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Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr
Bridgend County Borough Council



Swyddfeydd Dinesig, Stryd yr Angel, Pen-y-bont, CF31 4WB / Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB

Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Rhowch wybod i ni os mai Cymraeg yw eich dewis iaith.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh. Please let us know if your language choice is Welsh.



Cyfarwyddiaeth y Prif Weithredwr / Chief Executive's Directorate
Deialu uniongyrchol / Direct line /: 01656 643148 / 643694 / 643513
Gofynnwch am / Ask for: Democratic Services

Ein cyf / Our ref:
Eich cyf / Your ref:

Dyddiad/Date: Wednesday, 4 February 2026

Dear Councillor,

LICENSING COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Licensing Committee will be held Hybrid in the Council Chamber - Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB / remotely via Microsoft Teams on **Thursday, 12 February 2026** at **10:00**.

AGENDA

1 Apologies for Absence

To receive apologies for absence from Members.

2 Declarations of Interest

To receive declarations of personal and prejudicial interest (if any) from Members/Officers in accordance with the provisions of the Members Code of Conduct adopted by Council from 1 September 2008.

3 Approval of Minutes

To receive for approval the minutes of the 30/09/2025

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4 Bridgend County Borough Council Taxi Testing Regime

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5 Urgent Items

To consider any other item(s) of business in respect of which notice has been given in accordance with Rule 4 of the Council Procedure Rules and which the person presiding at

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the meeting is of the opinion should by reason of special circumstances be transacted at the meeting as a matter of urgency.

Note: This will be a Hybrid meeting and Members and Officers will be attending in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Angel Street Bridgend / Remotely via Microsoft Teams. The meeting will be recorded for subsequent transmission via the Council's internet site which will be available as soon as practicable after the meeting. If you would like to view this meeting live, please contact cabinet_committee@bridgend.gov.uk or tel. 01656 643148 / 643694 / 643513 / 643159.

Yours faithfully

K Watson

Chief Officer, Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy

Councillors:

H T Bennett
A R Berrow
S J Bletsoe
O Clatworthy
RJ Collins
C Davies
S Easterbrook
H Griffiths
RM James
P W Jenkins
M Lewis
J Llewellyn-Hopkins
J E Pratt
R Williams

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE LICENSING COMMITTEE HELD REMOTELY - VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON TUESDAY, 30 SEPTEMBER 2025
AT 10:00

Present

Councillor M Lewis – Chairperson

S Easterbrook
RJ Collins
H Griffiths

R Williams
H T Bennett
P W Jenkins

J E Pratt
A R Berrow

RM James
S J Bletsoe

Apologies for Absence

J Llewellyn-Hopkins, C Davies and O Clatworthy

Officers:

Mark Galvin
Nimi Chandrasena
Katie Wintle
Kirsty Evans

Senior Democratic Services Officer - Committees
Democratic Services Officer
Lawyer
Senior Licensing Officer

Declarations of Interest

Cllr S Bletsoe declared a personal interest as he is a member of Bridgend Town Council, Coity Higher Community Council, a governor of Pen Y Bont Primary School and other various volunteer organisations that on occasion apply for temporary events notices.

Cllr S Easterbrook declared a personal interest as he is a member of the Bridgend Town Council. He stated he was a town centre trader and a member of the Bridgend Traders Forum. He also stated he was a member of Development Control Committee stated that Planning and Licensing regimes were to remain separated to a point to avoid duplication and inefficiency

Approval of Minutes

Decision Made	<p><u>RESOLVED:</u></p> <p>That the Minutes of the Licensing Committee Meeting dated 21/05/25 be approved as a true and accurate record.</p>
Date Decision Made	30/09/25

46. Statement of Licensing Policy and Cumulative Impact Assessment

Decision Made	<p>A report was presented by the Senior Licensing Officer, the purpose of which, was to provide members with a proposed draft Statement of Licensing Policy (SLP) along with a draft Cumulative Impact Assessment (CIA) for consideration and noting before proceeding to Cabinet and Council for approval.</p> <p>There was a debate between members and officers that made reference to the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mention of concerns around Wyndham Street and Market Street on the analysis of the problems associated with licensing issues in this vicinity of the town, that included ant-social behaviour and crime and disorder, not only in establishments that were part of the town's night time economy, but also with the drinking of alcohol within streets of the town centre by members of the public. Reference was made as to why there was a mention of specific areas when a member was only aware of 1 licensed property on Wyndham Street. There was further mention of other areas close to Market Street but not Market Street itself where the member felt the CIA did not accurately reflect the current position of areas where crime and disorder was presently prevalent. The Senior Licensing Officer responded that the purpose of the meeting was to review the evidence provided by the Police as part of the CIA and in the event members were not satisfied with such evidence available to support the CIA in its current format, members had the option to remove the CIA from consideration for their approval, as this was not part of the Statement of Licensing Policy. • A member stated that the Local Authorities (LA's) adoption of a policy to govern the night-time economy should be reconsidered if it meant that the provisions of the policy made it challenging for certain types of businesses to operate. The Senior Licensing Officer responded that the CIA did not change the fundamental way that licensing decisions were made under the Licensing Act, therefore they would be reviewed on a case by case basis and establishments applying for a license would
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have to demonstrate that their application would not add to the high levels of crime and disorder in a particular area, for example within what is classed as the Saturation Area of Bridgend Town Centre .

- A member asked if similar assessments have been required in other towns such as Maesteg, Pencoed and Porthcawl. The Senior Licensing Officer responded the police had been asked to review their data to determine whether a CIA would be the right way forward in these towns. Their findings did not depict any high evidence in relation to those areas however and the outcome of their findings, were only related to areas of Bridgend as mentioned in the report.
- A member drew attention to the date on the evidence received by the Police and noted that the data was a year old and sought the possibility of deferring a decision until such time, more up to date data was available. The Senior Licensing Officer stated that the data would always be historic, due to the timings of when the review of the policy is conducted. She stated that in terms of deferring the report, there was a requirement to comply with the LA's statutory duty to review the policy and as such required members to make a decision but their decision could be not to support the CIA.
- A member inquired about introducing a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) in relation to areas considered under the Cumulative Impact Assessment (CIA). The Senior Licensing Officer responded that the two elements were to be treated separately as they were different legislation, and not a matter for the Committee but other departments within the Council.
- The Committee considered the report and appendices and raised concerns with approving the CIA as drafted at this stage, on the basis that the evidence provided by South Wales Police was outdated and insufficient. The Senior Licensing officer mentioned that in sourcing data from the Police, it was important that there was a timeline specified for that, as we would be reliant on Police resources.

The Senior Licensing officer proposed that the CIA could be removed from the LA policy and, following a consultation, the report could resume the process for approval. She stated that alongside these processes taking place, the LA could liaise with the Police to obtain better and more up to date evidence than what members had before them in this meeting. This would enable the LA's statutory duty of approving a policy and submitting it to proceed to cabinet and council before the end of the year.

	<p><u>RESOLVED :</u></p> <p>The Committee therefore unanimously decided to approve the Statement of Licensing Policy to comply with its statutory duty, with the removal of any information relating to the CIA, which requires further information from South Wales Police in order to be fully considered. The Committee noted that this will be subject to a two-week consultation period and may be required to return to Committee for further consideration pending any responses.</p>
Date Decision Made	30/09/2025

47. Urgent Items

Decision Made	None
Date Decision Made	30/09/2025

To observe further debate that took place on the above items, please click this [link](#)

The meeting closed at 11:04.

Meeting of:	LICENSING COMMITTEE
Date of Meeting:	12 FEBRUARY 2026
Report Title:	BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL TAXI TESTING REGIME
Report Owner / Responsible Chief Officer / Cabinet Member:	CHIEF OFFICER – LEGAL AND REGULATORY SERVICES, HR AND CORPORATE POLICY
Responsible Officer:	KIRSTY EVANS LICENSING TEAM MANAGER
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	The report content has no direct effect upon the policy framework and procedure rules.
Executive Summary:	To seek approval to consult with the taxi and private hire trade within Bridgend County Borough Council and other interested parties on the proposal to allow taxi and private hire vehicles to obtain an MOT and additional compliance test at any Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) approved MOT testing station or to retain the current regime of in-house testing at Ty Thomas Testing Centre.

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval to consult with the taxi and private hire trade, Ty Thomas Testing Centre and the Home to School Transport Department on the proposal to allow taxi and private hire vehicles to obtain an MOT and additional compliance test at any Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) approved MOT testing station or to retain the current regime of in-house testing.
- 1.2 This report sets out the advantages and disadvantages of both approaches.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Council must be satisfied that a vehicle is in a suitable mechanical condition, safe and comfortable before issuing a licence.

2.2 The Council currently uses its powers under Section 50 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 to require all vehicles to be presented to the Council's in-house MOT testing station at Ty Thomas Joint Vehicle Maintenance Facility, Newlands Avenue, Brackla Industrial Estate, Bridgend. This requirement is in place until March 2026.

2.3 On 22 November 2022 the Licensing Committee heard representations from the taxi and private hire trade, through local Members and a petition of approximately 170 signatories, to open taxi and private hire testing in Bridgend County Borough Council to other MOT garages.

The specific request in the petition was to allow for testing in any MOT testing station.

2.4 Options for testing elsewhere were unable to be explored at the time due to a binding requirement for in-house testing.

2.5 On 11 March 2025, Cabinet delegated authority to the Licensing Committee for decision making in respect of taxi and private hire testing. This allows the Licensing Committee to decide whether to continue with in-house testing after March 2026 or to implement a new process.

3. Current situation / proposal

3.1 Licensing Officers have identified two options for members to consider. These options are:

1) To retain the current in-house testing regime. This requires proprietors to obtain an MOT Certificate from Ty Thomas garage along with an additional taxi/private hire compliance check.

2) To allow proprietors to obtain an MOT Certificate from a Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) approved MOT testing station in the County Borough, and that the same testing station undertakes an additional taxi/private hire compliance check.

3.2 Some authorities offer a hybrid approach whereby MOTs are carried out at any approved station and additional compliance checks are conducted separately by Licensing Officers. This has been investigated and ruled out as there is insufficient officer resource to be able to support this approach.

3.3 In-house testing has a number of advantages, which also act as disadvantages for allowing testing elsewhere, these include:

- **Consistency.** In-house testing allows the Licensing Authority to apply uniform standards consistently; when more than one testing station is permitted there is a higher risk of variation in the standards being applied.

- **Reduced risk of conflict of interest.** Independent in-house testing removes the commercial incentive some garages may have to pass vehicles which are not up to standard. For example, some operators have their own testing stations which could increase the risk of faults being overlooked.
- **Improved oversight and auditability.** Direct control of the testing process allows for better auditing, data collection and performance monitoring. For example, issues such as reoccurring faults and trends in vehicle failures are easier to investigate. In addition, currently stop notices are issued when vehicles fail tests which require the vehicle not to be used. Such notices would not be issued if testing was done elsewhere as we would not be notified if vehicles have failed testing.
- **Increased public confidence.** The public may have more confidence in a testing system that is independent from the trade, this public confidence could be lost by allowing testing elsewhere.
- **Income for Ty Thomas.** Ty Thomas charges £46 for a taxi/private hire MOT test, which results in an approximate income of £46,000 per year from the taxi trade. If testing was allowed elsewhere, although some proprietors may still choose to have their test done at Ty Thomas, the majority of this income would be lost.

3.4 Some disadvantages of in-house testing and advantages for allowing testing elsewhere include:

- **Capacity and scheduling constraints.** We are limited in the number of testing slots available to the taxi and private hire trade as Ty Thomas Testing Station carry out additional work for Bridgend County Borough Council and South Wales Police. Over time the number of slots available to the trade has reduced due to the capacity and resource restraints of Ty Thomas. If we were to move to testing elsewhere proprietors would have greater choice and flexibility of when to have a test carried out.
- **Reduced flexibility for proprietors.** Proprietors may need to travel further to the testing centre or adjust working hours, such as school runs, to attend tests. Allowing testing at other locations would give proprietors more flexibility to accommodate their existing commitments, enabling them to select a testing centre that suits their needs for example, one closer to their base.
- **Unable to carry out repairs.** As Ty Thomas are a local authority garage, they are unable to carry out repairs on vehicles, therefore if vehicles fail, proprietors must take them to another garage for the repair and then get them re-tested at Ty Thomas.

- **Administrative burden for the authority.** Allowing testing elsewhere could free up resources within both Ty Thomas Testing Centre and the Licensing Department.
- **Fees are set.** Competition between garages can help keep costs lower for proprietors and encourage better customer service. If testing was allowed elsewhere proprietors could shop around for the best deal.

3.5 Approval is sought from members to progress the options available to Committee to consultation with the taxi and private hire trade within Bridgend County Borough Council, Ty Thomas Testing Centre and the Home to School Transport Department.

3.6 Following consultation, a report setting out the consultation responses will be presented to the Committee for consideration and a determination to be made.

4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)

4.1 An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening has identified that there would be no negative impact on those with one or more of the protected characteristics, on socio-economic disadvantage or the use of the Welsh Language. It is therefore not necessary to carry out a full EIA on this policy or proposal.

5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives

5.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of well-being goals/objectives as a result of this report.

6. Climate Change and Nature Implications

6.1 There are no climate change or nature implications arising from this report.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

7.1 There are no safeguarding and corporate parent implications arising from this report.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 There will be financial implications for the authority depending on the option chosen for future provision. A decision to accept any DVSA approved MOT testing station would result in loss of income for the Ty Thomas Joint Vehicle Maintenance Facility.

8.2 The loss of income is estimated to be approximately £46,000. Fleet currently charge £46 per test, and we have around 500 vehicles licensed per year, with mostly 2 tests per year. This figure does not include retests, full retests or tests following stop notices.

8.3 There would be no financial implication if members were to choose to stay with in-house testing.

9. Recommendations

- 9.1 That members agree to consult with the taxi and private hire trade, the Home to School Transport Department, and Ty Thomas on the following options with regards to taxi and private hire testing within Bridgend County Borough Council:
- i) To retain the current in-house testing regime. This requires proprietors to obtain an MOT Certificate from Ty Thomas Joint Maintenance Facility along with an additional taxi compliance check.
 - ii) To allow proprietors to obtain an MOT Certificate from any DVSA approved MOT testing station in the County Borough, and that the same testing station undertakes an additional taxi compliance check.

Background documents

None.

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