

HIGHLAND LICENSING BOARD

Minute of the meeting of the **Highland Licensing Board** held in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Tuesday, 28 October 2025 at 9.30am.

Present:

Dr C Birt, Mr J Bruce, Mr J Grafton, Mrs J Hendry (Convener), Mr S Kennedy, Ms E Knox, Ms K MacLean, Mr D Millar, Mr K Rosie.

In Attendance:

Ms C McArthur, Principal Solicitor, Clerk to the Board

Mr G Somers, Solicitor

Mr G Cameron, Licensing Standards Officer

Mr S Campbell, Licensing Standards Officer

Mr E Mackinnon, Licensing Standards Officer

Mrs G MacPherson, Committee Officer

Also In Attendance:

Sergeant Paterson, Police Scotland

Item 7.1: Martin and Claire Murray, Applicants

Item 8.1: Rebecca Fraser, Applicant's Solicitor

Item 8.2: Emily Allan, Applicant's Solicitor

Items 8.3, 8.4 and 8.6: Lewis Barn, Applicant's Solicitor

Item 8.7: David Hossack, Applicant's Solicitor, Hazel Urquhart, Premises Manager

Item 8.8: David Hossack, Applicant's Solicitor, Alan Cockburn, Premises Manager

Briefing on Protocol for Webcasting of Meetings

The Convener advised the Board that the meeting would be filmed and broadcast over the internet on the Highland Council website and would be archived and available for viewing for 12 months.

1. Apologies for Absence

Leisgeulan

An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Mr D Macpherson.

2. Declarations of Interest

Foilseachaidhean Com-pàirt.

Item 7.1: Mrs J Hendry

3. Confirmation of minutes

Dearbhadh a' gheàrr-chunntais

There was submitted for confirmation as a correct record the minute of the meeting of the Highland Licensing Board held on 16 September 2025.

The Minutes were held as read and **APPROVED**.

4. Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005
Licences granted under delegated powers
Achd Ceadachd (Alba) 2005
Ceadachdan a bhulicheadh fo ùghdarris air a thiomnadh

There had been circulated Report No HLB/76/25 detailing all Licences which had been granted under delegated powers to the Clerk during the period 4 September 2025 to 15 October 2025.

The Board **NOTED** the Report.

5. Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005
Occasional licences and extended hours granted under delegated powers
Achd Ceadachd (Alba) 2005
Ceadachdan Corra-uair agus uairean sinte a bhulicheadh fo ùghdarris air a thiomnadh

There had been circulated Report No HLB/77/25 detailing Occasional Licences and Extended Hours Applications which had been granted under delegated powers by the Clerk to the Board during the period 4 September 2025 to 15 October 2025.

The Board **NOTED** the Report.

6. Festive Period Dates 2025/2026
Cinn-latha na Nollaige 2025/2026

The Board **NOTED** the dates between which festive period hours under the Board's Policy Statement may be permitted in 2025/2026 which had been granted under delegated powers.

7. Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005
Applications for provisional premises licences
Achd Ceadachd (Alba) 2005
Iarrtas airson ceadachdan thogalaichean le cumha

7.1 Ref: HC/CSR/2157

Applicant: Dunnet Bay Distillers Ltd

Premises: Stannergill Distillery, Castletown Mill, Castletown

Type: On and Off Sales

Declarations of Interest: Mrs J Hendry declared interest in this as the applicants were clients of Teclan Ltd, of which she was a major shareholder and, in accordance with paragraph 5.6 of the revised Code of Conduct, she left the meeting for this item. Mr J Grafton, Vice Convener, took the Chair for this item.

There had been circulated Report No HLB/78/25 by the Clerk.

The applicants had successfully run licensed premises for 11 years. This application was part of a £5.7M investment into restoring an old derelict building

into a destination distillery with premium dining experience and tours. This was a big investment for the Caithness area and would provide opportunities for young people, including employment.

The Board **AGREED** to **GRANT** the application for a provisional premises licence subject to the mandatory conditions and the local conditions set out at 7.2 of the report.

8. Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005

Applications for variation (major) to premises licences

Achd Ceadachd (Alba) 2005

Iarrtasan airson Caochladh (Mòr) a thaobh ceadachdan thogalaichean

8.1 Ref: HC/INBS/653

Applicant: Black Sheep Management Service Limited, Tom-An-Oir, Invergarry, PH35 4HR

Premises: The Ambassador Hotel (formerly Strathness House), 4 Ardross Terrace, Inverness, IV3 5NQ

Type: On and Off sales

There had been circulated Report No HLB/79/25 by the Clerk.

The Board **AGREED** to **GRANT** the application for a major variation to the premises licence subject to the mandatory conditions, existing local conditions (subject to an amendment to (m) and the additional local conditions set out at 7.2 of the report.

8.2 Ref: HC/INBS/365

Applicant: Motor Fuel Limited, 10 Bricket Road, St Albans, AL1 3JX

Premises: Grantown Service Station, 39 Spey Avenue, Grantown-on-Spey, PH26 3EJ

Type: Off sales

There had been circulated Report No HLB/80/25 by the Clerk.

Motor Fuel Limited had undertaken a general check on all their premises licences, and it had been noted that this premises did not benefit from the full statutory hours on a Sunday. This variation brought the trading hours in line with legislation and with their other premises in the area.

The Board **AGREED** to **GRANT** the application for a major variation to the premises licence subject to the mandatory conditions only.

8.3 Ref: HC/INBS/13

Applicant: Co-operative Group Food Ltd, 1 Angel Square, Manchester, M60 0AG

Premises: Co-op, 11 Moss-side Road, Nairn, IV12 5NQ

Type: Off sales

There had been circulated Report No HLB/81/25 by the Clerk.

The applicant's solicitor spoke in support of the application.

The applicant operated a home delivery service across approximately 200 stores in Scotland, 27 of which were in Highland. The variation allowed for this service to be offered in Nairn. The Challenge 25 policy would be implemented at the point of delivery, by trained drivers, and alcohol would not be left unattended.

The Board **AGREED** to **GRANT** the application for a major variation to the premises licence subject to the mandatory conditions only.

8.4 Ref: HC/INBS/312

Applicant: Co-operative Group Food Ltd, 1 Angel Square, Manchester, M60 0AG

Premises: Co-op, 45 High Street, Nairn, IV12 4AG

Type: Off sales

There had been circulated Report No HLB/82/25 by the Clerk.

The applicant operated a home delivery service across approximately 200 stores in Scotland, 27 of which were in Highland. The variation allowed for this service to be offered in Nairn. The Challenge 25 policy would be implemented at the point of delivery, by trained drivers, and alcohol would not be left unattended.

The Board **AGREED** to **GRANT** the application for a major variation to the premises licence subject to the mandatory conditions only.

8.5 Ref: HC/RSL/1834

Applicant: Torabhaig Distillery Limited

Premises: Torabhaig Distillery, Teangue, Sleat, Isle of Skye, IV44 8RE

Type: On and Off sales

There had been circulated Report No HLB/83/25 by the Clerk.

The Board **AGREED** to **GRANT** the application for a major variation to the premises licence subject to the mandatory conditions, existing local conditions and existing special conditions.

8.6 Ref: HC/CSR/0325

Applicant: Co-operative Group Food Limited per Hill Brown Licensing, The Forsyth Building, 5 Renfield Street, Glasgow, G2 5EZ

Premises: Co-op, 13 Balconie Street, Evanton

Type: Off Sales

There had been circulated Report No HLB/84/25 by the Clerk.

The applicant operated a home delivery service across approximately 200 stores in Scotland, 27 of which were in Highland. The variation allowed for this service to be offered in Evanton. The Challenge 25 policy would be implemented at the point of delivery, by trained drivers, and alcohol would not be left unattended.

The Board **AGREED** to **GRANT** the application for a major variation to the premises licence subject to the mandatory conditions only.

8.7 Ref: HC/CSR/0706

Applicant: Diageo Scotland Limited per Morton Fraser MacRoberts LLP, 9 Haymarket Square, Edinburgh, EH3 8RY

Premises: The Singleton of Glen Ord Distillery Visitor Centre, Glen Ord Distillery, Muir of Ord

Type: On and Off Sales

There had been circulated Report No HLB/85/25 by the Clerk.

The applicant's solicitor provided a background to the premises and spoke in support of the application.

The premises provided tours and experiences where visitors could see how whisky was made and learn about its history. State-of-the-art facilities included a visitor centre, retail area, function suite and tasting rooms across a number of buildings.

As part of the application process, advice from the Licensing Standards Officer had been sought, and followed. The applicant's solicitor described the proposed changes to the layout and the reasoning behind them. There would be a slight increase in capacity, of less than 1m², attributable to the visitor centre. The following additional points were raised:-

- there were two separate buildings with off sales capacity;
- a visit to the retail area generally followed a tour of the premises or a tasting experience;
- the products tended to be expensive, often rare whiskies not available elsewhere, so their presentation was artful; and
- it was hoped to hold community fundraising events, such as bingo, quizzes and comedy nights, as well as offering the facilities to the community for activities such as yoga or pilates during quieter months.

During discussion it was said that this was a well used venue and the alcohol displays were large and spacious. It was felt that granting the application would benefit the community.

The Clerk clarified the Board's position in terms of overprovision.

Members were satisfied that the grant of the application would not undermine the licensing objectives.

The Board **AGREED** to **GRANT** the application for a major variation to the premises licence subject to the mandatory conditions, existing local conditions and the existing special condition to be amended as set out at 8.3 of the report.

8.8 Ref: HC/CSR/0857

Applicant: Diageo Scotland Limited per Morton Fraser MacRoberts LLP, 9 Haymarket Square, Edinburgh, EH3 8RY

Premises: Clynelish and Brora Distillery, Brora

Type: On and Off sales

There had been circulated Report No HLB/86/25 by the Clerk.

The applicant's solicitor spoke in support of the application.

Clynelish and Brora distilleries, although contained within the same licenced footprint, were separate buildings. Both working distilleries, offering tours and tastings, Clynelish had a state-of-the-art visitor centre and Brora offered more specialist private tours. Visitors tended to visit one or the other, rather than both. The capacity for alcohol sales was shared between both buildings and an increase in capacity was requested in each, however, this was to allow for a more minimalistic product display.

The applicant's solicitor highlighted that the capacity in the application was slightly overstated and a minor variation had since been submitted to correct this.

Members were satisfied that the grant of the application would not undermine the licensing objectives.

The Board **AGREED** to **GRANT** the application for a major variation to the premises licence subject to the mandatory conditions and the existing special condition to be amended as set out at 8.3 of the report.

9. Application for personal licence Iarrtas airson ceadachd phearsanta

9.1 Applicant: Michael Gray

There had been circulated Report No HLB/87/25 by the Clerk.

This item had been deferred during the last meeting of the Board, to allow a second opportunity for the applicant to attend. The applicant did not attend this meeting and the item was heard in his absence.

The Board heard from the Licensing Sergeant who advised, in terms of Section 73 (3) (b) of the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005, that the applicant had been convicted of a relevant offence. Information was provided in relation to the offence and the Police made no recommendation.

Clarification was sought, and provided, regarding the offence. The Board expressed disappointment that the applicant was not in attendance, particularly as the Police had made no recommendation. One Member wished to defer consideration for a second time and other Members wished to refuse the application.

The Clerk clarified the grounds for refusal in regard to the licencing objectives.

Thereafter, the Board **AGREED** to **REFUSE** the application for the following reasons.

Members were not satisfied that, having regard to the licensing objectives, in particular preventing crime and disorder, that the applicant was a fit and proper person to be the holder of a personal licence. This was based on the notice from Police Scotland confirming a relevant offence and no mitigatory evidence submitted from the applicant.

10. Surrender of premises licence

Gàilleadh ceadachd togalaich

10.1 Premises: The Coach House Cafe, Tomich by Beauly, Inverness-shire
IV4 7LY

Licence Holder: Partnership of DJ & SJ Fraser

10.2 Premises: Cairngorm Gin Company Ltd, Unit 9/3, Achnagonalin
Industrial Estate, Grantown on Spey PH26 3TA

Licence Holder: Cairngorm Gin Company Limited

10.3 Premises: Speyside Distillers Company Limited, Tromie Mills, Kingussie
PH21 1NS

Licence Holder: Speyside Distillers Company Limited

10.4 Premises: The Old Post Office, 3 Kilvaxter, Kilmuir, Isle of Skye, IV51
9YR

Licence Holder: Kathleen Walker

10.5 Premises: Jacobite Queen, Tomnahurich Bridge, Inverness, IV3 5TD

Licence Holder: Jacobite Cruises Ltd

The above Premises Licences had been surrendered in terms of Section 28(5)(f).

The meeting closed at 10.25am.