

MINUTES OF THE
REGULATORY COMMITTEE

held on 20 November 2025 at 7pm

Present:

Councillor D. Clark (Chair)

Councillors H. Clark, A. Davidson, S. Davis, J. Frasca, J. Lardge, R. Lee, S. Manley, S. Scott and P. Wilson

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mascot and Pappa. Cllr Lardge substituted for Cllr Mascot.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2025 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3. Declaration of Interests

All Members were reminded to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary interests or other registerable interests where appropriate in any items of business on the meeting's agenda. None were made.

4. Public Question Time

[Three public questions were asked at the meeting which can be viewed via this link.](#)

Members of the Taxi Trade made statements about Item 7, which highlighted that vehicles were subject to twice yearly checks, replacement vehicles were expensive and that many Euro 5 vehicles remained fit for purpose. Members of the trade also stated that some of the vehicles would naturally reach their end of life, before the 12 year period and that there were many other polluting vehicles on the streets of Chelmsford, than Euro 5 taxis.

Further questions were also asked about out of area licensed taxis operating in Chelmsford, commonly without doorplate stickers and concerns about a lack of control over those drivers from the Council and lost profits for Chelmsford based drivers. In response officers stated that any such instances that were reported to them, would be investigated accordingly and that enforcement action would be taken if appropriate. In response to other points raised about the length of operator licences and new private hire vehicles being first registered, when over four years old, it was noted that points such as these could be explored in a policy review, which was expected in 2026.

Exclusion of the Public

Resolved that under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for Item 5 on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information falling within paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

5. Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 – Application for a New Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Dual Driver's Licence

Public interest statement: It is not in the public interest to disclose the content of the report because the information in it concerns the interests and circumstances of an individual who has an expectation that such information would not normally be released to the public. To do otherwise would establish a precedent for the future treatment of personal information.

The Committee was informed that under the provisions of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, a district council should not grant a licence to drive a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle unless it was satisfied that the applicant, amongst other criteria, is a fit and proper person to hold such a licence. It was noted by the Committee that there is no statutory definition of what constitutes a fit and proper person, but that Chelmsford City Council had established its own guidelines which the Committee was required to have regard to when determining applications.

The Committee was informed that they were being asked to consider an application for a new Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Dual Driver's Licence by Mr X, whilst having regard to information contained on their enhanced DBS Certificate and DVLA driving record. The Committee noted that Mr X had six penalty points on their DVLA licence and a conviction on their DBS for the Common Law offence of outraging public decency. The Committee also noted that Mr X had misrepresented to Licensing Officers the nature of the conduct which led to the conviction for outraging public decency, in particular that the witness statement provided, which contained a formal statement of the truth on their part, was contradictory to the police record.

Mr X attended the meeting to speak to the Committee and answer questions about their history and application. They informed the Committee that the offence had taken place a long time ago, that it had been a mistake and that they had no other offences on their record. They stated that they wanted a licence to drive taxis in Chelmsford and apologised to the Committee for the offence. In response to questions from the Committee, they claimed that they had been confused about their caution for the offence and this had led to the witness statement, being at odds with the police record; however, they confirmed that the police statement setting out the factual background to the offence was indeed correct. The Committee also heard that they had been confused about the 6 penalty points on their licence and had thought that the penalty points had been imposed for driving without valid insurance.

RESOLVED that;

1. The application be refused as the Committee did not feel the applicant was a 'fit and proper person to hold such a licence.

2. A detailed decision notice with details of how to appeal the decision, be sent to the applicant.

(7.02pm to 7.37pm)

6. Hackney Carriage and Private Hire – Driver Convictions Policy (2025 Review)

The Committee considered a report that sought their approval of an updated Hackney Carriage and Private Hire – Driver Convictions Policy 2025, which strengthened safeguarding measures, aligned with National Guidance and enhanced transparency in driver suitability assessments. The Committee heard that full details of the proposed amendments were available as appendices to the report, alongside a tracked changes version and a copy of the old policy. The Committee noted that the updated policy offered a clearer, fairer and more transparent framework for assessing the suitability of licensed drivers, which would support consistent decision-making. It was noted that approval of the policy would help to demonstrate the Council's ongoing commitment to public safety and high professional standards in the licensed trade.

In response to questions from the Committee, officers confirmed that;

- The table of convictions, included both referral to the Regulatory Committee for certain offences, and to Legal Services for other offences.
- There had been a strengthening of the wording for some sexual offences, that would make issues clearer going forward.
- Despite the automatic checks of DBS certificates, drivers were still expected to inform officers of any convictions during their licence immediately.
- There were some drafting inconsistencies within the document that officers would pick up on after the meeting, to ensure consistency and remove any ambiguities.

Members of the Committee thanked officers for their hard work on the revised policy and stated that they were pleased with the changes.

RESOLVED;

1. That the Committee approved the revised Relevance of Convictions Policy 2025 for implementation, as set out in Appendix A of this report for implementation.
2. That the Committee delegated authority to the Lead Licensing Officer to make minor non-material amendments (such as formatting or statutory reference updates) to ensure ongoing legal and operational consistency, and that any substantive changes must be returned to the Committee for approval.
3. That the Committee delegated authority to the Lead Licensing Officer, to make any changes to the document related to drafting inconsistencies, to ensure consistency and remove any ambiguity in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee.

(8.45pm to 9.02pm)

7. Licensed Taxis – Policy Requirement for Euro 6 Compliance

The Committee considered a report that presented a request from some licensed drivers to extend the compliance date for Euro 6 Requirements for licensed vehicles. The Committee were reminded of a previous resolution in 2020, to require all licensed

vehicles to be Euro 6 compliant by 1st April 2024 and the revisiting of the issue in 2023 that had led to an extension to 1st April 2026. The Committee heard that in 2023, all licensed drivers had been made aware of the extension and that it would impact any newly licensed vehicles, as well as those issued with a licence since 1st April 2025.

The Committee heard that as a result of the impending requirement, those drivers with Euro 5 vehicles were made aware again that their vehicle would become non-compliant, to which eight requests for extensions had been received, due to replacement costs and the availability of replacement vehicles. The Committee heard that 29 vehicles would not benefit from the normal 12 year possible licence period, of which 23 were wheelchair accessible. The Committee also heard that since the 2023 decision, some owners had bought replacement vehicles as a result already. Members were asked to consider the requests and whether they wanted to amend the requirement as a result.

Members of the Committee highlighted concerns about the potential loss of important wheelchair accessible vehicles and the fact that the economic climate had not improved since 2023 and that if the vehicles were safe then they shouldn't be scrapped. Views were also expressed that enough notice had been given to drivers alongside the decision in 2023, which the minutes stated would be a final decision not to be revisited. It was also noted that many drivers had already changed their vehicles as a result of the decision and that the Council had taken an important decision to declare a Climate Emergency in 2019, that the Euro 6 requirement would be in line with.

In response to a question from the Committee, officers confirmed that if the Euro 6 Requirement was removed entirely, it was expected that 8 of the 29 currently licensed Euro 5 vehicles would still be on the road in 2028, 1 in 2029 with the rest reaching their 12 year expiration period earlier.

The Committee considered the options available to them and agreed to amend the policy to allow Euro 5 vehicles with licences expiring after 1st April 2026, to be permitted to use their full term and to ask officers to explore whether other Euro 5 licensed vehicles could be renewed earlier than the 1st April 2026 deadline to allow some usage ahead of 1st April 2027.

RESOLVED that;

1. The policy be amended to allow currently issued licences for Euro 5 vehicles to continue for their full annual period, even if this meant they would still be licensed after 1st April 2026, as long as they met other policy requirements and;
2. Officers be asked to investigate whether it was possible for Euro 5 licensed vehicles, to be renewed earlier than the usual renewal period and that if so, these vehicles should be allowed to renew for 12 months ahead of 31st March 2026, meaning that they could be licensed until 31st March 2027 as long as they met other policy requirements

(7.38pm to 8.44pm)

8. Pavement Licence Policy Review

The Committee considered a report that presented the consultation responses on the revised Pavement Licence Policy and were asked to make recommendations on the final reviewed policy. The Committee were reminded of their request at the June 2025 meeting for a review of the policy, following which an extensive public consultation had been carried out, to which two responses had been received. It was noted that one of these was a response of support from a local business and the other was from the Council's Planning Services covering a range of matters and included suggested clarifications and recommendations for amendments to the policy. The Committee heard that the revised policy had been further amended to take those comments into account and it was attached at Appendix 1 with detailed changes. It was noted that following approval, a detailed and scaled plan would be produced, to clearly show areas where tables and chairs would be permitted.

In response to questions from the Committee, officers confirmed that;

- There was not a requirement within the Council's City Centre Public Spaces Protection Order, that prohibited drinking alcohol on the street, rather that it prohibited street drinking which caused harassment, alarm, distress, nuisance or annoyance to other people. It was also noted that many high street business also had off-sales licences which allowed the consumption of alcohol on their outside tables and chairs.
- Street furniture was aligned with designated seating areas and extensive work had gone into maintaining a natural flow for pedestrians down the High Street, that had led to table and chairs areas at the Shire Hall end of the High Street, abutting premises, unlike further along the High Street.

Members of the Committee thanked officers for their hard work on the revised policy and stated that they were pleased with the changes.

RESOLVED that the revised Pavement Licence Policy be approved.

(9.03pm to 9.15pm)

8. Urgent Business

There were no matters of urgent business.

The meeting closed at 9.15pm

Chair