

LICENSING COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, 13 MAY 2025

Minutes of the meeting of the Licensing Committee held at Committee Room - 2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Tuesday, 13 May 2025 at 1.45 pm

Present

Members:

James Tumbridge
Deputy John Fletcher
Brendan Barns
Deputy Peter Dunphy

Anthony David Fitzpatrick
Deputy Marianne Fredericks
David Sales

In Attendance

Dr Joanna Abeyie (online)
Deputy Henry Pollard (in the room)
Deputy Ceri Wilkins (online)

Officers:

Andrew Buckingham	- Town Clerk's Department
Paul Holmes	- City of London Police
Aggie Minas	- Environment Department
Ross Morton	- City of London Police
Sadhari Perera	- Comptroller and City Solicitor
Jenny Pitcairn	- Chamberlain's Department
Rachel Pye	- Environment Department
Gavin Stedman	- Environment Department
Raquel Pinto	- Town Clerk's Department

With Deputy Marianne Fredericks in the Chair until item 4.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Dr Joanna Abeyie, Jason Pritchard, Sushil Saluja and Deputy Ceri Wilkins. Members noted that both Dr Joanna Abeyie and Deputy Ceri Wilkins were observing the meeting online.

2. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no declarations.

3. ORDER OF THE COURT OF COMMON COUNCIL

The Committee received an Order of the Court of Common Council dated 25th April 2025 appointing the Committee and setting its terms of reference for the ensuing year.

RECEIVED

4. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

The Committee proceeded to elect a Chair in accordance with Standing Order No 28.

Deputy John Fletcher being the only Member expressing their willingness to serve, was duly elected Chairman for the ensuing year.

The Chairman thanked Members for their confidence in his election and looked forward to working with the Members and Officers over the next year. The Chairman also wanted to place on record the Committee's thanks to the following Members who were no longer on this Committee for their service: Mary Durcan, Sophie Fernandes, Michael Hudson and Luis Tilleria.

At this point in the meeting, Deputy Marianne Fredericks moved a Vote of Thanks to James Tumbridge, the immediate past Chairman.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: THAT the Members of this Committee take great pleasure in expressing to

JAMES TUMBRIDGE

their sincere gratitude and appreciation for the dedication he has shown in all aspects of the work of this Committee, and the exemplary and efficient manner in which he has presided over proceedings during the last three years as Chairman of the Licensing Committee.

He has been very active in the work of the Committee and has shown great leadership in steering the Committee through a period of change and working to deliver economic growth including ensuring the City's hospitality offer is considered as integral to the development of the Destination City Programme.

James has embedded the view that the City's success is not due solely to its status as a global financial centre, but also because of its attractiveness to workers, residents, and visitors has been essential in the development of a permanent offer for the City Corporation's [al fresco dining policy](#) and the launch of an [interactive map](#) to help organisations and people decide where to invest in, live, and visit were two highlights of a productive Chairmanship.

He also presided over the year in which the ['Safety Thirst'](#) accreditation scheme was relaunched, which saw a record 75 City venues accredited, all of them keen to demonstrate the importance that they place on the safety of customers and staff.

Under James's chairmanship, a revised Code of Good Practice, Pool of Model Conditions and a new Statement of Licensing Principles in line with the Gambling Act 2005 were put forward by the Committee and were approved by the Court of Common Council in 2022 and 2024 respectively.

With the support of the City Corporation, the number of licensed premises in the City returned to pre-pandemic levels during James' tenure. Currently at 960

licensed premises., the City's hospitality offering is thriving and remains one of the safest places to socialise in London.

He has also recognised the need for a flourishing safe night-time economy in the City and across London through his support of key initiatives such as Operation Reframe.

During his tenure, 16 licensing hearings took place including 1 personal licence review, and he paid particular attention to ensuring Hearings were conducted in a fair, clear and open manner. There were also no successful appeals against the decisions of the Licensing Sub-Committees under Mr Tumbridge's chairmanship.

Throughout his term of office, James has managed the Committee's deliberations with pace and a fair and firm hand to ensure that the Committee executed its duties in a competent manner.

Finally, in congratulating their former Chairman upon a most successful term of office, his colleagues wish to thank him for his enthusiasm and commitment and to express the hope that with continued good health and happiness he can continue to serve the City Corporation for many years to come.

5. ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIRMAN

The Committee proceeded to elect a Deputy Chairman in accordance with Standing Order No. 29.

James Tumbridge, being the only Member expressing their willingness to serve, was duly elected Deputy Chairman for the ensuing year.

The Deputy Chairman expressed his gratitude for the vote of thanks and for the privilege to work with both members and officers of this Committee.

6. PUBLIC MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on 6 February were approved as a correct record.

7. APPOINTMENT OF SUB-COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN AND REFERENCE SUB-COMMITTEE

The Committee was asked to appoint four Members to the Licensing Hearings Sub Committee, noting that this would be in addition to the appointment Chairman, Deputy Chairman and past Committee Chairmen.

Only two expressions were received prior to the meeting, so the two remaining vacancies were opened up to Members in the room.

The Town Clerk asked Members to consider Standing Order 26, whereby the previous practice of allowing additional Members onto Sub Committees, in order to avoid a ballot, should be by exception and only if it is in the best interests of the Committee and the Sub Committee.

Three Members came forward, which would have triggered a ballot, however, Members unanimously agreed that, in the case of Licensing Hearings, which are often called at short notice and take place during recess periods, a larger pool of Members is desirable, therefore agreeing to allow an additional Member.

RESOLVED – That the following Members be appointed to Chair the Licensing Hearing Sub Committee, together with the Chairman, Deputy Chairman and any past Committee Chairmen:

Dr Joanna Abeyie
Brendan Barns
Anthony Fitzpatrick
David Sales
Deputy Ceri Wilkins

8. **APPEALS AGAINST LICENSING (HEARING) SUB COMMITTEE DECISIONS**

The Comptroller & City Solicitor provided an update in relation to one appeal logged in relation to the Sub-Committee decision regarding the hearing on the premise license for Tokyo Hit, Ground Floor & Basement, 165 Fleet Street, EC4A 2AE, held on the 10th of April 2024.

The appeal against the licensing decision for Tokyo Hit, was with the Magistrates' Court. Court directions had been issued, and the applicant has submitted a summary of factual and legal issues. However, evidence had not yet been filed. Members also noted that a second respondent has appealed the planning permission. There was no trial date set yet, but both parties were following the Court's directions. It was anticipated that without prejudice discussions would take place to explore a potential settlement out of court, depending on the evidence submitted. The Committee noted that with regards to the negotiated proposal, officers typically handle such matters, though they consult the Chair and Deputy Chair. Final decisions were pending, and both parties were awaiting further developments.

9. **DELEGATED DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ENVIRONMENT PERTAINING TO PREMISES LICENCES**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director Environment, relating to premises licences, and variations to premises licences, granted under the Licensing Act 2003 and administered by the Licensing Service from 1 December 2024 to 28 February 2025.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted

10. **UPDATE ON ONGOING WORK STREAMS**

The Committee noted the following updates regarding the various ongoing workstreams:

Website Content Review

Officers reviewed the website and supporting documents to assess the balance between the information provided to the trade and to residents. Improvements were being made to the content's clarity and accessibility, especially around

signposting support for residents making representations. Final sign-off was pending, after which the updated content would be shared with the Committee

Decision Letters

A review was underway to improve the format and accessibility of the Sub-Committee's decision letters following recent hearings. The Comptroller's team was leading on this work, and a draft structure would be circulated to Committee Members once this was ready.

Late Night Levy Leaflet

A short leaflet was being prepared to inform levy payers about the benefits they receive, including statistics from police, cleansing, and environmental health services. This would be launched at the City of London Police Licensing Forum on the 2 July 2025. The leaflet would also include information about discounts available through participation in the Safety Thirst scheme.

The Chairman requested to receive a note on the timing of when all the various changes would take place.

A Member asked for the decisions and minutes of each hearing to be easily accessible under the Sub-Committee's page, as currently it was difficult to navigate the Corporation's website to find these. The Town Clerk assured Members this would be looked into and would work with the City Comptroller to rectify this.

Finally, the Chairman asked for dates/invitations to be circulated to the Committee on the upcoming Licensing Forum and upcoming Op Reframe dates.

11. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**
There were no questions.

12. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**
There were two items raised.

The Deputy Chairman informed that at a recent Policy and Resources Committee meeting, concerns were raised about how the City Corporation's venues were preparing to comply with Martyn's Law, noting that this Committee has given the issue more thought than others. Approval was secured to encourage cross-departmental collaboration to avoid siloed efforts and share practical insights, especially as unclear guidance and high compliance costs were disproportionately affecting smaller venues. The aim was to support the City's venues and destination programme while potentially feeding back to Government on the challenges of implementation.

The Chairman updated the Committee on the four outstanding vacancies for the Licensing Committee. Three Members had expressed an interest and would be appointed at the next Court of Common Council meeting on the 22 May 2025, which would leave one remaining vacancy. The Chairman encouraged members to reach out to any interested parties. Secondly, the Chairman also suggested that at the next meeting of the Committee, that an agenda item which looked at

Martyn's Law as well as other expected changes which would impact the work of the committee with proposals as to how this would be integrated.

13. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

RESOLVED - That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

14. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

RESOLVED – That the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2025, be approved as correct record.

The Deputy Chairman noted that at the last meeting, he gave his thanks at the end of the meeting which happened to be under non-public session and asked if this could be moved into the public record. The Town Clerk agreed to make the necessary change.

15. **CITY OF LONDON POLICE QUARTERLY UPDATE QUARTER 1**

The Committee received a report of the Commissioner of Police containing data from Quarter 1 2025, relating to the nighttime economy, offences recorded by police, and police operations.

16. **APPENDIX 4: DELEGATED DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ENVIRONMENT PERTAINING TO PREMISES LICENCES RECEIVED.**

17. **NON PUBLIC QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**
One question was raised.

18. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**
There was no urgent business.

The meeting ended at 2:50 pm

Chairman

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