

HIGHLAND LICENSING BOARD

Minute of the meeting of the **Highland Licensing Board** held in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Tuesday, 13 January 2026 at 9.30am.

Present:

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

In Attendance:

Ms C McArthur, Principal Solicitor, Clerk to the Board
Mr I Meredith, Solicitor, Depute Clerk to the Board
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 6.1: Niall Hassard, Applicant's Agent

Item 6.2: Brian Hume, Visitor Centre Manager, Ben Nevis Distillery

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

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Ms E Knox, Mr D Macpherson and Mr K Rosie.

2. Declarations of Interest Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt.

There were no declarations of interest.

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 2 December 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 bhuilicheadh fo ùghdarras air a thiomnadh

There had been circulated Report No HLB/01/26 detailing all Licences which had been granted under delegated powers to the Clerk during the period 20 November 2025 to 16 December 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 sìnte a bhuilicheadh fo ùghdarras air a thiomnadh

There had been circulated Report No HLB/02/26 detailing Occasional Licences and Extended Hours Applications which had been granted under delegated powers by the Clerk to the Board during the period 20 November 2025 to 16 December 2025.

The Board **NOTED** the Report.

6. Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005
Applications for variation (major) to premises licences
Achd Ceadachd (Alba) 2005
Iarrtasan airson Caochladh (Mòr) a thaobh ceadachdan thogalaichean

6.1 Ref: HC/INBS/393

Applicant: Star Pubs Trading Limited, 45 Mortimer Street, London, W1W 8HJ

Premises: Chieftain Hotel, 2 Millburn Road, Inverness, IV2 3PS

Type: On and off sales

There had been circulated Report No HLB/03/26 by the Clerk.

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

Since taking over in May 2025, the operator had installed a new kitchen team. Locally sourced products had been well received by guests and this had attracted local attention. The variation would allow guests to enjoy a premium or celebratory type breakfast experience, with the option of a glass of prosecco or similar while eating. Further updates to the permitted activities were provided.

The Board **AGREED** to **GRANT** the application for a major variation to the premises licence subject to the existing conditions and additional local condition (f).

6.2 Ref: HC/RSL/1379

Applicant: Ben Nevis Distillery (Fort William) Limited

Premises: Ben Nevis Distillery, Visitors Centre, Lochybridge, Fort William, PH33 6TJ

Type: On and off sales

The Visitor Centre Manager spoke in support of the application.

The distillery was a busy attraction with approximately 35,000 visitors per year. The variation would allow an earlier daily tour, with whisky tasting offered prior to purchase. Drivers were provided with small bottles so that a sample could be taken away and consumed at a later time.

There had been circulated Report No HLB/04/26 by the Clerk.

The Board **AGREED** to **GRANT** the application for a major variation of the premises licence subject to the existing conditions and the following special condition:

- Alcohol for consumption on the premises prior to 11:00am on any day may only be sold to persons participating in a formal tasting or sampling session or to such other persons following on from their participation in a formal tasting or sampling session and a notice to that effect will be displayed on the premises.

7. **Application for personal licence Iarrtas airson ceadachd phearsanta**

7.1 **Applicant:** Samantha Box

There had been circulated Report No HLB/05/26 by the Clerk.

This item had been deferred during the last meeting of the Board, to allow a further opportunity for the applicant to attend. The applicant did not attend this meeting and the item was heard in her 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 which had not been declared on the application. Information was provided in relation to the offence.

During discussion, the Board expressed disappointment in the applicant's non-attendance at the meeting and the lack of engagement with the Licensing Team since the last meeting, in addition to her omission of the relevant offence on the application.

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

The Board **AGREED** to **REFUSE** the application on the grounds that, having had regard to the licensing objectives, particularly preventing crime and disorder, the applicant was not a fit and proper person to hold a licence based on her previous conviction and the information contained in the letter submitted by Police Scotland.

Thereafter, and in response to a question, the Clerk clarified that there would be no right to appeal but the applicant could seek legal advice.

**10. Surrender of premises licence
Gèilleadh ceadachd togalaich**

10.1 Premises: Tarrel House, Tarrel Farm, Portmahomack
Licence Holder: James Goulding

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

The meeting closed at 9.55am.