was robust, its impact was dependent on enforcement capacity. The Senior Licensing Officer explained that enforcement, including test purchasing, was undertaken by Lincolnshire Police, though resource constraints might limit frequency. It was also noted that retrospective conditions on existing licences could only be added as part of a formal review process.
- It was queried whether the Police still conducted test purchases for underage alcohol sales. The Senior Licensing Officer confirmed that such operations continued, albeit less frequently, and were often combined with checks on tobacco and vape sales.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor John Baxter and seconded by Councillor Jonathan Noble.

Resolved:

That the draft Statement of Licensing Policy, at Appendix 1 within the report, be approved for consultation.

The Meeting ended at 2.24 pm.