
Report To:	Planning and Environment	Date:	8 th December 2025
Contact Officer:	Paula Harrison		
Subject:	DRAFT STATEMENT LICENSING POLICY 2026-31		

1. **Purpose**

- 1.1 To further update Councillors on the consultation of Swindon Borough Council's draft Statement of Licensing Policy for the period 2026 to 2031.

2. **Background Paper**

2.1 **Summary for Councillors – Consultation Consideration**

Purpose of the Policy

The Statement of Licensing Policy sets out how Swindon Borough Council will exercise its statutory functions under the Licensing Act 2003 from 1 April 2026, with a scheduled review in 2031. It provides guidance to applicants, licence holders, responsible authorities, and Licensing Committees, ensuring decisions are consistent, transparent, and focused on promoting the four licensing objectives. The consultation documentation does not include a summary or comparison setting out how the draft Statement of Licensing Policy differs from the current adopted policy.

2.2 **Strategic Context**

The Policy reflects national guidance (Section 182), recent legislative developments, and local priorities. It recognises the importance of licensed premises to Swindon's economy and culture, balancing this with public safety, community wellbeing, and neighbourhood amenity.

2.3 **The Four Licensing Objectives**

All decisions must promote:

1. *Prevention of crime and disorder*
2. *Public safety*
3. *Prevention of public nuisance*
4. *Protection of children from harm*

Each application is determined on its individual merits against these objectives.

2.4 Key Policy Themes and Developments

1. Stronger focus on safety and vulnerability

- Clear expectations around safeguarding, welfare policies, staff training, and support for vulnerable individuals.
- Active promotion of initiatives such as WAVE, Ask for Angela, and zero-tolerance approaches to harassment, spiking, and violence.
- Explicit reference to Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) and victim-centred responses.

2. Crime and disorder prevention

- Strong encouragement (and potential adverse weight if absent) for engagement with Pubwatch and Licensing SAVI schemes.
- Clear expectations around CCTV, door supervision standards, risk assessments, and cooperation with Police.
- Proportionate use of conditions where evidence shows risk.

3. Public safety and national legislation

- Incorporation of Martyn's Law (Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025) requirements, including preparedness and security planning for venues over the defined capacity thresholds.
- Emphasis on capacity management, fire safety, health and safety duties, and emergency procedures.

4. Prevention of public nuisance

- Detailed guidance on managing noise, waste, odour, lighting, customer dispersal, and late-night impacts.
- Particular attention to residential areas and the period between 11pm and 7am.

5. Protection of children

- Reinforcement of Challenge 25, refusals logs, staff training, and prevention of proxy sales.
- Clear safeguarding expectations relating to child sexual and criminal exploitation.
- Controls on access to age-restricted films and entertainment.

2.5 Licensing Process and Governance

- Encourages early engagement with officers and responsible authorities.

- Sets out how representations are assessed and how decisions are delegated.
- Confirms hearings are inquisitorial, evidence-based, and proportionate.
- Reinforces transparency, consistency, and defensibility of decisions.

2.6 Enforcement and Reviews

- Graduated and proportionate enforcement approach.
- Reviews used where licensing objectives are undermined, with a clear range of potential outcomes up to and including revocation.

2.7 Other Local Policies

- Confirms the continued application of:
 - Cumulative Impact Policy (Broad Green area)
 - Late Night Levy (if applied)
 - Early Morning Alcohol Restriction Orders (EMROs) where justified

2.8 Overall Consideration for Councillors

The Policy sets out to update Swindon's licensing framework, strengthening expectations around safety, safeguarding, and partnership working while remaining consistent with national legislation and guidance. It aims to support the night-time economy while protecting residents, visitors, and vulnerable individuals.

Councillors are invited to consider whether the policy is clear, proportionate, and fit for purpose for the next five years.

What about West Swindon?

- West Swindon is not named anywhere in the policy
- There are no ward-specific controls, restrictions, or expectations that apply uniquely to:
 - West Swindon
 - Parish Council areas
 - Particular neighbourhoods outside Broad Green

How the policy applies to West Swindon in practice

- The policy applies Borough-wide
- Any impact in West Swindon would be:
 - Application-led, not policy-led
 - Based on:
 - Local representations (e.g. residents, Parish Council)
 - Evidence relating to the four licensing objectives
 - Site-specific risks (location, proximity to housing, hours, activities)

3. Financial and Budget Considerations

- 3.1 There are no costs associated with this project.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 That this Committee notes the report and considers whether it wishes to recommend a response from West Swindon Parish Council.