

LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN	WARDS: All
REPORT TITLE: Preliminary Impact of the Revised Statement of Licensing Policy on Licensing Application Processes	
REPORT OF: Director of Recreation and Public Safety	
FOR SUBMISSION TO: Licensing Committee	DATE: 11 February 2026
<p>SUMMARY OF REPORT</p> <p>Camden's revised Statement of Licensing Policy was introduced in August 2025 with one of its aims being removing barriers for businesses and improving and streamlining the licensing application process and experience for applicants whilst maintaining controls to safeguard our communities. This report provides an assessment of the impact of the Statement of Licensing Policy on the processing and determination of licensing applications.</p> <p>Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information</p> <p>The following documents have been used in the preparation of this report:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Statement of Licensing Policy 2025-2030 <p>Contact Officer: William Sasu, Public Protection Manager 5 Pancras Square London, N1C 4AG Tel: 020 79744733 Email: william.sasu@camden.gov.uk</p>	
<p>RECOMMENDATION</p> <p>The Licensing Committee is asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) Note the early positive impact of the policy implementation; and ii) Recommend ongoing monitoring is undertaken using a larger data set to confirm long-term trends. 	

Signed:



Date: 21 January 2026

Oliver Jones,
Director of Recreation and Public Safety

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of licensing application processing times before and after the implementation of the revised Statement of Licensing Policy. It is intended to support the Licensing Committee in assessing the effectiveness of the policy approved in April 2025 in improving efficiency and decision-making.

2. Background

- 2.1 The revised licensing policy was introduced to balance the right of an individual to make a licence application for licensable activities with the right of individuals or communities to object to an application or to seek a review of an existing licence. It aims at helping businesses to develop successfully whilst safeguarding the amenities of Camden residents and local communities.
- 2.2 To assess its impact, a comparison has been undertaken using a sample of applications determined prior to the policy implementation and a comparable sample determined after the policy implementation.
- 2.3 Pre-implementation, licence applications generally took longer to conclude and the time taken varied more from case to case, suggesting a less predictable and streamlined process.
- 2.4 Post implementation, the sample shows decisions being reached more quickly and within a narrower timeframe, indicating improved efficiency and greater consistency.
- 2.5 While the number of cases reviewed is limited and ongoing monitoring is recommended, the overall picture suggests the policy is having a positive effect on timeliness and process discipline.
- 2.6 A wider assessment of the impact of the Statement of Licensing Policy is required to establish the overall impact of the policy.

3. Pre-Policy Implementation Performance

- 3.1 Prior to the policy implementation, applications had longer and more variable determination periods. Based on the sample reviewed:

Number of applications reviewed: 3
Average determination time: 82 days
Range: 66–94 days

- 3.2 Applications regularly exceeded two months to reach determination. There were notable variations between different application types, particularly variations versus new applications. The absence of clear policy guidance contributed to extended negotiation periods and, in some cases, delayed outcomes.

- 3.3 Overall, pre-policy applications had less predictability in timescales and contributed to a higher administrative burden.

4. Post-Policy Implementation Performance

- 4.1 Following the introduction of the revised policy, there is a clear improvement in application processing times. Based on the sample reviewed:

Number of applications reviewed: 4
Average determination time: 68 Days
Range: 52–78 days

- 4.2 Determination times have reduced significantly (a 17% reduction on average), and decisions are being reached more consistently across different premises and application types. Improved policy clarity has supported earlier resolution of issues, reducing the need for prolonged negotiation periods.
- 4.3 These outcomes suggest that the policy has had a positive operational impact on the licensing process.

5. Comparative Assessment

- 5.1 A comparison of pre-and post-policy performance demonstrates:
- Average reduction of approximately 14 days per application (from 82 days pre-policy to 68 days post-policy – a 17% reduction).
 - A narrower range of determination times, indicating greater consistency.
 - Improved efficiency for both applicants and the licensing authority.
 - Comparison between pre-policy and post-policy licensing applications presents a clear narrative of operational improvement following policy implementation.

6. Impact of the Policy Implementation

- 6.1 Before the policy change, the licensing process was characterised by longer determination periods, greater variability in outcomes, and reduced predictability for applicants. Applications routinely took on average three months to resolve, with significant divergence between applications. This variability suggests that decision-making was more dependent on case-by-case negotiation and policy interpretation, increasing administrative burden and extending timescales.
- 6.2 Following the implementation of the policy, the licensing service operating model was streamlined to take into account the changes the policy introduced. With greater consistency in assessment, earlier identification of policy issues, and improved clarity for both applicants and responsible authorities have led to an increase in the quality of applications being made.

- 6.3 There has been an 8% increase in the number of pre-application advice requests received per month. This early engagement by applicants with responsible authorities has led to applicants receiving the necessary guidance, signposting and direction to make better quality applications, increasing their chances of getting their applications granted.
- 6.4 The model conditions introduced by the policy has also simplified and clarified the process for applicants when selecting conditions to be included in their operating schedule. It has been noted that it provides greater transparency for licensing panels and responsible authorities, enabling them to address specific operational concerns more effectively.
- 6.5 In addition, there has been a noticeable shift in behaviour among licence venue operators. Venue operators are aligning their operating hours with the current framework hours. This is seen by the increase in the number of applications with operating hours aligned with the current framework hours.
- 6.6 These changes introduced by the policy and the subsequent operational changes has shortened the time it takes for licence applications to be determined, has narrowed the range of outcomes, and has led to significant reduction in the number of applications that goes before the licensing sub-committee for determination.
- 6.7 Overall, the post-policy profile shows that venue operators are implementing measures such as WAVE training and Ask for Angela, to address women safety concerns, are more engaged in the licensing process, and are confident of the outcomes of their applications. It also reflects a service that is operating with clearer direction, improved efficiency, and increased certainty in decision-making by both officers and panel members.
- 6.8 While the sample size and scope of the assessment is limited, the early trend indicates that the policy is meeting its intended objectives.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 The evidence reviewed suggests that the revised licensing policy has contributed to more efficient and timely determination of applications. Early indications are positive, with reduced processing times, improved consistency, and a clearer framework for decision-making.

8. Comments of the Director of Finance

- 8.1 There are no material financial implications concerning this report. The Director of Finance has been consulted in the preparation of this report and has no further comments to add.
- 8.2 Any additional costs (e.g. design, communication costs) would be minimal and subject to approval.

9. Legal Comments of the Borough Solicitor

- 9.1 The Borough Solicitor has been consulted, and legal comments have been incorporated in this report.

10. Environmental Implications

- 10.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

11. Appendices

- 11.1 Appendix 1 – Policy Impact Presentation

REPORT ENDS