

North Northamptonshire Council Licensing Act 2003 Statement of Licensing Policy 2027–2032 (Draft)

Consultation Summary Report

Purpose

North Northamptonshire Council has published its draft **Statement of Licensing Policy 2027–2032** for consultation. The draft has been reviewed against the current 2022–2027 policy to identify the principal changes and assess any implications for Little Harrowden Parish Council (LHPC).

Key Changes from the Current Policy

The draft policy does not introduce new licensing powers but updates the existing policy to reflect recent legislation, revised Home Office guidance and current best practice.

The principal changes are:

- Updated throughout to reflect the revised **Home Office Section 182 Guidance (February 2026)**.
- New strategic objectives aligning licensing decisions with the Council's priorities for:
 - supporting the local economy;
 - improving service delivery; and
 - safer communities.
- New dedicated section covering **online alcohol sales and delivery services**, including:
 - Challenge 25/age verification during delivery;
 - delivery refusal procedures;
 - delivery record keeping;
 - training requirements for delivery drivers and third-party couriers;
 - prohibition on deliveries to public places.
- Expanded crime prevention guidance requiring applicants to consider:
 - drink spiking prevention;
 - violence against women and girls;
 - sexual harassment policies;
 - Ask for Angela;
 - illegal tobacco and vape sales;
 - crowd and queue management;
 - bottle and glass safety;
 - drinks promotions;
 - illegal working;
 - theft and vandalism.
- Greater emphasis on **Public Health evidence**, recognising that Public Health data may support licensing decisions where relevant.

- New section on **Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking**, encouraging operators to identify and report suspected exploitation.
- New section on **Counter Terrorism**, including reference to the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 (Martyn's Law) and expectations for venue preparedness.
- New recognition of the **Agent of Change principle**, protecting existing pubs, entertainment venues and cultural facilities from inappropriate neighbouring development.
- Greater emphasis on **partnership working** between Licensing, Planning, Police, Environmental Health and Community Safety.
- Updated guidance on licensing hours, reinforcing that later opening hours may require stronger operating schedules where premises are close to residential properties.
- More detailed guidance regarding:
 - Temporary Event Notices;
 - licence variations;
 - representations;
 - petitions;
 - reviews;
 - operating schedules;
 - licence conditions.
- New evidence-led enforcement approach, using complaint data, crime statistics and other available evidence to prioritise inspections and enforcement.
- Updated application procedures allowing incomplete applications to be "held" until sufficient information is provided rather than automatically progressing.
- Minor administrative changes including updated contact details, revised delegation arrangements and updated legislative references.

Matters Remaining Unchanged

The following positions remain unchanged:

- No Cumulative Impact Assessment is proposed for any part of North Northamptonshire.
- No Early Morning Restriction Order (EMRO) is proposed.
- No Late Night Levy is proposed.
- Every application will continue to be determined on its individual merits.

Impact on Little Harrowden Parish Council

Consultation on Applications

The draft policy **does not alter the statutory consultation arrangements** under the Licensing Act 2003.

Parish Councils are **not Responsible Authorities** under the Licensing Act and therefore **do not have a statutory right to be consulted on every application**. The policy does, however, expressly confirm that **Town and Parish Councillors may submit representations themselves or on behalf of residents**, provided those representations relate to one or more of the four licensing objectives.

In practice, North Northamptonshire Council has historically notified parish councils of new premises licence applications within their parish as part of its consultation process. **Nothing within the draft policy indicates that this local practice will cease**, and there is no proposal to remove parish council notifications.

Accordingly, **LHPC should expect to continue receiving consultations on new premises licence applications and major variations**, as it does currently.

Impact on LHPC

The review identified **no material change** to the role or powers of Little Harrowden Parish Council.

Specifically:

- No additional statutory powers are conferred on parish councils.
- No reduction in the Parish Council's ability to submit representations.
- The Parish Council's representations must continue to relate to one or more of the four licensing objectives.
- The expanded guidance may assist the Council when preparing future representations, particularly where local evidence exists regarding:
 - crime and disorder;
 - public safety;
 - public nuisance; or
 - protection of children from harm.

Recommendation

Members are recommended to:

1. Note the proposed North Northamptonshire Licensing Act 2003 Statement of Licensing Policy 2027–2032.
2. Note that the draft policy introduces no material changes affecting the powers, responsibilities or consultation arrangements of Little Harrowden Parish Council.
3. **Respond to the consultation confirming that Little Harrowden Parish Council supports adoption of the revised Licensing Policy**, noting that:
 - the document provides a clearer and more comprehensive framework for applicants and decision-makers;
 - the additional guidance on safeguarding, crime prevention, modern slavery and counter-terrorism is welcomed;
 - the continued emphasis on evidence-based decision making is supported; and
 - the Council requests that North Northamptonshire Council continues its existing practice of notifying parish councils of new premises licence applications and major variations affecting their parish, recognising the value of local knowledge in informing licensing decisions.

