

## Licensing Service

### Proposed Workplan 2025

#### Achievements from previous plan:

- Licensing Fees review undertaken - annual requirement
- Updated Statement of Licensing Policy – Licensing Act (5-year policy)
- Determination Hearings LA03 – Change to constitution
- Temporary Licences – Clear Guidance for Officers/Service Users
- Private Hire Operators – Compliance Checks following amendments to licence conditions
- Pavement Licence Policy – Updated and complaint district
- Updates to taxi policy – prescribed roof-sign now optional
- Premises update – inspections/volume of applications/compliance levels
- WAV – Changes to PHO conditions (1 WAV per 10 vehicles)

Project	Scope	Reason	Risks	Timeline	Progress – March 2025
To Review the Councils Statement of Gambling Policy (Valid for 3 years)	Review content and aspirations of the Council in terms of how it will deal with Gambling Act 2005 matters, including applications and enforcement.	Statutory Requirement	Legal Challenge	Urgent	Licensing Officer reviewing current policy.
Review of Hackney Carriage Rank Provision	A full Hackney Carriage stand review has been required for a number of years and has been highlighted as part of the most recent unmet demand survey.	<p>To improve availability of Hackney carriages to the public</p> <p>To prevent misuse of current stands by members of the public.</p>	Failure to review ranks regularly will lead to issues of non-compliance and or out of date signs and lines.	Ongoing	Contact was made with Highways Officer. It was advised that the costs of the review would have to be met by LCC, they are significant, roughly

			The trade requires ranks in suitable locations.		<p>12k.</p> <p>2024 improvements made to Arndale HC stand.</p> <p>2025 Lancaster Bus Station and Brock St updates a priority.</p> <p>Intention to tackle outdated stand signs/lines as/when identified to keep costs minimal.</p>
Review Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Policy	<p>The policy was implemented by Licensing committee in April 2022.</p> <p>It brought together all existing policies, application standards, specifications and expectations of licence-holders of Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing into one document.</p>	<p>Policies require regular reviews, particularly in light of significant changes to process/applications.</p>	<p>Information provided is out of date and incorrect.</p>	<p>Will need to align with digitalisation project</p>	<p>Licensing Manager maintains a running list of matters requiring review or attention as part of the review.</p> <p>Updates actioned eg. Roof-signs/wheelchair accessible vehicle PHO condition.</p> <p>Taxi and private hire liaison group will identify matters to review/consult trade.</p>

Promote Commercial Services	To promote paid service “Licensing Direct” and Personal licensing training courses.	<p>To assist business start-ups and existing licence holders.</p> <p>Ensure valid applications are applied for every time.</p> <p>Reduce time spent by Officers amending applications and liaising with applicants.</p>	<p>Reduced capacity in team to meet demand (Staffing Levels/Sickness/Annual Leave)</p> <p>Sourcing Trainers</p>	Ongoing	<p>Licensing Officers offering paid services as/when applicable.</p> <p>Non-priority.</p>
<p>Hackney Carriage Fare Review 2025/26</p> <p>Annual Requirement</p>	Methodology and frequency of fare reviews was determined by the Council Cabinet in April 2022.	To ensure fares reflect the cost of living.	Further decrease in availability of drivers/vehicle in the District – licensed trade becomes unsustainable.	November 2025	<p>Review will begin using RPI from November 2025.</p> <p>Trade will be consulted on preferred options – Fares maintained 2024, with many of the trade believing an uplift would be detrimental.</p>
Multi-Agency Vehicle Operation	<p>Planned Operation with partner agencies, Lancashire Constabulary/DVLA/VOSA.</p> <p>Provides an opportunity to complete a high number of vehicle inspections, check compliance with licence conditions.</p>	<p>To ensure the licensed fleet of HC/PHVs are mechanically fit and roadworthy.</p> <p>Additionally, that condition/signage requirements are met</p>	Members of the trade become complacent regarding compliance with licence conditions, leading to a poorly maintained fleet.	Summer 2025	<p>Licensing Officers will plan the operation, involving DVLA/traffic police.</p> <p>Date(s) tbc.</p>

	The trade will not be notified of when the operation will be conducted, if requested they will be required to present their vehicle for inspection.				
Licensing Fees Review	Licensing Manager to conduct a full Licensing fee review based on full cost recovery.	Licensing Fees should allow for full cost recovery, it is important to regularly review fees on that basis.	Legal Challenge - Judicial review	Early 2026	Set in line with budget  New fees to take effect from April 2025.
Scrap Metal Compliance and Enforcement Activity	Ensure all those operating in/around the District have the relevant licences  To improve compliance and standards in the District.  Facilitate a multi-agency approach, involving internal and external partners	It has been highlighted that the number of licensed Scrap Metal Dealers has reduced since legislation/licensing requirements in 2013.  Compliance visits and spot checks have not been conducted in previous years due to other service priorities	Illegal activity in the District increases, putted added pressure on colleagues in other departments and external partners eg. Police	Ongoing	Little resource to conduct programmed inspections.
Review of Street Trading Policy	To liaise with colleagues in Economic Development, Public Realm and Food Safety Team regarding potential improvements to the current street trading policy in respect of consent/ licence and prohibited streets for street trading.  Ensure that permitted street traders are subject to appropriate public safety checks	The current policy does not take account of where on permitted streets trading can take place.  To help ensure a balanced and level playing field approach between high street	Some mobile traders may lose income and become unsustainable.  Enquiries receive conflicting information/unclear application process etc.	When resources allow	Little resource to conduct programmed inspections.  Licensing Manager intentions is to create an action plan for consideration colleagues/group.

	Formal consultation regarding any proposed changes	businesses and mobile street traders  To help avoid mobile traders locating outside inappropriate locations e.g. schools Options to introduce a charging policy and increase revenue			
Digitalisation of Licensing Service	The Licensing service were part of an OBR/People 2 project to look at digitalisation.  The outcome of the project was reported to the Councils Cabinet.  A set of recommendations have drafted and working groups set up to address the actions required.	To streamline application processes, making a positive customer experience, with streamlined, clear instructions and information available.	The service will not meet the needs of its licence-holders/ users.	Ongoing throughout 2025/26	Front end - Website Information updated.  All Taxi/PH applications now online.  Intention to move Licensing Act/Misc licences digital.
Unmet Demand Survey 2025/26	Licensing Service currently caps number of Hackney carriages (108) – as such need to undertake unmet demand every 3 years.	Report is used as a basis to maintain cap.	Legal challenge	Early 2026	Will engage with procurement process mid-2025.
Review Vehicle Licensing Procedures, Inspections and Maintenance	Vehicle Licensing, including length of licence, testing standards and the products used require review.	To align digitalisation with efficient, streamlined products and processes	Digitalisation outcomes have marginal impact	March 2026	No progress made as yet.

**Colour coding Key (Priority)**

	<b>Lowest Priority</b>
	<b>Medium Priority</b>
	<b>Highest Priority</b>

**Colour coding Key (Progress)**

	<b>On track or completed</b>
	<b>Behind schedule but progressing ok</b>
	<b>Significantly behind schedule, delayed, at risk or no progress</b>