



## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EAST LoTHIAN LICENSING FORUM

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WEDNESDAY 21 MAY 2025, 10AM  
HYBRID SYSTEM/CHAMBER

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### **Forum Members Present:**

Mr G Blaikie (Chair) – online  
Mr S Baxter – in person  
Ms K Harling – in person  
PC S Gibson – in person  
Mr J Thayers – online

### **Licensing Board Members Present:**

Councillor F Dugdale – in person  
Councillor N Gilbert – online  
Councillor G McGuire – in person

### **Council Officials Present:**

Ms M Scott

### **Visitors Present:**

N/A

### **Apologies:**

Councillor C Cassini  
Councillor J McMillan  
Councillor L Bruce  
Mr A Podder  
Ms K Burke

### **Declarations of Interest:**

None

## **1. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE JOINT EAST Lothian LOCAL LICENSING FORUM AND LICENSING BOARD HELD ON 26 FEBRUARY 2025 & MATTERS ARISING**

The minute was agreed as an accurate recording of the meeting. There were no matters arising.

## **2. POLICE REPORT (VERBAL)**

PC Gibson gave an update on reported incidents over the last three months, which included: six assaults, one of which was a serious assault; 13 disturbances; one drug-related incident; two hate crimes; one licensing issue; and 38 incidents of shop lifting. He noted that most of the incidents took place within Musselburgh and Tranent. PC Gibson confirmed 40 inspections of licensed premises were carried out in the East Lothian area and he also made Members aware it was likely the proxy purchase scheme would pick up in the summer.

Mr John Thayers asked how many of the thefts were carried out by repeat offenders. PC Gibson stated most of the thefts were committed from the same small cohort of people to fund addiction. Mr Thayers asked if the people committing these thefts were not in treatment for their addiction, was this something that could be encouraged. PC Gibson explained intervention and support was offered to people when they were taken into custody, but enrolment in a treatment plan could not be forced. Mr Thayers explained the contact service would be able to help people and could even offer transport to appointments. He was happy to provide cards for the contact service to PC Gibson to be made available from the station.

Ms Harling asked if the *It'll Cost You* campaign would be running again this year, but PC Gibson was unsure.

Councillor Dugdale asked if the police had anything in place for keeping young people safe over the summer months as they started to gather in large groups. PC Gibson was not aware of any specific response lined up, but he assumed day and evening patrols in usual hotspots would take place. He agreed to update with any further information he was made aware of.

## **3. LICENSING STANDARDS OFFICER REPORT**

Ms Harling spoke to her report and explained the following outcomes from the February, March, and April 2025 Licensing Board meetings.

### **FEBRUARY**

- Occasional License Applications: Winton Brewery Tap Room, Buck & Birch, 18 Newbigging, Carlo's Fish Bar & Restaurant, the Mart Farm Shop & Humble Hub – a number of occasional licenses were heard as they were either for new premises in the process of applying for provisional premises license or they had been operating on occasional licenses for a period of 12 months. All applications reviewed and applicants for updates on confirming provisional premises licenses. All were granted.
- Major Variation Application: Aldi, Haddington – an application to increase off sales capacity was granted.
- Provisional Premises License: Yarrow Cookery School, Longniddry – a provisional premises license was granted.

## **MARCH**

- Provisional Premises License Application: 18 Newbigging, Musselburgh – an application for a new convenience shop with off sales was granted.
- Occasional License Applications: La Trattoria, Tranent – applications for occasional licenses to operate alongside the provisional premises license were granted.
- Occasional License Application: Seton Garden, Longniddry – an application for season of weddings, update in relation to progress towards premises license.

## **APRIL**

- Occasional License Applications: Broxmouth Court, Carfrae Farm Shop – a number of occasional licenses were heard as they were either for new premises in the process of applying for a provisional premises license, or they had been operating on occasional licenses for 12 months. All applications reviewed and applicants asked for updates on confirming provisional premises licenses. All were granted.
- Occasional License Application: EMF, Musselburgh – an application for occasional license for Edinburgh Marathon Festival, outwith policy hours starting on sales at 10am, was granted.
- Occasional License Applications: Aberlady & East Linton Galas – applications for occasional license for Gala Day and music event were both granted with conditions.
- Occasional License Application: Direlton Village Fete & Games – an application for occasional license for a village fete and games and music event was granted with conditions.
- Occasional License Application: Seton Sands – an application for occasional license for owners and music events was granted with conditions in relation to noise management.
- Provisional Premises License Application: Graze, Dunbar – an application for occasional license for on and off sales at café was granted.
- Provisional Premises License Application: La Trattoria, Tranent – an application for occasional license for on and off sales at restaurant was granted.
- Provisional Premises License Application: Asda Express PFS – applications for occasional licenses for off sales at garage convenience shop was granted.
- Provisional Premises License Application: Carlo's Fish Bar & Restaurant, Port Seton – applications for occasional licenses for on and off sales at café was granted.

Ms Harling reported that there were 15 provisional licenses outstanding confirmation.

### **Marketing the Forum**

Ms Harling confirmed she continued to prompt the Forum while on visits, but there had been no recent enquiries of people looking to join.

### **Pre-inspection Letters**

Ms Harling confirmed letters with information about the statement of licensing policy and helpful resources were being distributed to all licensed premises. Inspection would take place after all letters were delivered.

### **Forum Training Update**

Unfortunately, as not all Members responded to the email sent out in relation to the training, this was unable to be taken forward.

Councillor Gilbert asked if Buck and Birch were still trading as normal after their business suffering a fire. Ms Harling confirmed they continued to supply to other premises and off sales, but she would need to check for further information.

Mr Thayers noted that there had been a large number of occasional license applications for May, June, and July, and asked if these were for events for children and families. Ms Harling explained two applications for gala days had already been dealt with, and decisions followed Board policy. She added that applications picked up again in August for single events, such as Halloween- and Christmas-themed events.

Councillor Dugdale asked if there had been any progress on increasing the costs of occasional licences. Ms Harling reported the East Region Licensing Standards Officer Group had been established, and she had taken on the role of secretary. She advised that the group had only met twice, but a lot of authorities had reported the same issues with occasional licences; one had reported back on cost analysis that processing a licence cost between £65 and £75, when the applicant is only charged £10. Ms Harling noted progress with the Scottish Government had been slow, but they had began looking at the Civic Government Scotland Act; if that was overhauled, then there could be changes to occasional licences. Ms Harling agreed to feed back from the LSO Group to the Scottish Government.

Mr Graham Blaikie asked if most premises had completed the two-hour mandatory training with their staff. Ms Harling confirmed this was not the case, and untrained staff were a significant problem over many venues. She added that this was something she was strict with, and she would not allow anyone to sell alcohol who had not completed their two hours of mandatory training.

#### **4. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr Thayers reported towards the end of last year Audit Scotland produced a report on people who used substances; they had made several interesting comments particularly relating to alcohol, one of which pointed out how the Government had failed to deliver on a number of targets relating to alcohol. He added the report highlighted that alcohol was Scotland's most problematic substance and he hoped they would receive additional funding to reduce alcohol harms. Mr Thayers was happy to share the report with the rest of the Forum.

Councillor Dugdale welcomed the Audit Scotland report and felt it tied in well with the NHS and mental health services, as sometimes people self-medicated with alcohol while awaited services.

Mr Blaikie asked if Mr Thayers could also send him some of the cards for the Contact Service, as he would like to have them available within his premises.

Ms Harling said she would send out another email to Members regarding the Forum Training, and hoped to get more responses than last time. She made everyone aware the training could not be taken forward unless the majority of Members agreed to attend. Ms Harling explained the training would be provided by Alcohol Focus, who would spend a day with the Forum to come up with a plan to better structure meetings to aid the function of the Forum to review the Licensing Board in terms of how it administered its functions.

Councillor McGuire asked if premises were actively promoting the *Ask for Angela* initiative. Ms Harling reported from visiting premises that she very rarely saw campaign materials for this, but if the police still had a stock of these, then they could be distributed. She commented that the campaign was not well known. Mr Blaikie said he was aware of this being used a couple of times, and it worked well, allowing the customer to leave safely in a taxi. Councillor Dugdale highlighted that the public also needed to know about the campaign for it to be effective. Ms Harling suggested a social media release from the Council alongside the police, along with the distribution of posters to licensed premises.

## **FUTURE MEETING DATES**

Future meeting invites will be sent out electronically.

- Wednesday 20 August 2025, 10am
- Wednesday 19 November 2025, 10am (Joint meeting with the Licensing Board)
- Wednesday 18 February 2026, 10am



## LSO – Licensing Forum Notes May 2025 – July 2025

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### Board Meetings

As Licensing Standards Officer, I have been involved in the following applications etc. as presented at the Licensing Board:

- **May Licensing Board 2025**
  - **Major Variation Application - New Hailes Estate**  
Increase to outside licensed area and capacity to facilitate events. This was identified by the LSO following compliance issues. Granted by the Licensing Board
  - **Provisional Premises Licence – Margiotta, Longniddry**  
New off sales premises in new development in Longniddry, similar model to premises in Aberlady and Gullane. Granted by Licensing Board. Premises currently operating on occasional licences until confirmation.
  - **Provisional Premises Licence – Gilmerton House, Haddington**  
Provisional premises licence for large house and grounds to be used as a wedding and events venue. This premises has operated for several year on occasional licences and was guided to make this application to move operations forward. Granted by Licensing Board.
  - **Provisional Premises Licence – Premier Gifford**  
This premises was previously licensed as a convenience store however the premises licence was revoked in Dec 2023 as the premises licence holder was found not fit and proper. A new operator had taken over the premises. Provisional premises licence granted. Premises currently operating on occasional licences until confirmation.
  - **Occasional Licence – Premier Gifford**  
As per above occasional licences granted following grant of provisional premises licence. Use of occasionals to be reviewed in 12 months.
  - **Occasional Licence – Marigiotta, Longniddry**  
As per above occasional licences granted following grant of provisional premises licence. Use of occasionals to be reviewed in 12 months.
  - **Occasional Licence – Scottish Genesis Open, Renaissance Golf Course on course hospitality**  
Occasional licence application for public bars on course. Licensing Board happy with operator and information provided and allowed 10am on sales start. Local conditions applied and granted by the Licensing Board.
  - **Occasional Licence – Scottish Genesis Open, Renaissance Golf Course Marquees/outlets**  
Occasional licence application for hospitality marquees and outlets. Licensing Board members had questions about the application and felt the applicant lacked preparation. The on sales time more

than board policy of 11pm was refused and applicant was only allowed a midnight finish on the Tuesday for a specific event. Local conditions applied and granted by the Licensing Board.

- **Review of Personal Licence –Ashleigh McGarvie**

Applicant was committee member and premises licence holder where circumstances were established that alcohol had been sold at the premises without a premises manager resulting in a section 1 Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 offence. Reported by LSO, police made no objection. Granted by Licensing Board as deemed she had applied to increase knowledge to try and improve compliance at the premises.

- **Review of Premises Licence – Wiremill Social Club**

Review brought forward by Licensing Board following information contained in LSO report about the above personal licence. Police gave full circumstances that alcohol had been sold without a premises manager on several occasions and police had been called to incidents of disorder at these times. Premises licence was suspended for 1 month until next licensing board for committee to improve practice and work with the LSO and police.

- o **June Licensing Board 2025**

- **Review of Premises Licence – The Rocks, Dunbar**

Review applications submitted by LSO and police in relation to breach of licence conditions such as no staff training, providing activities not on the operating plan (pool, darts, gaming) and no age verification policy. Following a joint visit by LSO and Community police a 17-year-old was found consuming alcohol. Multiple complaints in relation to noise, drug use, drunkenness and underage patrons were received from residents. All the above was committed by the tenant at the premises and so prior to the review hearing the landlord and premises licence holder terminated the lease and removed the tenant from the premises. Given this action was taken the Licensing Board issued a written warning.

- **Premises Licence follow up – The Wiremill Social Club**

Committee presented improvements that had been made following guidance from the LSO and Environmental Protection Officers. Suspension was lifted and premises permitted to trade.

- **Major Variation Application – The Law, North Berwick**

Applications to add activities to licence, change on sales hours and change the premises name. Large investment to refurbish premises for a new tenant who will be operating it. Granted by the Licensing Board with conditions in relation to the outside area.

- **Major Variation Application – Musselburgh and Fisherrow Welfare Club**

Applications to change to open premises licence from club and appoint a premises manager. This will allow greater frequency of public functions. Granted by the Licensing Board.

- **Major Variation Application – Longniddry Inn**

Applications to add activities to licence, change children access and extend licensed hours and amend layout plan. Granted by the Licensing Board.



- **Premises Licence Application – Tranent Bowling Club**

Applications for full club premises licence after the previous premises licence was lost due to administrative errors. Granted by the Licensing Board.

○ **No July Licensing Board**

**Provisional Licences Outstanding Confirmation**

<b>Provisional Grant Date</b>	<b>Premises</b>	<b>Comments re Section 50 Certs.</b>	<b>Confirmed</b>
31/03/2022	Broxmouth Courtyard	Ongoing work on section 50	Expires Mar 2026
25/08/2022	The Mart, East Linton	Ongoing work on section 50	Expires Aug 2026
27/10/2022	The Tap Room, Haddington	Ongoing work on section 50	Expires Oct 2026
30/03/2023	Buck and Birch	Ongoing work on section 50	Expires Mar 2027
28/09/2023	Carfrae Farm shop	Ongoing work on section 50	Expires Sep 2027
23/11/2023	Garden City, Longniddry	No update, not selling alcohol	Expires Nov 2027
23/11/2023	The Tiffin Box, North Berwick	No update, not selling alcohol	Expires Nov 2027
25/04/2024	One Stop, Tranent	Just opened with occasional licences	Expires Apr 2028
23/05/2024	Tesco Express, Wallyford	No update, not selling alcohol	Expires May 2028
29/08/2024	Papple Steading	No update, not selling alcohol	Expires Aug 2028
29/08/2024	Costcutter, Tranent	No update	Expires Aug 2028
27/02/2025	Yarrow Cookery School	Recently granted	Expires Feb 2029
24/04/2025	Carlo's Fish Bar and Restaurant	Recently granted	Expires Apr 2029
24/04/2025	La Trattoria	Recently granted	Expires Apr 2029
22/05/2025	Gilmerton House	Recently granted	Expires May 2029
22/05/2025	Premier Gifford	Recently granted	Expires May 2029
22/05/2025	Margiotta, Longniddry	Recently granted	Expires May 2029
<b>Confirmation</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>17</b>	

**7 premises have confirmed their provisional premises licence to operate on a full premises licence.**

**Marketing the Forum**

The LSO has been promoting the forum whilst on visits.

**Joint working LSO and Community Police Officers**

Visits have been conducted in town centres in giving guidance about safe sales of alcohol to staff and highlighting any issues found. This will continue across East Lothian over the coming months.

**Forum training update**

Becky Crichton as our new Clerk has offered to help assist in organising forum training from Alcohol Focus Scotland.

**Annual Fees**

Letters were sent to all premises licence holders at the beginning of August requiring the annual fee to be paid by 1<sup>st</sup> October. Follow up with continue over this period to ensure fees are paid.

**Karen Harling**

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