

Moray Licensing Committee

Annual Functions Report

1 April 2025 - 31 March 2026

---

## **Contents**

|                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| About Moray .....                | 2 |
| Introduction .....               | 3 |
| Annual Functions Report .....    | 4 |
| Decisions of the Committee ..... | 4 |
| Short Term Let Licensing .....   | 5 |
| Licensing Standards.....         | 5 |

## About Moray

With a population of around 95,000, Moray nestles between the rugged and spectacular Highlands and the flat, fertile farmlands of the north-east and although it belongs to neither, it shares the best elements of both – from the snow-capped peaks of the Cairngorms to the unspoiled coastline of the Moray Firth.

Moray is well known for its outstanding natural resources and has been voted as one of the top 5 rural regions in Scotland for quality of life. Moray provides a firm foundation for a high value tourism section. Approximately 877,000<sup>1</sup> visitors explored the wider Moray Speyside including the famous Speyside Way and Moray Coastal Trail in 2023. Moray is home to 18 golf courses, including the highest tee in Scotland, offering a mix of coastal links, clifftop layouts and inland park designs.

Local industry is as diverse as the landscape in which it is located and makes a major contribution to the area's buoyant economy. Moray is the heartland of the Scottish whisky industry and is home to more than 55 distilleries whose brands are savoured in just about every corner of the world. Whatever country you're in, you'll find a bottle of Speyside Malt for sale.

In the spirit of celebration, music plays a vital role in the Moray community. There are major music festivals every year, including MacMoray and the traditional Speyfest, alongside other festivals like the Spirit of Speyside linked to the whisky industry, and, the Keith Traditional Music and Song Association Festival. Venues for the performing arts thrive in the area, and each town sustains a lively artistic culture. Two thriving arts and performance centres exist in Findhorn alone.

Traditional industries - farming, fishing and forestry - play an important part in the area's culture whilst underpinning the economy. Moray is home to several prominent seafood producers and wholesale suppliers situated primarily along its coastal hub in Buckie, supplying fresh catches from the Moray Firth and North Sea. In addition, two internationally renowned food producers, Baxters of Speyside and Walkers of Aberlour, have put Moray firmly on the international map.

The area's biggest town and administrative capital is Elgin, which is also Moray's principal shopping centre. Many leading national retailers are represented alongside long-established local outlets. Other main towns include Forres, well known for its successes in national floral competitions; Buckie, with its fishing and commercial harbour; and Keith, built on a once-thriving textiles industry.

---

<sup>1</sup>Moray Chamber of Commerce 9 May 2026.

## Introduction

Moray Licensing Committee ("the Committee") is the licensing authority for the purposes of all civic and similar type licensing.

NB. Alcohol and gambling are dealt with separately by the Moray Licensing Board.

The Committee is responsible for considering applications and objections in relation to regulating civic licensing in accordance with the Civic Licensing (Scotland) Act 1982, as amended, ("the Act") as well as other licence types under other, similar, legislation.

Under the Act, the Committee is responsible for considering applications for:-

1. Taxis
2. Second hand dealers
3. Knife dealers
4. Metal dealers
5. Boat hire licences
6. Street traders' licences
7. Market operators' licences
8. Public entertainment licences
9. Indoor sports entertainment licences
10. Late hours catering licences
11. Window cleaners' licences
12. Public processions
13. Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006
14. Various animal related licences e.g. pet shops, animal boarding, animal breeding, animal rehoming, horse riding establishment etc. under multiple Acts
15. Landlord registration under the Antisocial Behaviour (Scotland) Act 2004
16. Short term lets
17. Sex shops and sexual entertainment venues

In exercising its functions under these Acts, the Committee is required to have regard to consultees' responses as well as neighbouring or community objections if there are any.

## **Annual Functions Report**

From 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026, the Committee was scheduled to meet on an approximate eight week cycle and met on the following dates:

- (a) 30 April 2025
- (b) 18 June 2025
- (c) 3 September 2025
- (d) 12 November 2025
- (e) 17 December 2025 – Special Meeting

Information and assistance is always available to persons wishing to apply for a licence or respond to an application. The Committee has published guidance documents and licensing staff are on hand to answer queries.

Committee meetings are as informal as possible whilst maintaining a fair and transparent process. The majority of applicants appearing before the Committee are willing and able to represent themselves.

## **Decisions of the Committee**

Each application received by the Committee is considered on its individual merits. All licence applications that are received must be weighed-up in accordance with the Act and in consultation with the consultees.

During the course of the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026, the Committee received applications for 501 and issued 537 licences respectively. Lists of application numbers by calendar year appear at the end of this report for comparison. It should be noted that not all licences are due to be considered each year as most licences under the Act have a three year cycle. Therefore the overall number of licences is much higher than the number considered each year.

In addition the majority of licence applications are processed under delegated powers where there are no problems with the application and there are no objections or representations. In cases where an objection or representation does arise the matter is referred to the Committee. The Committee is regularly provided with a report on applications considered and granted under delegated powers.

During the financial year 2025 to 2026 the Committee considered; 1 application for a public entertainment licence (PEL) and 1 application for a renewal of a taxi driver licence application as well as the possible suspensions of a taxi driver licence and a street trader's licence. No action was taken in connection with the taxi driver licence nor the street trader's licence. The PEL was continued until a meeting later in the year however all issues were resolved and the application was granted under delegated authority and did not require to be considered at a future meeting of the Committee. The renewal application of a taxi driver licence was granted.

In considering the applications, the Committee considered a number of different sources of information to enable them to reach decisions. These sources include applicants themselves, council services (including planning, building standards and environmental health), reports from local residents, the Licensing Standards Officer and Police Scotland.

Tourism and Industry continue to play an important role in parts of Moray. Moray Council has set out a number of community planning priorities including healthier citizens, a growing and diverse economy and safer communities. Licensing plays an important role in all of these and decisions of the Committee also have regard to these community planning priorities.

### **Short Term Let Licensing**

Over the last year, applications for short-term let licences have continued to increase with officers issuing new licences under delegated authority. Over the last year the first provisional short-term let licence was issued following the introduction of the new application types.

### **Animal Licensing**

The Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (Scotland) Regulations 2021 came into force in September 2021\*. It modernised some of the animal related licences (e.g. selling animals as pets), added some categories to existing licences (e.g. dog breeding has become breeding of dogs, cats or rabbits) and introduced new licences for animal rehoming and animal welfare establishments. The Regulations brought animal related licences more into line with civic style licences by making them up to three years in length and providing for specific mandatory conditions for relevant licence types. These licences are now becoming more common and work is ongoing to modernise the system of processing, including working with local vets as regards inspections for animal related licences.

### **Licensing Standards**

There are two full time Licensing Standards Officers (LSOs). One LSO is responsible for all aspects of civic licensing like taxis, while the second LSO is responsible for liquor licensing, gambling and adult entertainment. Due to the volume of short-term let licence applications both LSOs have been involved in this work. The LSOs will offer guidance and advice to licence holders and communities to supervise compliance with the requirements of the Act by the licence holders. The LSOs will act as an intermediary between licence holders and the general public helping to avoid and resolve any disputes or disagreements. LSOs also attend meetings with the trade and the public which allows them to build a rapport with the local trade and members of the public as a consistent point of contact. This will ensure that there is a cohesive working partnership between all persons interested in the operation of the Act.

*\*NB. The Scottish Government has initiated a review of animal licensing in general and it is anticipated that more licence types will fall under the regime of these Regulations.*

## **Licensing Standards Officer Report**

The Civic LSO is responsible for numerous licence types. The aim of the role is to provide guidance and information to interested parties; ensure compliance by licence holders; and provide a mediation service for the purpose of avoiding or resolving disputes.

Below is a brief list of some of the activities carried out by the LSO between April 2025 and March 2026.

- Joint visits with the Council's Environmental Health Service to various licence type holders to ensure compliance with both licensing and environmental health legislation.
- Worked with numerous mobile sauna businesses to ensure they were licensed and have suitable conditions applied where required.
- Carried out two joint taxi inspection operations with Police Scotland, Fleet Services and the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (referred to as "VOSA" locally).
- Supported the applicants of Public Entertainment Licences for MacMoray, Speyfest, Gordon Castle Highland Games, Moray Pride, Rotary Rota Fest and numerous other local events.
- Supported applicants in developing plans for the return of Lossie Raft Race.
- Mediated Short-term lets and Late hours licence complaints.
- Worked with community groups and charities to ensure they claimed correct exemptions for markets.
- Participated in the Northeast Civic Licensing Group meetings to share information and best practice among Civic Licensing Standards Officers across the North of Scotland.
- Investigated reports of unlicensed Short-term Let premises when reported by the public,
- Attended meetings with The Round Table, Elgin Rotary and other volunteer groups to assist in explaining licensing requirements and offer assistance in completing required applications.
- Contributed to and helped manage the processing of civic licence applications.
- Working with organisers on local celebrations for upcoming Fochabers and Tomintoul 250<sup>th</sup> community events.
- Developed a proposed updated list of licensable activities for review.
- Updated all licence types and web pages with new 2026 fees.
- Supported licensing solicitor with the 2026 Taxi Fare Review process as and when required.



| <b>Applications Received</b>                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                    |
|-----------------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Year</b>                                   |                  |                  |                  |                  |                    |
| <b>Licence Type</b>                           | <b>2022/2023</b> | <b>2023/2024</b> | <b>2024/2025</b> | <b>2025/2026</b> | <b>Grand Total</b> |
| Animal Boarding                               | 28               | 36               | 35               | 40               | <b>139</b>         |
| Animal Breeding - 1 Year                      | 0                | 1                | 0                | 0                | <b>1</b>           |
| Animal Breeding – 2 Years                     | 0                | 0                | 0                | 1                | <b>1</b>           |
| Animal Breeding – 3 Years                     | 0                | 0                | 0                | 1                | <b>1</b>           |
| Animal Rehoming - 1 Year                      | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                | <b>0</b>           |
| Animal Rehoming - 3 Years                     | 1                | 0                | 0                | 0                | <b>1</b>           |
| Animal Welfare Establishment - 1 Year         | 1                | 0                | 0                | 0                | <b>1</b>           |
| Animal Welfare Establishment - 3 Year         | 0                | 1                | 0                | 1                | <b>2</b>           |
| Cinema                                        | 4                | 1                | 3                | 1                | <b>9</b>           |
| Dangerous Wild Animals                        | 2                | 1                | 1                | 1                | <b>5</b>           |
| Dog Breeding                                  | 2                | 0                | 0                | 0                | <b>2</b>           |
| HMO Licence                                   | 14               | 8                | 5                | 9                | <b>36</b>          |
| Knife Dealers                                 | 0                | 0                | 1                | 0                | <b>1</b>           |
| Late Hours Catering                           | 5                | 10               | 7                | 6                | <b>28</b>          |
| Market Operators – Full                       | 4                | 11               | 10               | 6                | <b>31</b>          |
| Market Operators – Temp                       | 1                | 1                | 1                | 1                | <b>4</b>           |
| Metal Dealer Licence                          | 1                | 1                | 1                | 2                | <b>5</b>           |
| Pet Shops                                     | 0                | 0                | 1                | 0                | <b>1</b>           |
| Private Hire Driver                           | 6                | 5                | 13               | 6                | <b>30</b>          |
| Private Hire Operator                         | 11               | 9                | 13               | 5                | <b>38</b>          |
| Public Charitable Collections                 | 34               | 24               | 25               | 24               | <b>107</b>         |
| Public Entertainment - 1 Year                 | 3                | 6                | 4                | 4                | <b>17</b>          |
| Public Entertainment - 3 Years                | 11               | 11               | 16               | 19               | <b>57</b>          |
| Public Entertainment – Temporary              | 9                | 9                | 12               | 6                | <b>36</b>          |
| Riding Establishments                         | 2                | 5                | 3                | 2                | <b>12</b>          |
| Sale of Pet Animals - 2 Years                 | 2                | 0                | 0                | 0                | <b>2</b>           |
| Sale of Pet Animals – 3 Years                 | 0                | 0                | 0                | 1                | <b>1</b>           |
| Second Hand Dealer                            | 33               | 27               | 18               | 27               | <b>105</b>         |
| Short-term Lets - Home Letting                | 2                | 25               | 10               | 10               | <b>47</b>          |
| Short-term Lets - Home Letting/Sharing        | 0                | 29               | 6                | 11               | <b>46</b>          |
| Short-term Lets - Home Sharing                | 2                | 35               | 8                | 6                | <b>51</b>          |
| Short-term Lets - Secondary Letting           | 58               | 540              | 70               | 88               | <b>756</b>         |
| Short-term Lets - Temporary                   | 0                | 0                | 0                | 1                | <b>1</b>           |
| Short-term Lets – Provisional                 | 0                | 0                | 1                | 2                | <b>3</b>           |
| Short-term Lets – Confirmation of Provisional | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                | <b>0</b>           |
| Short-term Lets - Transfer                    | 0                | 0                | 4                | 7                | <b>11</b>          |
| Skin Piercing and Tattooing                   | 19               | 17               | 21               | 14               | <b>71</b>          |
| Small Lotteries                               | 17               | 16               | 14               | 13               | <b>60</b>          |
| Street Trader                                 | 32               | 37               | 36               | 44               | <b>149</b>         |

|                     |            |             |            |            |             |
|---------------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| Taxi Booking Office | 1          | 0           | 1          | 1          | <b>3</b>    |
| Taxi Driver         | 84         | 76          | 75         | 69         | <b>304</b>  |
| Taxi Operator       | 50         | 84          | 68         | 55         | <b>257</b>  |
| Venison Dealer      | 2          | 2           | 1          | 3          | <b>8</b>    |
| Window Cleaners     | 18         | 14          | 12         | 14         | <b>58</b>   |
| <b>Grand Total</b>  | <b>459</b> | <b>1042</b> | <b>496</b> | <b>501</b> | <b>2498</b> |

| <b>Licences Issued</b>                 |                  |                  |                  |                  |                    |
|----------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Year</b>                            |                  |                  |                  |                  |                    |
| <b>Licence Type</b>                    | <b>2022/2023</b> | <b>2023/2024</b> | <b>2024/2025</b> | <b>2025/2026</b> | <b>Grand Total</b> |
| Animal Boarding                        | 28               | 34               | 16               | 47               | 125                |
| Animal Breeding – 1 Year               | 0                | 1                | 0                | 0                | 1                  |
| Animal Breeding – 2 Years              | 0                | 0                | 0                | 1                | 1                  |
| Animal Breeding – 3 Years              | 0                | 0                | 0                | 1                | 1                  |
| Animal Rehoming – 1 Year               | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                  |
| Animal Rehoming – 3 Year               | 0                | 1                | 0                | 0                | 1                  |
| Animal Welfare Establishment – 1 Year  | 0                | 1                | 0                | 0                | 1                  |
| Animal Welfare Establishment – 3 Year  | 0                | 1                | 0                | 0                | 1                  |
| Cinema                                 | 3                | 2                | 2                | 2                | 9                  |
| Dangerous Wild Animals                 | 0                | 1                | 1                | 2                | 4                  |
| Dog Breeding                           | 2                | 0                | 0                | 0                | 2                  |
| HMO Licence                            | 8                | 10               | 11               | 9                | 38                 |
| Knife Dealers                          | 0                | 0                | 1                | 0                | 1                  |
| Late Hours Catering                    | 5                | 10               | 7                | 5                | 27                 |
| Market Operators – Full                | 3                | 8                | 12               | 8                | 31                 |
| Market Operators – Temp                | 1                | 2                | 1                | 1                | 5                  |
| Metal Dealer Licence                   | 2                | 1                | 1                | 2                | 6                  |
| Pet Shops                              | 3                | 0                | 0                | 1                | 4                  |
| Private Hire Driver                    | 5                | 2                | 9                | 7                | 23                 |
| Private Hire Operator                  | 9                | 8                | 12               | 5                | 34                 |
| Public Charitable Collections          | 32               | 23               | 27               | 21               | 103                |
| Public Entertainment - 1 Year          | 3                | 2                | 6                | 5                | 16                 |
| Public Entertainment - 3 Years         | 20               | 12               | 10               | 21               | 63                 |
| Public Entertainment – Temporary       | 10               | 6                | 14               | 6                | 36                 |
| Riding Establishments                  | 3                | 3                | 4                | 3                | 13                 |
| Sale of Pet Animals - 2 Year           | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                  |
| Sale of Pet Animals - 3 Years          | 0                | 0                | 0                | 1                | 1                  |
| Second Hand Dealer                     | 33               | 26               | 18               | 27               | 104                |
| Short-term Lets - Home Letting         | 0                | 8                | 18               | 10               | 36                 |
| Short-term Lets - Home Letting/Sharing | 0                | 4                | 18               | 16               | 38                 |
| Short-term Lets - Home Sharing         | 1                | 5                | 30               | 10               | 46                 |
| Short-term Lets - Secondary Letting    | 13               | 164              | 386              | 110              | 673                |
| Short-term Lets - Temporary            | 0                | 0                | 0                | 1                | 1                  |
| Short-term Lets – Provisional          | 0                | 0                | 0                | 1                | 1                  |

|                                               |            |            |            |            |             |
|-----------------------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| Short-term Lets – Confirmation of Provisional | 0          | 0          | 0          | 0          | <b>0</b>    |
| Short-term Lets - Transfer                    | 0          | 0          | 3          | 6          | <b>9</b>    |
| Skin Piercing and Tatooing                    | 19         | 16         | 19         | 16         | <b>70</b>   |
| Small Lotteries                               | 16         | 11         | 17         | 13         | <b>57</b>   |
| Street Trader                                 | 32         | 36         | 30         | 42         | <b>140</b>  |
| Taxi Booking Office                           | 1          | 0          | 1          | 0          | <b>2</b>    |
| Taxi Driver                                   | 86         | 72         | 64         | 66         | <b>288</b>  |
| Taxi Operator                                 | 51         | 83         | 67         | 56         | <b>257</b>  |
| Venison Dealer                                | 1          | 3          | 1          | 3          | <b>8</b>    |
| Window Cleaners                               | 16         | 17         | 13         | 12         | <b>58</b>   |
| <b>Grand Total</b>                            | <b>406</b> | <b>573</b> | <b>819</b> | <b>537</b> | <b>2335</b> |