

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the

Licensing Committee

Held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Woodgreen, Witney, Oxfordshire OX28 1NB
at 10.00 am on **Tuesday, 9 December 2025**

PRESENT

Councillors: David Jackson (Vice-Chair), Sandra Cosier, Jane Doughty, Andrew Lyon, Paul Marsh, David Melvin and Tim Sumner

Officers: Andrea Thomas (ERS Officer, Professional Services), Ana Prelici (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Mathew Taylor (Democratic Services Officer), Mandy Fathers (Business Manager - Environmental, Welfare & Revenue Service) and Maria Harper (Democratic Services Assistant)

Other Councillors in attendance: None.

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Apologies for Absence and temporary appointments

Councillor David Jackson, Vice-Chair of the Licencing Committee, took the Chair and welcomed Members to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mark Walker, Chair of the Licensing Committee, and Councillor Sandra Simpson.

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Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made by members of the Committee.

Councillor Paul Marsh joined the meeting at 10:02.

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Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Councillor Jane Doughty proposed that the minutes of the previous Committee meeting, held on 21 May 2025, be signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record. This was seconded by Councillor Andrew Lyon, was put to the vote, and was agreed by the Committee.

The Committee **Resolved** to:

Agree the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 21 May 2025, as a true and accurate record.

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Public Participation

There was no public participation at the meeting.

New Fee for Primate Licences

Councillor David Jackson, Vice-Chair of the Licensing Committee, asked the Business Manager for Environment, Welfare and Revenues, to present the report to the Committee.

In her presentation the Officer advised that:

- In 2024 the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) had brought in regulations on animal welfare which came into force on 6 April 2025.
- The regulations introduced a licensing scheme for private keepers of primates for which the Council was the licensing authority.
- A licence would be granted for a period of three years or a shorter period on the request of the applicant. Provisions were in place for the licensing authority to revoke licenses if required.
- A fee would be charged for the application and could be charged for inspections. An estimate of the fees was shown in section 2.9 of the report. The proposed fees were in line with those already in place for horse riding establishments which required a similar application and administration process. The fees would be reviewed annually.

In the discussion the Committee raised the following points and questions:

- A Member queried the number of potential cases that would require a license in the district. Officers advised that they were not aware of any privately owned primates that would require a licence at present. However, Officers intended to work with veterinarians to raise awareness of the requirement for a licence.
- A query was raised around the wording used in section 2.6 of the report that referred to “suitable persons” being required to undertake inspections. The Committee was informed that Officers who were responsible for inspections would undergo a two-day training course. In addition, a veterinarian would be required to inspect prior to an Officer. This would ensure a thorough process would be followed by a qualified person.
- The number and frequency of inspections in the licensing period was discussed. It was suggested that more regular inspections could take place if concerns were raised.
- The powers of the Council as licensing authority to issue fines, prosecute or revoke licenses was discussed.
- A query was raised as to how Officers were making the public aware of the requirement to hold a license. The Committee was advised that the Council’s Communication Team was raising awareness.
- The list of primates that required licences, shown at section 2.2 of the report, was discussed.

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Councillor Andrew Lyon proposed that the Committee agree the recommendations as set out in the report. This was seconded by Councillor Tim Sumner, was put to the vote and was unanimously agreed by the Committee.

The Committee **Resolved** to:

1. Note the contents of the report and the implications of the Animal Welfare (Primate Licences) (England) Regulations 2024 on the Council; and,
2. Recommend to Council that the fees applicable to Primate Keeper Licence applications are set as detailed in paragraph 3.9

The Meeting closed at 10.15 am

CHAIR