

Agenda Item	15
Report No	HLC/28/26

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Highland Licensing Committee

Date: 24 February 2026

Report Title: Short Term Let Licensing Policy

Report By: Gary Somers, Solicitor

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report seeks to allow the Committee to amend the Council's existing short term let (STL) licensing policy statement in order to provide further information on the operation of the licensing scheme, particularly in terms of the renewal of a licence, and to update the policy statement to reflect the practices which have developed as the licensing scheme has evolved.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
- i. Approve the changes made to the STL licensing policy as contained within Appendix 1; and
 - ii. Approve the continuation of their existing policy on temporary exemptions to requiring an STL licence, namely that they will not be granted under any circumstances and that the position will be kept under review.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Highland Licensing Committee approved the Highland Council's STL licensing policy at its meeting of 6 September 2022. This was in accordance with the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 as amended by The Civic Government Scotland Act 1982 (Licensing of Short Term Lets) Order 2022.

The Committee approved an amended policy on 24 October 2023, in accordance with changes introduced by virtue of The Civic Government Scotland Act 1982

(Licensing of Short Term Lets) Order 2023, and updated guidance from the Scottish Government.

The Committee approved a further amended policy on 10 October 2024, in accordance with changes introduced by virtue of The Civic Government Scotland Act 1982 (Licensing of Short Term Lets) Order 2024, and to reflect practices as the licensing scheme has evolved.

- 3.2 The licensing scheme for STLs was established and introduced in October 2022. It has now been in place for over three years. As at 19 January 2026, 8,291 full STL licences had been granted across the whole Council area.
- 3.3 Full STL licences were typically granted for a period of three years from the date of their issue, with the first full licences being issued in February 2023. Licence holders are required to apply to renew their short term let licence before the expiry date, in order to continue to operate lawfully. The Council's scheme is open for applications to renew a licence and officers have started to process licence renewal applications.
- 3.4 Council officers have taken this opportunity to review the Council's policy statement on STL licensing and amend this to provide further information on the operation of the licensing scheme, particularly in terms of the renewal of an existing licence, and update provisions within the existing policy to reflect the current practices for the processing of licence applications.

4. Summary of proposed changes

4.1 Primarily, the changes in the draft policy are:

- To amend parts of the definitions section of the policy (section 3), specifically in respect of the following:
 - Excluded accommodation – to provide information on how the Council assess whether accommodation forms part of property which itself if excluded from requiring an STL licence;
 - Type of letting – to provide further information on how the Council assess whether the licence application premises can be determined as the host/operator's "home";
 - Non-natural persons – to provide some further information on applications made by or on behalf of non-natural persons such as companies, limited liability partnerships, registered charities, unregistered voluntary organisations and trusts; and
 - Multiple units on one licence – to clarify and update the guidance here, to bring this in line with the adopted practices and, in particular:
 - to detail factors which would permit multiple units of unconventional accommodation to apply for one licence application, and
 - provide guidance on the points which may be taken into consideration to assess whether more than one unit of accommodation can be included on one licence.

- To update information on who is consulted on an application, in line with adopted practices;
- To provide further information regarding the requirements and examples of evidence that may be requested, where the owner is not the applicant or host/manager of the application premises;
- To provide updated information on the licence renewal process;
- To clarify information regarding the grant of a full STL Licence, following the issue of a provisional STL licence;
- To remove information on “existing hosts”, this being a transitional provision which is no longer relevant;
- To provide further information for the surrender of an existing licence, in line with adopted practices; and
- To otherwise generally amend some of the references within the policy and to tidy up some of the provisions in the policy.

4.2 For comparison, the current policy can be viewed at [https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/25349/short-term lets - policy statement](https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/25349/short-term-lets-policy-statement)

5. Integrated Impact Assessment

5.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment screening exercise has been carried out and determined that that impact of the proposed changes would be largely neutral. Accordingly a full impact assessment is not required.

Date: 30 January 2026

Author: Gary Somers, Solicitor

Background Papers: Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Updated Short Term Let Licensing Policy



Short term let licensing policy statement

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Foreword

This policy statement is the ~~third~~-fourth one published by the Highland Licensing Committee.

The purpose of the policy is to provide guidance for applicants, licence holders and members of the public on the licensing system for short term lets.

Consultation on the initial draft policy statement took place during the period from 21 June 2022 to 5 August 2022.

A report providing details of the comments received from consultees was considered at the meeting of the Highland Licensing Committee on 6 September 2022. A copy of the report is available online at:

https://www.highland.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/4664/highland_licensing_committee

An amended policy statement was approved by The Highland Licensing Committee on 24 October 2023, to reflect changes introduced by The Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 (Licensing of Short-term Lets) (Amendment) Order 2023 and to also include updated guidance from the Scottish Government regarding changes to the planning requirements for short term lets. A copy of the report is available online at:

https://www.highland.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/4864/highland_licensing_committee

A further amended policy statement was approved by The Highland Licensing Committee on 10 October 2024 to reflect changes introduced by The Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 (Licensing of Short-term Lets) (Amendment) Order 2024, and to reflect updated guidance on the licensing requirements in a short term let control area. A copy of the report is available online at:

https://www.highland.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/5055/highland_licensing_committee

A further amended policy statement was approved by The Highland Licensing Committee on [] 2026 to include more information on the renewal of a full licence and reflect updates to the scheme arising from developed practices: A copy of the report is available online at: []

This policy statement will be reviewed and revised when necessary.

1. Background

- 1.1. On 19 January 2022, The Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 (Licensing of Short-term Lets) Order 2022 (“the 2022 Order”) was approved by the Scottish Parliament. The 2022 Order came into force on 1 March 2022 and inserts new legislative provisions into the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 (“the Act”). The 2022 Order was amended by The Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 (Licensing of Short-term Lets) Order 2023 (“2023 Order”), which came into force on 31 March 2023. The 2022 Order was further amended by The Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 (Licensing of Short-term Lets) Order 2024 (“2024 Order”) which came into force on 31 August 2024.
- 1.2. The 2022 Order introduced a new mandatory licensing system for short term lets which local authorities were required to establish by 1 October 2022.
- 1.3. Prior to the introduction of the legislation, there was no requirement to licence short term lets and, therefore, local authorities did not have the ability to regulate these types of premises.
- 1.4. The licensing scheme was brought in by the Scottish Government with the aim to ensure short term lets are safe, address issues faced by neighbours, to facilitate local authorities in knowing and understanding what is happening in their area and handling complaints effectively. It also enables local authorities to ensure the people providing short term lets are suitable. The legislation aims to make sure that the economic and tourism benefits from short term lets are balanced with the needs and concerns of local communities.

2. Timescales for applying

- 2.1. Since 1 October 2023, all new host/operators cannot lawfully operate (i.e. take bookings or receive guests) until their application has been determined and they have been granted a licence.
- 2.2. Whilst there was a transitional provision which permitted existing host/operators (those using accommodation to provide short term lets before 1 October 2022 and who applied for a short term let licence prior to 1 October

2023) to continue to operate if they either had a licence or had made an application for a licence that had not yet been determined; all licence applications made on or following 1 October 2023 will be considered to be from a new host/operator.

~~2.1. existing host and operators (those using accommodation to provide short term lets before 1 October 2022 and who applied for a short term let licence prior to 1 October 2023) can only continue to operate if they either have a licence, or have made an application for a licence that has yet to be determined.~~

~~2.2. New hosts or operators cannot lawfully operate (i.e. take bookings or receive guests) until their application has been determined and they have been granted a licence.~~

3. Definitions

3.1. A short term let is defined in the Act as the use of residential accommodation provided by a host in the course of business to a guest, where all the following criteria are met-

- (a) The guest does not use the accommodation as their only or principal home
- (b) The short term let is entered into for commercial consideration
- (c) The guest is not
 - a. An immediate family member of the host
 - b. Sharing the accommodation with the host for the principal purpose of advancing the guest's education as part of an arrangement made or approved by a school, college, or further or higher educational institution, or
 - c. An owner or part owner of the accommodation
- (d) The accommodation is not provided for the principal purpose of facilitating the provision of work or services by the guest to the host or to another member of the host's household
- (e) The accommodation is not excluded accommodation
- (f) The short term let does not constitute an excluded tenancy

Commercial consideration - this includes money and a benefit in kind (such as the reciprocal use of accommodation).

Guest – this means a person who occupies accommodation under a short-term let

Host – this means a person who exercises control over the occupation and use of the accommodation

Immediate family member — a guest is deemed to be an immediate family member of the host if they are:

1. Your partner (spouse, civil partner or someone you live with as if you were married to them)
2. Is you or your partner's: parent or grandparent, child, stepchild, foster child or grandchild or brother or sister
3. Is the partner of one of your: parents or grandparents, children or grandchildren, or brothers or sisters

Excluded accommodation – this means accommodation which is, or is part of:

- an aparthotel (as defined in the 2022 Order)
- premises in respect of which a premises licence within the meaning of section 17 of the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 has effect and where the provision of accommodation is an activity listed in the operating plan as defined in section 20(4) of the 2005 Act
- a hotel which has planning permission granted for use as a hotel
- a hostel (as defined in the 2022 Order)
- residential accommodation where personal care is provided to residents, including guest rooms provided at that accommodation for the purposes of visiting residents
- a hospital or nursing home, including guest rooms provided at the hospital or nursing home for the purposes of visiting residents of the hospital or nursing home a residential school, college or training centre
- secure residential accommodation (including a prison, young offenders institution, detention centre, secure training centre, custody centre, short-term holding centre, secure hospital, secure local authority accommodation, or accommodation used as military barracks)
- a refuge (as defined in the 2022 Order)
- student accommodation (as defined in the 2022 Order),
- accommodation which otherwise requires a licence for use for hire for overnight stays
- accommodation which is provided by the guest,
- accommodation which is capable, without modification, of transporting guests to another location
- a bothy (as defined in the 2022 Order)
- accommodation owned by an employer and provided to an employee in terms of a contract of employment or for the better performance of the employee's duties

- guest rooms in sheltered housing (as defined in the 2024 Order) which are provided for the purposes of visiting residents of that housing.

3.2. Please note that if you have an HMO licence for your property, you would still need a short-term let licence if it is also to be used for short-term lets. This is the case whether or not you live at the premises covered by your HMO licence. In addition, please note that if you have registered as a private registered landlord, you would still need a short-term let licence if your property is also to be used for short-term lets.

~~3.3. Self-catering property in the grounds of a licensed hotel would be excluded.~~

3.3. Excluded Accommodation

3.3.1 The 2022 Order provides that where accommodation which is part of property which is itself excluded from requiring a short term let licence, such accommodation will also be excluded from requiring a licence.

3.3.2 To assess whether such potentially excluded accommodation forms part of property which is excluded from requiring a short term let licence, the Council will consider the specific facts and circumstances, on a case-by-case basis and consider points including, though not limited to, the following:

- The contents of any planning consents which apply to both the excluded property and the potentially excluded accommodation;
- Whether the potentially excluded accommodation and excluded property form part of the same legal title or whether they are within separate titles, together with the content of the title deeds and any title plans which apply;
- Whether the potentially excluded accommodation shares an access and any services with the excluded accommodation;
- What boundary features are in place between the potentially excluded accommodation and the excluded property; premises; and
- Details of what facilities, including cooking, washing and other basic facilities, if any, are shared between the potentially excluded accommodation and the excluded property, including the extent to which such facilities are shared and whether the facilities are integral to the operation of the accommodation of whether such facilities are, for example, available for use to the wider public.

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Excluded tenancy – an excluded tenancy means a tenancy which falls within any of the following definitions:

- protected tenancy (within the meaning of section 1 of the Rent (Scotland) Act 1984
- an assured tenancy (within the meaning of section 12 of the Housing (Scotland) 1988 Act)
- a short assured tenancy (within the meaning of section 32 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1988)
- a tenancy of a croft (within the meaning of section 3 the Crofters (Scotland Act 1993)
- a tenancy of a holding situated outwith the crofting counties (within the meaning of section 61 of the Crofters (Scotland Act 1993) to which any provisions of the Small Landholders (Scotland) Acts 1886 to 1931(8)) applies
- a Scottish secure tenancy (within the meaning of section 11 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001)
- a short Scottish secure tenancy (within the meaning of section 34 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001)
- a 1991 Act tenancy (within the meaning of section 1(4) of the Agricultural Holdings (Scotland) Act 2003)
- a limited duration tenancy (within the meaning of section 93 of the Agricultural Holdings (Scotland) Act 2003)
- a modern limited duration tenancy (within the meaning of section 5A of Agricultural Holdings (Scotland) Act 2003)
- a short limited duration tenancy (within the meaning of section 4 of the Agricultural Holdings (Scotland) Act 2003)
- a tenancy under a lease under which agricultural land is let for the purpose of its being used only for grazing or mowing during some specified period of the year (as described in section 3 of the Agricultural Holdings (Scotland) Act 2003)
- a private residential tenancy (within the meaning of section 1 of the Private Housing (Tenancies) (Scotland) Act 2016)
- a student residential tenancy.

3.4. Types of letting

~~3.4.~~ 3.4.1 There are four types of licences for short term let accommodation. Any licence granted must be for either:

1. Secondary letting;
2. Home letting;
3. Home sharing; or
4. Home letting and home sharing

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3.5. 3.4.2 The different types of licences are defined as follows:

- **Secondary letting** – this means a short-term let involving the letting of property where the host/operator does not normally live
- **Home letting** - this means the host/operator is using all or part of their own home for short-term lets whilst they are absent.
- **Home sharing** – this means the host/operator is using all or part of their own home for short-term lets whilst they are there.
- **Home letting and home sharing** – this means the host/operator is using all or part of their own home for short-term lets whilst they are there and whilst they are absent

3.4.3 For each application, The Highland Council (“the Council”) will assess whether an applicant has applied for the correct type of letting. Where this is difficult to ascertain from the information provided on the application form itself, the Council will revert to applicants to request further information or evidence as to whether the application premises is or forms part of the host/operator’s home.

3.4.4. For the purposes of short term let licensing, the Council will consider the host/operator’s “home” as being their principal home, namely being where they normally live. A host/operator could not, therefore, have more than one “home” for the purposes of short term let licensing.

3.4.5 To assess whether the application property is the host/operator’s home for short term let licensing purposes, the Council will consider the specific facts and circumstances on a case-by-case basis and consider points including, though not limited to, the following:

- Evidence of where the host/operator normally lives i.e. where they eat and sleep, have registered with GP;
- The address the host/operator states their home is for tax purposes, including the address detailed on their tax return address;
- The address where the host/operator is registered to vote;

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- The address where the host/operator receives their utility bills; and
- The address where the host/operator's vehicle is registered.

~~3.6. Multiple properties operated by the same host/operator as an STL can apply for the one licence if all properties:~~

- ~~• are on the same site;~~
- ~~• are under the one title deed;~~
- ~~• have the same postal address; and~~
- ~~• are used for the same type of letting, for example, secondary letting.~~

3.5. Non-natural persons,

3.5.1 Applications for a short term let licence can be made by and on behalf of "non-natural persons" including though not limited to companies, limited liability partnerships, registered charities, unregistered voluntary organisations and trusts. Please also note that, for such applications the Council will require the organisations allocated number (for example, a company number) together with details for all directors, partners, office bearers, or trustees (as the case may be). Applications must be signed by a director, partner, office bearer, authorised signatory (as the case may be) or an agent authorised on their behalf.

3.5.2 Host/operators which are non-natural persons cannot be held as having a "home" for the purposes of the short term let licensing legislation and, as such, the Council cannot accept applications where non-natural persons are the stated host/operators and the type of letting applied for is home letting, home sharing or home letting and home sharing licence.

3.5.3 A non-natural person will be required to confirm that they have the authority to make the application and proceed with the application as part of the licence application form. Depending on the specific facts and circumstances of an application, the Council may require evidence of such authority to proceed. This will include though is not limited to the constitutional documents of such organisation (as amended), a contractual arrangement such as a shareholders agreement, partnership agreement or similar, or a letter from the directors, partners, office bearers, trustees or other office bearers (as the case may be), confirming the non-natural person has the authority to apply for the licence.

~~If they meet the above conditions, then one licence application can cover multiple properties. If not, then multiple licences will be required.~~

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3.7.3.6. Dwellinghouse means for these purposes, an independent dwelling (with its own front door, kitchen and bathroom) such as a house, flat, cottage etc,

3.8.3.7. You do not need a separate licence for short-term lets within the same dwellinghouse. For example, if you are letting out two rooms in your home, that would be covered by one licence.

3.9.3.8. Unconventional accommodation – this means residential accommodation that is not defined as a dwelling-house and would include residential accommodation such as glamping pods and yurts.

3.9. Multiple units on one licence

3.9.1 Multiple units of unconventional accommodation can apply for one short-term let licence if certain conditions are satisfied. This will include all units:

- being operated by the same host/operator;
- being on the same site;
- being under the one title deed;
- having the same postal address; and
- being used for the same type of letting, for example, secondary letting.

If the above conditions are met, multiple units of unconventional accommodation can be included on one licence application.

If the above conditions are not met, multiple licence applications will likely be required, namely one licence for each unit of accommodation.

3.9.2 Multiple dwellinghouses will not normally be included on one short term let licence application and they will likely require multiple licence applications, namely one for each dwellinghouse. This will only be permitted in very specific facts and circumstances, which will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and will be based on the following (non-exhaustive) points:

- What planning consents are in place for the premises and whether they apply separately to the accommodation units;
- Whether there are any restrictions on the premises being sub-divided or used for any purpose other than a short term let including, for example, the premises being used for a residential purpose

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- What is specified within the title deeds for any premises, including what is shown in any title plan, what is in place for access and services to the premises to the premises;
- Do the units share any services, such as electricity or heating;
- What boundary features and in place between the multiple units at the premises; and
- Do the units share facilities, including cooking and washing facilities and other basic facilities, and what is the extent of such facilities being shared, namely are the shared facilities integral to the operation of the premises.

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4. Application and notification

- 4.1. All applicants must complete a short term let licence application form, using our the Council's online or paper application form.

Applicants must pay the application fee as part of the application process. The Council will not process a licence application form where the fee has not been paid.

- 4.2. Under the terms of the Act, all applicants who apply for a short-term let licence, including a licence renewal, must display a notice of their application at or near the premises so that it can be conveniently read by the public for a period of 21 days.

- 4.3. The notice shall state that an application has been made for a licence, the main facts of the application, that objections and representations in relation to the application may be made to the licensing authority and how to make objections or representations. A site notice document will be provided for display.

- 4.4. Applicants are required to certify compliance that they have displayed the site notice as soon as possible after the 21 days has expired. A template will be provided to the applicant to complete and return.

- 4.5. A copy of the application must be sent to Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service by the local authority. A copy will also be sent to:

- The Highland Council's Building Standards Department (depending on the individual facts and circumstances of the application) and

- The Highland Council's Environmental Health Service

Each of these services/agencies will be consulted on the licence application.

The Highland Council's Planning Department, as the planning authority, will be consulted on a licence application on a case-by-case basis depending on the specific facts and circumstances of an application, however, they will typically be consulted for the following licence applications:

1. Secondary letting within a designated Short Term Let Control Area;
2. Flats within the whole of The Highland Council area; and
3. Individual premises where one unit has 5+ bedrooms, within the whole of The Highland Council area. an application as and when required.

4.6. All personal data will be processed in line with the following privacy notices:

https://www.highland.gov.uk/directory_record/1036156/civic_government_licence

https://www.highland.gov.uk/directory_record/1036197/licensing_payments

4.7. Owner's consent to a licence application

4.7.1 The 2022 Order contains a specific provision requiring that, where the applicant for a short term let licence is not the owner of the application premises or the owner of the land on which the premises are located, the following must be provided along with an application for the grant or renewal of a licence:

- (i) the name and address of the owner (or, as the case may be, each owner), and
- (ii) a declaration from the owner (or, as the case may be, each owner) or a person authorised to act on their behalf, that they consent to the application.

4.7.2 Whilst the Council will not normally require evidence of ownership of the application premises to be submitted with a licence application, it may, depending on the information provided on a licence application and given the specific facts and circumstances of an application, request further information or specific evidence from the applicant regarding the ownership of the premises.

4.7.3 In line with the general principles of ownership of property in Scots Law; the assumption is that the party who is the registered or recorded owner of the property on the title to the property, is the owner for the purposes of short term let licensing. In that regard, the evidence the Council will accept to demonstrate ownership of a property for licensing purposes will be a title sheet or land certificate from the Land Register of Scotland or a deed from the Sasine Register.

4.7.4 Evidence of the owner's consent will be required for an application where the owner (s) is not the host/operator (s) of the licence. Whilst this will depend on the specific facts and circumstances of an application and be dealt with on a case-by-case basis, the Council will accept the following pieces of evidence to demonstrate the owner's consent:

- A signed letter of consent, signed by the owner of the application property or a person authorised to act on their behalf;
- A contractual document, including though not limited to, a lease or tenancy agreement, which confirms such consent to the application;
- A power of attorney document; of
- A testamentary writing, including though not limited) to, a will which is accompanied by Confirmation (or a similar document) issued by a Court.

If evidence of the owner's consent is not provided with the licence application, then the application will be refused

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5. Objections and representations

5.1. It is open to any member of the public to submit an objection or representation in relation to a short term let licence application.

5.2. To enable ~~The Highland~~the Council, as licensing authority (~~"the Council"~~) to entertain an objection or representation, it must be:

- in writing (email is sufficient)
- specify the grounds of the objection or the nature of the representation
- specify the name and address of the person making it
- be signed off by them or on their behalf
- be received by the Council within 28 days from when the notice of application is displayed

5.3. Anonymous objections or representations will not be considered.

5.4. Late objections or representations may be considered if the Council is satisfied that there is sufficient reason as to why it was not made in the time required.

5.5. The objection should be relevant to the statutory grounds that can be taken into consideration when refusing an application. These are set out in the Act:

- The applicant or, where the applicant is not a natural person, any director of it or partner in it or any other person responsible for its management, is either
 - for the time being disqualified under section 7(6) of the Act or;
 - is not a fit and proper person to be the holder of the licence.
- The activity to which it relates would be managed by or carried on for the benefit of a person, other than the applicant, who would be refused the grant or renewal of such licence if he made the application himself;
- The premises is not suitable or convenient for the conduct of the activity, having regard to:
 - The location, character or condition of the premises
 - The nature and extent of the proposed activity;
 - The kind of persons likely to be in the premises;
 - The possibility of undue public nuisance, public order; or public safety
- Where there is other good reason

5.6. It should detail clearly the reasons for the objection/representation and why the applicant and/or the premises are not suitable in terms of the statutory grounds

5.7. A copy of the objection or representation will be provided to the applicant and will include the individual raising the objection/representation's name and address. All personal data will be processed in line with the following privacy notice:

https://www.highland.gov.uk/directory_record/1046990/licensing_objections_representations_and_complaints

6. Determination of application

6.1. Everybody named on the application form will be subject to the fit and proper test. Every application form will require consultation with Police Scotland who will carry out background checks.

- 6.2. Licensing authorities are responsible for determining whether you are a fit and proper person to be the holder of a licence for short-term lets. Consideration will be given to a wide range of information including relevant criminal convictions, other relevant information provided by Police Scotland, any previous disqualifications from being a private landlord, previous revocations of a [civic licence, previous revocations of an HMO licence](#), and providing false or misleading information in your application form.
- 6.3. If there are no objections or adverse representations to a short term let licence application, the application will be determined under delegated powers by the Principal Solicitor – Regulatory Services/Solicitor – Regulatory Services
- 6.4. If an objection or adverse representation is submitted in relation to the short term let licence application, the application will be subject to a hearing at a meeting of the Highland Licensing Committee.
- 6.5. The person submitting the objection or representation will be invited to attend the meeting of the Highland Licensing Committee and speak to their objection/representation. They will be given at least 14 days' notice of the hearing date.
- 6.6. The applicant or their representative will also be invited to attend the meeting and given the opportunity to state why the application should be granted.
- 6.7. The Committee will be able to ask questions of both parties and, thereafter, decide whether to grant or refuse the application. The grounds for refusing an application are set out at paragraph [45.5](#).
- 6.8. Applications will be heard in public unless required to be taken privately on the grounds of disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973
- 6.9. A copy of the Council's hearing procedure can be found at **Appendix 2**.
- 6.10. Both the applicant and the person(s) making an objection/representation can request a statement of reasons for the decision within 21 days of the date of the decision. The statement of reasons will be produced by the Principal Solicitor – Regulatory Services/Solicitor – Regulatory Services within 10 days of that request.
- 6.11. If your application for a licence is refused, you cannot reapply for a licence within 1 year of that decision, unless there has been a material change in your circumstances since then.

7. Right of appeal

- 7.1. The applicant and the person(s) making an objection/representation have a right of appeal to the Sheriff Court.
- 7.2. However, they only have this right if they have taken every opportunity to state their case to the Committee as has been made available.
- 7.3. The Sheriff can uphold an appeal only if the sheriff considers that the licensing authority erred in law, based their determination on any incorrect material fact, acted contrary to natural justice or exercised their discretion in an unreasonable manner.
- 7.4. Any appeal must be lodged by way of a summary application with the relevant Sheriff Clerk's office within 28 days of the date of the decision appealed against.
- 7.5. Parties should seek their own independent legal advice in relation to an appeal.

8. Licence duration and renewal

- 8.1. The duration of the licence applies from the date on which the licence comes into force. This will be specified on the licence together with the expiry date of the licence. It is, however, a licence holder's responsibility to check the expiry date of their short term let licence and make sure they submit a renewal application in time.
- 8.2. When an application is made to renew a licence timeously, the existing licence will continue in effect until such time as a decision is made on the renewal application. If you do not apply to renew your licence before the expiry date, it will be unlawful to continue to operate the premises as a short term let, such as accept guests and bookings, after the expiry date.

If you decide not to renew your licence, for example, because you are no longer operating this property as a short term let or you have sold the property, please let the Council know as soon as possible by emailing STL@highland.gov.uk.

8.3. A licence shall have effect-

- for a period of 3 years from the date when it comes into force; or
- for such shorter period as the licensing authority may decide at that time when they grant; or
- for such longer period as the licensing authority may decide at the time when they renew a short-term let licence

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8.4. The Scottish Government's guidance for licensing authorities on short term lets has made it clear that licensing authorities are encouraged to renew licences for a period of 3 years, unless they have good reasons to do otherwise.

8.5. Whilst, each application will be decided on its own merits, it is not anticipated that licences will be renewed for a period of longer than 3 years.

9. Licence conditions

9.1. The Act sets out a number of mandatory licence conditions which apply to all short-term let across Scotland. A list of these conditions can be found at **Appendix 3**.

9.2. In addition to the mandatory licence conditions which apply to all short-term lets, licensing authorities may impose additional conditions. These enable the licensing authority to respond to local challenges and concerns relative to specific types of short-term letting.

9.3. There are a number of additional conditions which will apply to all short term let properties. There also some specific additional conditions which may only apply to certain types of short term let properties or to properties following investigation of concerns. A list of the additional licence conditions which may apply to a short-term let licence can be found at **Appendix 4**.

10. Temporary exemptions

10.1. The Council will not be granting temporary exemptions under any circumstances. This position will be kept under review.

11. Temporary licences

11.1. A licensing authority can also decide to grant temporary licences. These can be applied for online or by way of a paper application. Details for the application process are set out in Section [34](#).

11.2. Temporary licences may be granted for a duration of up to 6 weeks.

11.3. A temporary licence cannot be renewed. However, if a host or operator applies for a full licence during the period of a temporary licence, the temporary licence duration will extend until their full licence application is determined.

11.4. Hosts and operators that apply for a temporary licence will still have to comply with all the mandatory conditions and the additional conditions detailed at section 9 together with any further additional conditions deemed applicable.

11.5. It is anticipated that temporary licences will be used by hosts or operators that only require a short term let for a specific event that runs for 6 weeks or less or where a host or operator wishes to trial providing a short term let.

12. Provisional licences

12.1. The 2024 Order introduced provisional short term let licences. A provisional short term let licence can be applied for in relation to any premises that are yet to be or are in the course of being built for the use as a short term let. The type of letting that can be applied for with such provisional short term let licence is Secondary Letting, Home Sharing, Home Letting and Home Sharing and Home Letting.

12.2. All applicants who wish to apply for a provisional short term let licence must complete an application form using ~~our~~ the Council's paper application form.

The paper application form must be completed and emailed to stl@highland.gov.uk or returned to the relevant area office, together with the appropriate documentation and information and full payment of the application fee.

This application must also be accompanied by a provisional planning certificate. This is a certificate which is signed on behalf of the planning authority which states that:

(a) planning permission, planning permission in principle or outline planning permission under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 has been obtained in respect of the construction of the premises, or

(b) no such planning permission is required.

12.3. A copy of the application for a provisional short term let licence will be sent to Police Scotland, Scottish Fire & Rescue Service and the Council's Environmental Health service for consultation.

In addition, a site notice will be issued to the applicant, as detailed in section 4.3-4.5 of this Policy. If an objection/representation is received from a service/agency or a member of the public, the application will be referred to

the Highland Licensing Committee for determination, as detailed further in sections 5 and 6 of this Policy.

12.4. If a provisional short term let licence is granted, no mandatory conditions or additional licence conditions will apply to the provisional short term let licence. The licence holder is not permitted to operate the premises as a short term let i.e. accept bookings or guests, until the provisional short term let licence is confirmed, as detailed in sections 12.5 and 12.6 of this Policy.

12.5. When the construction of the short term let premises is complete, the provisional licence holder may then apply to the Council to confirm the provisional licence. As laid down in the 2024 Order, a provisional short term let licence must be confirmed before the premises can operate as a short term let.

All applicants who wish to apply for the confirmation of a provisional short term let licence must complete an application form using ~~our~~ the Council's paper application form.

The paper application form must be completed and emailed to stl@highland.gov.uk or returned to the relevant area office, together with the appropriate documentation and information and full payment of the application fee. This application for confirmation must also be accompanied by:

- (a) the provisional short term let licence;
- (b) if the provisional planning certificate which accompanied the provisional short term let licence application in respect of the premises consisted of outline planning permission or planning permission in principle, a planning certificate (as detailed further in section 12.9 below);
- (c) a building standards certificate (as detailed further in section 12.10 below); and
- (d) such other information as the Council, as the licensing authority, may reasonably require.

12.6. An application for confirmation of a provisional short term let licence will be sent to Police Scotland, Scottish Fire & Rescue Service and the Council's Environmental Health service. In the event of an objection/representation from such agency/service, the application will be referred to the Highland Licensing Committee for determination, as detailed further in sections 5 and 6 of this Policy. There is no requirement for the applicant to display a site notice under section 4.3-4.5 of this Policy and there is no opportunity for members of the public to lodge objections/representations to the application for confirmation of a short term let licence.

12.7. Where the Council receive an application for the confirmation of the provisional short term let licence application, it must, if it is satisfied that, following construction of the premises, the applicant would be able to secure compliance with the mandatory conditions and additional conditions, confirm the licence.

12.8. Following determination of an application for the confirmation of the provisional short term let licence application, a short term let licence will be issued to the applicant for the premises to which the provisional short term let licence related to. Upon confirmation being issued by the Council, the short term let licence will then be in place for a period of up to three years ~~from the date on which the provisional licence was issued.~~

12.9. For the purposes of an application for confirmation of a provisional STL licence, a “planning certificate” is a certificate signed on behalf of the planning authority stating that

- (a) planning permission under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 in respect of any development of the subject premises in connection with their proposed use as a short term let has been obtained, or
- (b) that no such planning permission is required.

12.10. For the purposes of a confirmation of provisional STL licence application, a “building standards certificate” is a certificate signed on behalf of the appropriate authority and stating that:

- (a) a completion certificate has been accepted under section 18 of the Building (Scotland) Act 2003 in respect of any construction of the subject premises in connection with their proposed use as a short term let, or
- (b) that permission for the temporary occupation or use of the premises has been granted under section 21(3) of the Building (Scotland) Act 2003, or
- (c) that no such completion certificate or permission is required.

12.11. A provisional short-term let licence is treated as revoked if it is not confirmed within 3 years after the date on which it was issued unless this period is extended – this period can be extended if the Council is satisfied that completion of the construction has been delayed by factors outwith the provisional short term let licence holder’s control.

12.12. For the avoidance of any doubt, section 19 of this Policy does not apply to provisional STL licence applications.

13. Transfer of short term let licence

13.1. The 2024 Order introduced a provision which will permit a licence holder to apply to the Council to transfer their short term let licence (including a provisional short term let licence) to another individual, termed a “transferee”.

13.2. All applicants who wish to apply for the transfer of a short term let licence must complete an application form using ~~our~~ the Council's paper application form.

The paper application form must be completed and emailed to stl@highland.gov.uk or returned to the relevant area office, together with the appropriate documentation and information and full payment of the application fee. This application must also be accompanied by:

- a. the short term let licence to which it relates or, if that is not possible, a statement of reasons for the failure to produce the licence;
- b. where the applicant is not the owner of the short term let premises or the land on which it is located:
 - i. the name and address of the owner (or, as the case may be, each owner), and
 - ii. a declaration from the owner (or, as the case may be, each owner), or a person authorised to act on their behalf, that they consent to the application;
- c. where the applicant shares ownership of the premises or the land on which the premises are located:
 - i. the name and address of each owner, and
 - ii. a declaration from each owner, or a person authorised to act on their behalf, that they consent to the application.
- d. where the short term let licence is held in joint names:
 - i. the name and address of each licence holder, and
 - ii. a declaration from each licence holder, or a person authorised to act on their behalf, that they consent to the application.
- e. such other information as the Council, as the licensing authority may reasonably require.

13.3. A copy of the application for the transfer of a short term let licence will be sent to Police Scotland for consultation. If an objection/representation is

received from Police Scotland, the application will be the application will be referred to the Highland Licensing Committee for determination, as detailed further in sections 5 and 6 of this Policy – with reference to the “Applicant” in such sections being substituted for the term “Transferee”.

If there is no objection/representation, the transfer application will be granted.

There is no requirement for the applicant to display a site notice under section 4.3-4.5 of this Policy and there is no opportunity for members of the public to lodge objections/representations to the transfer application.

- 13.4. If a transfer application is granted, there will be no change to the expiry date of the short term let licence to which the application relates to.

14. Maximum occupancy

- 14.1. For licensing purposes, children under the age of 2 do not count towards the maximum occupancy on any licence granted.

15. Compliance and enforcement

15.1. Unlicensed short term lets

15.1.1 It is a criminal offence to carry on an activity for which a licence is required without having a licence and without reasonable excuse. From 1 October 2022, new host/operators cannot accept bookings until they have obtained a short term let licence. For the avoidance of doubt, a host/operator cannot operate while their short term let application is being determined unless this is a renewal application.

1.

2. The Scottish Government has set out the following timescales for hosts and operators. Please note the rules are different depending on whether you are a new host/operator or an existing host/operator:

New hosts/operators

- From 1 October 2022 you cannot accept bookings until you have obtained a short term let licence
- From 1 October 2022, you cannot operate while your short term let application is being determined

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Existing hosts/operators

- Existing hosts/operators must have applied for a short term let licence by 1 October 2023, at the latest.
- If you have been trading on or before 30 September 2022, you may continue to accept bookings after 1 October 2022 but only if you have made a licence application by 1 October 2023.
- You can continue to operate for the time it takes for your licence application to be finally determined.

3. A public register will be maintained of licensed short term lets by the Council. This will allow members of the public to check the licensing status of a premises being used as a short term let. The public register which is published on our website is not a "live" register and it is not automatically updated when a change is made to an application. For example, where a licence application is received or a licence issued, the published register will not be updated automatically. The public register contains data based on the information which was submitted by an applicant at the point when they submitted their application form. If the application has been subsequently amended by an applicant, such amendments may not appear on the entry in the public register.

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4. 15.1.2 If a member of the public wishes to report to the Council that a short term let property is operating without a licence or if they wish to report that a licensed property is not complying with the licence conditions, they can do so by reporting this to our the Council's Environmental Health short term let team. Their email address is EHSTL@highland.gov.uk and they can investigate such reports further. Complaints about suspected unlicensed hosts/operators should be directed to Police Scotland.

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15.2. Licensed short term lets

1. 15.2.1 Hosts and operators must ensure that any advert or listing placed on or after they are granted a licence includes their licence number.

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2. 15.2.2 Hosts and operators must ensure that they comply with all the mandatory and any additional conditions on their licence. It is a criminal offence to fail to comply with a licence condition if a licence holder has not used all due diligence to prevent the offence.

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~~3.~~ 15.2.3 It is also a criminal offence for a licence holder, without reasonable cause, to fail to notify the licensing authority of a material change of circumstances.

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~~4.~~ 15.2.4 The Council may undertake premises site visits as part of the application process and throughout the duration of the licence to ensure compliance with licence conditions.

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15.3. Complaints about licensed short term lets

~~4.~~ 15.3.1 In the first instance, guests should raise any concerns about their short term let with their host/operator or letting agent/platform. If the issue is sufficiently severe, then the Council may become involved.

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~~2.~~ 15.3.2 A complaint must be relevant to the matters that the Council can take into consideration. Frivolous or vexatious complaints will not be considered.

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~~3.~~ 15.3.3 The Council can consider matters relating to the suitability of the licence holder, threats to public safety or public order or whether a condition of the licence has been contravened.

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~~4.~~ 15.3.4 These issues would include a host/operator exceeding the number of people staying at the premises, serious disturbance or antisocial behaviour or concerns about the maintenance and safety of the premises. These complaints can be directed to stl@highland.gov.uk or EHSTL@highland.gov.uk

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~~5.~~ 15.3.5 Please note that the Council cannot consider complaints in relation to the quality of a guest's stay or specific contractual matters between the guest and the host/operator as this is outside the scope of the licensing scheme.

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~~6.~~ 15.3.6 Complaints will aim to be acknowledged within 5 working days. A full response advising you of the outcome may take some time if the complaint requires further investigation. The complaint may also need to be directed to other departments within the Council such as Planning, Environmental Health or other services such as Police Scotland or Scottish Fire and Rescue Service for input. Complainants will be kept up to date with progress if there is a delay in a full response being provided.

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~~7.~~ 15.3.7 Premises site visits may be undertaken by the Council as part of an investigation into a complaint.

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15.4. Enforcement

~~1.~~ 15.4.1 It is possible that some complaints may require enforcement action from the Council.

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~~2.~~ 15.4.2 The Act provides for several options for enforcement action if justified. This includes additional licence conditions being attached, enforcement notices or variation, suspension or revocation of the licence or in more serious circumstance pursuing a prosecution.

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~~3.~~ 15.4.3 An enforcement notice must set out the matters constituting a breach or likely breach, the action required to rectify or prevent the breach and the date by which the action must be taken.

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~~4.~~ 15.4.4 If the matter is not addressed satisfactorily by the licence holder, the Council may then consider a variation, suspension or revocation of the licence.

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~~5.~~ 15.4.5 You will not be charged a fee for a routine visit. However, you may be charged if a follow up visit is necessary because you have breached one of your licence conditions or for an inspection necessary due to a complaint relating to the premises, which is not deemed frivolous or vexatious (please see section 21. Fees for more details).

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15.5. Public register

15.5.1 A public register will be maintained of licensed short term lets by the Council. This will allow members of the public to check the licensing status of a premises being used as a short term let.

15.5.2 The public register which is published on the Council's website is not a "live" register and it is not automatically updated when a change is made to an application. For example, where a licence application is received or a licence issued, the published register will not be updated automatically.

15.5.3 The public register contains data based on the information which was submitted by an applicant at the point when they submitted their application form. If the application has been subsequently amended by an applicant, such amendments may not appear on the entry in the public register.

16. Variation of a licence

16.1. A licensing authority may, at any time, whether or not upon an application made to them by the holder of the licence, vary the terms on any grounds they think fit.

16.2. A variation application cannot, however, be used to substitute a new holder of the licence for the existing one i.e. effectively to transfer a licence. This would be dealt with as a licence transfer, in terms of Section 13 of this Policy.

17. Suspension, ~~or~~ revocation or surrender of a licence

17.1. A licensing authority may, whether upon a complaint made to them or not, suspend or revoke a licence.

17.2. A licensing authority may order the suspension or revocation of a licence if in their opinion-

- the holder of the licence is no longer a fit and proper person to hold the licence
- the licence holder is managing the property on behalf of someone who would have been refused the grant or renewal of the licence
- the short-term let is causing or is likely to cause undue public nuisance or a threat to public order or public safety; or
- a condition of the licence has been contravened

17.3. The period of suspension can be the unexpired portion of the duration of the licence, or such shorter period as the licensing authority may fix. The effect of the suspension shall be that the licence shall cease to have effect during the period of suspension.

17.4. If a licence holder no longer operates and wishes to surrender their licence, they should confirm this in writing and email this to stl@highland.gov.uk or by letter to the relevant area office (as detailed at Appendix 1).

17.5. For non-natural persons, ~~their licence will come to an end~~ no longer have effect ~~and be held to be surrendered~~ if the organisation is wound up, dissolved, terminated or such similar action which ceases their operation.

~~17.3.~~

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18. Third party accreditation

18.1. The Council will consider third party evidence, accreditation or certification from certain approved bodies to demonstrate compliance with the mandatory and any additional conditions of a licence.

18.2. The Council will also consider the provision of supporting documentation being provided through suitable third-party platforms. Applicants will be expected to provide a link to the database with the supporting documentation in lieu of uploading the documents as part of the application process.

19. Planning permission

19.1 There is a separate legislative process from licensing which allows the Council, as planning authority, to establish a short term let control area. It is important to understand the purposes of such a short term control area and what the consequences, in planning terms, might be for properties with a short term let business in such an area and the relationship to the licensing system. It is also important to understand that short term let properties which exist outside of such an area may also require planning permission.

Badenoch & Strathspey, Ward 20, was designated as a Short Term Let Control Area with effect from 12pm on 4 March 2024. Depending on the specific facts and circumstances for a property, applications for secondary letting in a Short Term Let Control Area may require additional information or evidence to be provided as part of the licence application.

19.2 It must also be understood that the securing of planning permission is a separate matter from securing a licence to operate as a short term let. It should also be noted that the definition of a short- term let for the purpose of securing a licence is different from the definition for the purposes of planning law and in particular securing, if needed, planning permission¹.

19.3 The purposes behind the establishment of a short term let control areas are to help planning authorities manage high concentrations of short term lets, where it affects the availability of residential housing or the character of a neighbourhood, and to restrict or prevent short term lets in places or types of buildings where that might not be appropriate.

19.4 Being in such an area is also important as it may mean, as a matter of law under section 26B of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 and

¹ For the licensing definition see Article 3 of The Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 (Licensing of Short-term Lets) Order 2022 ("the 2022 Order)." Hosts and operators should familiarise themselves with this definition.

Regulations made by Scottish Ministers under that section², that the use of a property as a short term let is deemed to represent a change of use such that it requires planning permission.

19.5 It is also possible that a property may be in a short term let in a control area but that it does not fall within the special definition of a short term let which leads to a deemed change in use³. In such a case the planning authority may still need to consider whether the property requires planning permission. This will be undertaken on a case by case basis, with the authority having to assess the materiality of any change in use. Not all changes in use will be material.

19.6 It is also important to understand that planning permission may also be required for the use of a property outside of such a short term let control area. Outside of a control area, it is for the planning authority to consider whether any change of use of a dwelling house is material and, therefore, requires planning permission. This is determined on a case by case basis as opposed to being a deemed change in use in terms of Section 26B of the 1997 Act.

19.7 By way of a general overview, within a short term let control area designated by the planning authority, such a change of use will always require planning permission where the property provides a form of short term letting which triggers a deemed change in use. Where a *deemed* change in use does not arise in a short term let control area, planning permission may be required if the use of the property still generates a material change in use. That will also be the case in relation to properties outside of a short term let control area. In both those cases, whether there has been a change in use which was material and so needs planning permission will need to be assessed on a case by case basis by the planning authority.

19.8 In all cases, where a property has been operating as a short term let for a period which exceeds ten years and does not benefit from having a grant of planning permission, planning permission may not be required. The change in use may be immune from enforcement action and the planning authority may be prepared to issue, on application, a Certificate of Lawful Use or Certificate of Lawful Development. That could replace the need that would otherwise arise for planning permission. This is a matter for the planning authority.

For the avoidance of doubt, the Certificate of Lawful Use and the Certificate of Lawful Development referred to in this section are those issued by the planning authority.

² These are The Town and Country Planning (Short-term Let Control Areas) Regulations 2021.

³ For that special definition see Regulation 2 of the 2021 Regulations. There are exceptions to that special definition in that not all tenancies constitute a short term let for the purpose of that special definition. For exclusions from that special definition see section 26B(3) of the 1997 Act and Regulation 2 of the 2021 Regulations. Hosts and operators should familiarise themselves with these provisions.

19.9 It should be noted that the Council, as licensing authority, may refuse to consider an application for a short term let licence where it considers that use of the premises as a short term let would give rise to a breach of planning control.⁴ This is known as a preliminary refusal and the Council has a discretion to refuse to consider an application for a licence in those circumstances.

19.10 The exercise of this power does not depend on whether or not the property is in a short term let control area. As this is a discretionary power, the Council will ordinarily be open to considering representations as to why, in a particular case, it should not make a preliminary refusal, but go on to consider the application for a licence. Applications will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

19.11 The Council, as licensing authority, has 21 days from receipt of a valid application to decide to refuse to consider the application on these grounds. If an application is refused to be considered on these grounds, the host or operator must be notified within 7 days together with an explanation.

19.12 A host or operator who then subsequently obtains planning permission or a certificate of lawful use or development can resubmit their licensing application (with no additional fees) provided the host or operator submits the licence application within 28 days of obtaining planning permission or a certificate.

19.13 It is a mandatory condition of the licence that where the property is in a short-term let control area for the purposes of section 26B of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 ("the 1997 Act"), the holder of the licence must, where the use of the property for a short-term let requires planning permission under the 1997 Act, ensure that either:

- an application has been made for planning permission under the 1997 Act and has not yet been determined, or
- planning permission under the 1997 Act is in force.

Operating a short term let in breach of this condition is capable of being both a criminal offence and could also lead to enforcement action by the Council as licensing authority, including the possibility of suspension or revocation of the licence. Such action would also be distinct from any action the Council might take as planning authority.

⁴ By virtue of section 123(1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 and Paragraph 8 of Schedule 2 of the 2022 Order. Hosts and operators are asked to familiarise themselves with these provisions. A refusal to consider an application is not a refusal decision which attracts a right of appeal to the Sheriff.

19.14 Although for the purpose of section 26B of the 1997 Act and the 2021 Regulations, the focus is on there being a “dwellinghouse”, it is important to understand that one can operate a short term let from a property or premises which do not constitute a dwelling house. Such may still require planning permission. Whether it does will be a matter for the hosts and operators to consider, as needed, in conjunction with the planning authority. Again, independently of the planning authority, the licensing authority can exercise the power to issue a preliminary refusal.

19.15 Information in relation to areas within The Highland Council proposed to be designated by the authority as a short term let control area can be found at https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/161/planning_and_building_standards/991/s-hort-term-let-control-area.

19.16 As will be evident from the foregoing, hosts and operators must comply with both planning and licensing law. Planning permission may be required whether or not the premises is in a short term let control area. It is the responsibility of applicants and licence holders to make an enquiry as to whether or not they require planning permission when they come to make an application or, given Mandatory Condition 13, where a licence is already held.

19.17 Please note that planning authorities could designate control areas after a premises has already obtained a short term let licence. Licence holders would be given a reasonable opportunity to comply with the Mandatory Condition 13 by submitting a planning application as soon as possible after the control area is designated, if required. Where planning permission is required and is refused, this may result in the licence being refused, varied, or revoked as appropriate.

19.18 It should be understood that the existence of planning permission will not, of itself, automatically lead to the grant of a licence. The Council as a licensing authority is entitled to consider all relevant circumstances relating to the applicant, property and proposed activity as a short term let⁵.

19.19 That being said in general terms where planning permission exists it is likely to provide the Council for a basis for accepting the location or suitability of the premises for the purpose of a short term let or, as regards how the premises might impact any considerations of amenity, as having addressed issues of amenity. Even so, each case must still be assessed on a case by case basis.

19.20 It might also be noted that an application for a short term let licence for a premises which already has a certificate of lawful use or development will be assessed differently to premises that have been granted planning permission

⁵ See in particular the general grounds of potential refusal in Paragraph 5(3) of Schedule 1 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982.

on the basis that the former have not gone through any assessment of suitability as part of a planning application process. The Council, as licensing authority may give closer consideration to questions of location, suitability and amenity in those circumstances as compared with applicants who have a grant of planning permission (which would have included consideration of those issues already).

19.21 Given the foregoing host and operators are, therefore, also encouraged to engage with the Council's planning department prior to submitting a licence application to confirm whether they require planning permission or a certificate of lawful use or development.

19.22 Details for the Council's planning department can be found at – https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/161/planning_and_building_standards.

20. Equality

20.1. The Equality Act 2010 Act introduced a new public sector equality duty which requires public authorities, including the Committee, to try and eliminate discrimination, promote equality and good relations across a range of protected characteristics.

20.2. Prior to the Committee implementing this policy an equality impact assessment was undertaken. This can be viewed using the following link: https://www.highland.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/4664/highland_licensing_committee

21. Fees

21.1. Licensing authorities are required to charge fees in respect of processing and determining, the consideration of applications, the issue of duplicate licences and other matters. They must ensure that the fees are sufficient to cover their administrative expenses and are reviewed periodically.

21.2. Licensing fees are non-refundable. Whether or not a licensing application is granted, the Council incurs significant costs in processing the application.

21.3. The Council has considered the following criteria in the process of determining the fees:

- The size of the premises
- The number of rooms at the premises

- The number of guests who can reside at the premises
- The type of short term let

Application and renewal – full licence

Guest capacity (people) (excluding children under the age of 2)	Home sharing and home letting	Secondary letting
1-2 occupants	£320	£400
3-6 occupants	£390	£470
7-9 occupants	£460	£540
10+ occupants	£530	£610

Application – temporary licence

Guest capacity (people) (excluding children under the age of 2)	Home sharing and home letting	Secondary letting
1-2 occupants	£160	£200
3-6 occupants	£195	£235
7-9 occupants	£230	£270
10+ occupants	£265	£305

Provisional Licence application

Guest capacity (people) (excluding children under the age of 2)	Home sharing and home letting	Secondary letting
1-2 occupants	£120	£200
3-6 occupants	£190	£270
7-9 occupants	£260	£340
10+ occupants	£330	£410

Confirmation of Provisional Licence application

A confirmation of a provisional STL licence application will be £200 for all types of STL licences

Other types of application	Fee
Variation of licence / change in circumstances	£120
Transfer of licence	£120
Duplicate licence	£20

Enforcement costs

A licensing authority may charge such reasonable fees as they may determine in respect of an inspection of premises following—

- (i) a failure to comply with a licence condition, or
- (ii) a complaint relating to the premises (unless the complaint is frivolous or vexatious).

The decision to make such a charge will be taken in a proportionate manner in line with the [Enforcement Policy for Environmental Health](#). Where such a charge is to be made, the Council will seek full cost recovery for such inspections based on the appropriate productive hourly rate for the grade of officer undertaking the inspection.

Note - Where a local authority charges a fee in respect of an inspection, the licensing authority must—

- (a) produce a report of its finding to the licence holder within 28 days of the inspection, or
- (b) where a report is not provided within 28 days of the inspection, refund the fee charged to the licence holder.

Appendix 1 – Contact details

Email – stl@highland.gov.uk

Area offices:

Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross
Council Offices, Caithness House, Market Place, Wick, KW1 4AB

Inverness, Nairn Badenoch and Strathspey
The Highland Council, Town House, Inverness, IV1 1JJ

Ross, Skye and Lochaber
The Highland Council, Charles Kennedy Building, Achintore Road, Fort William, PH33 6RQ
The Highland Council, Tigh Na Sgìre, Park Lane, Portree, IV51 9GP

<u>Ross and Skye</u>
<u>The Highland Council, Tigh Na Sgìre, Park Lane, Portree, IV51 9GP</u>

Appendix 2 – Hearing procedure

DURING THE HEARING

1. The Chair will introduce the Members and Officials present. If the representations/objection(s) were submitted timeously and there are no spent convictions to be considered, then proceed directly to number 4.
2. If the representation/objection (from the Police or any other party) has been received late the Committee must hear details as to why the representation/objection was late and be satisfied that there is sufficient reason why it was not made in the time required. If they agree that then the representation/objection can be heard otherwise it should be disregarded. The process to be followed should be that the objector is invited to provide reasons as to why the submission was late. Members may ask any follow up questions of the objector. The applicant must then be asked if they have any objections to the late submission being accepted. The Committee must take all comments into account when deciding whether to accept the late submission.
3. If spent convictions are to be referred to then the guidance notes for spent convictions should be followed for each conviction. The Committee should resolve to go into private whilst considering spent convictions.
4. The hearing procedure below should now be followed:

A	The Licensing Officer will present the report to the Committee
B	The applicant or the party who has initiated the hearing will present their case first
C	The presenting party shall be entitled to provide information in support of their application, representation or objection (as applicable).
D	Any other interested party will have the opportunity to ask the presenting party relevant questions.
E	The Committee Members will have the opportunity to ask the presenting party relevant questions.

F	Any other interested parties will then present their case in turn and be entitled to provide information in support of their application, representation or objection (as applicable)
G	Any other interested party will have the opportunity to ask the presenting party relevant questions.
H	The Committee Members will have the opportunity to ask the presenting party relevant questions
I	The Chair will invite the applicant, or the party who has initiated the hearing, to briefly summarise their points if they wish.
J	The Chair will invite the other interested parties to briefly summarise their points if they wish.
K	The Chair will ask the applicant, or the party who has initiated the hearing, and all parties making representations, that they are satisfied that they have said all they wish to.
L	At the sole discretion of the Members, the Committee may decide to retire to consider the representations/objections in private.
M	<p>The Committee will invite the parties to return to the meeting and the Chair will invite Members to take a decision.</p> <p>NOTE: If during private deliberations, the Committee receive advice on a legal submission from the Clerk which is contrary to the view of the party making the submission or the Committee believe additional information would be relevant, then these points should be raised with the parties, in public, prior to any decision being made.</p>

DECISION

A determination of the case will be made at the conclusion of the hearing and all parties will be notified of the decision in writing within 7 days of the hearing and shall be advised of his/her right to seek written reasons and appeal to the Sheriff Court.

If the decision of the Committee is to suspend, refuse or refuse to suspend a licence, a relevant person has a right to request within 28 days of the meeting, the Committee's reasons for arriving at their decision. Unless the circumstances of the case justify immediate suspension, the suspension shall not take effect for 28 days from the date of the decision.

Appeals against the decision of the Committee must be lodged with the Sheriff Clerk within 28 days of the date of the decision.

Appendix 3 – Mandatory licence conditions

Agents

1. Only those named as a holder of the licence can carry out the day to day management of the short-term let of the premises.

Type of licence

2. The holder of the licence may only offer the type of short-term let for which the licence has been granted.

Fire safety

3. The holder of the licence must ensure the premises has satisfactory equipment installed for detecting, and for giving warning of—

(a) fire or suspected fire, and

(b) the presence of carbon monoxide in a concentration that is hazardous to health.

4. The holder of the licence must keep records showing that all upholstered furnishings and mattresses within the parts of the premises which are for guest use, or to which the guests are otherwise permitted to have access, comply with the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire Safety) Regulations 1988

Gas safety

5. Where the premises has a gas supply—

(a) the holder of the licence must arrange for an annual gas safety inspection of all gas pipes, flues and appliances in the premises,

(b) if, after an annual inspection, any appliance does not meet the required safety standard, the holder of the licence must not allow a short-term let of the premises until the works necessary to bring the appliance to the required safety standard have been carried out.

Electrical safety

6. Where there are electrical fittings or items within the parts of the premises which are for guest use, or to which the guests are permitted to have access, the holder of the licence must—

(a) ensure that any electrical fittings and items are in—

(i) a reasonable state of repair, and

(ii) proper and safe working order,

- (b) arrange for an electrical safety inspection to be carried out by a competent person at least every five years or more frequently if directed by the competent person,
- (c) ensure that, following an electrical safety inspection, the competent person produces an Electrical Installation Condition Report on any fixed installations,
- (d) arrange for a competent person to—
 - (i) produce a Portable Appliance Testing Report on moveable appliances to which a guest has access, and
 - (ii) date label and sign all moveable appliances which have been inspected.

7. In determining who is competent, the holder of the licence must have regard to guidance issued by the Scottish Ministers under section 19B(4) of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006(2).

Water safety: private water supplies

8. Where the premises are served by a private water supply, the licence holder must comply with the requirements on the owners of private dwellings set out in the Water Intended for Human Consumption (Private Supplies) (Scotland) Regulations 2017

Water safety: legionella

9. The holder of the licence must assess the risk from exposure to legionella within the premises, whether or not the premises are served by a private water supply.

Safety & repair standards

10.(1) The holder of the licence must take all reasonable steps to ensure the premises are safe for residential use.

(2) Where the premises are subject to the requirements of Chapter 4 of Part 1 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006, the holder of the licence must ensure that the premises meet the repairing standard.

Maximum Occupancy

11. The licence holder must ensure that the number of guests residing on the premises does not exceed the number specified in the licence.

Information to be displayed

12. The holder of the licence must make the following information available within the premises in a place where it is accessible to all guests—

- (a) a certified copy of the licence and the licence conditions,
- (b) fire, gas and electrical safety information,
- (c) details of how to summon the assistance of emergency services,
- (d) a copy of the gas safety report,
- (e) a copy of the Electrical Installation Condition Report,
- (f) a copy of the Portable Appliance Testing Report,
- (g) instructions as to what guests should do in the event that the carbon monoxide alarm sounds, and

- (h) if there is a mobile gas cabinet heater in the premises, safety instructions as to the operation and movement of that mobile heater.

Planning Permission

13. Where the premises is in a short-term let control area for the purposes of section 26B of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (“the 1997 Act”), the holder of the licence must, where the use of the premises for a short-term let requires planning permission under the 1997 Act, ensure that either—

- (a) an application has been made for planning permission under the 1997 Act and has not yet been determined, or
- (b) planning permission under the 1997 Act is in force.

Listings

14.(1) The holder of the licence must ensure that any listing or advert (whether electronic or otherwise) for the short-term let of the premises includes—

- (a) the licence number, and
 - (b) a valid Energy Performance Certificate rating if an Energy Performance Certificate is required for the premises, in accordance with the Energy Performance of Buildings (Scotland) Regulations 2008
- (2)** The holder of the licence must ensure that any listing or advert (whether electronic or otherwise) for the short-term let of the premises is consistent with the terms of the short-term let licence.

Insurance

15. The holder of the licence must ensure that there is in place for the premises—

- (a) valid buildings insurance for the duration of the licence, and
- (b) valid public liability insurance for the duration of each short-term let agreement.

Payment of fees

16. The holder of the licence must pay any fees due to the licensing authority in respect of the licence on demand.

False or misleading information

17. The holder of the licence must not provide any false or misleading information to the licensing authority.

Interpretation

18. In this schedule—

“**Electrical Installation Condition Report**” means a report containing the following information—

- (a) the date on which the inspection was carried out,
- (b) the address of the premises inspected,
- (c) the name, address and relevant qualifications of the person who carried out the inspection,
- (d) a description, and the location, of each installation, fixture, fitting and appliance inspected,
- (e) any defect identified,
- (f) any action taken to remedy a defect,

“Energy Performance Certificate” means a certificate which complies with regulation 6 of the Energy Performance of Buildings (Scotland) Regulations 2008,

“gas safety report” means a report containing the following information—

- (a) the date on which the appliance or flue was checked,
- (b) the address of the premises at which the appliance or flue is installed,
- (c) a description of and the location of each appliance or flue checked,
- (d) any safety defect identified,
- (e) any remedial action taken,
- (f) confirmation that the check undertaken complies with the requirements of an examination of—
 - (i) the effectiveness of any flue,
 - (ii) the supply of combustion air,
 - (iii) subject to head (iv), its operating pressure or heat input or, where necessary, both,
 - (iv) if it is not reasonably practicable to examine its operating pressure or heat input (or, where necessary, both), its combustion performance,
 - (v) its operation so as to ensure its safe functioning,
- (g) the name and signature of the individual carrying out the check, and

(h) the registration number with which that individual, or that individual’s employer, is registered with a body approved by the Health and Safety Executive for the purposes of regulation 3(3) of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998,

Appendix 4 – Additional licence conditions

1. Material Changes

- i. The licence holder shall notify the Council immediately of any material change of circumstances affecting the licensed premises or the licence holder (or any agent appointed by them to manage part or all of the licensed activity), including details of any criminal convictions incurred by such persons since the granting or renewal of the licence

2. Reporting of Certain Incidents

- i. The licence holder shall notify the Council, as soon as is reasonably practicable, of the details of any incident affecting, or within, the licensed premises which (a) has resulted in structural damage to, or structural collapse within, the premises, or (b) which has involved a gas leak, fire, or explosion necessitating the call-out of the Emergency Services.

3. Noise and Anti-Social Behaviour

- i. The licence holder shall take reasonable steps to manage the premises in such a way as to seek to prevent and deal effectively with any noise nuisance or antisocial behaviour by guests to anyone else in the short-term let and in the locality of the short-term let.
- ii. The licence holder shall take reasonable steps to:
 - i. ensure that no disturbance or nuisance arises within or from the premises, for example by explaining the house rules to the guests;
 - ii. deal effectively with any disturbance or nuisance arising within or from the premises, as soon as reasonably practicable after the licence holder is made aware of it; and
 - iii. ensure any vehicles belonging to guests are parked lawfully, for example explaining where any designated parking spaces (if applicable) are to be found and highlighting any local rules.
- iii. The licence holder shall notify the Council, as soon as is reasonably practicable, of the details of any incident of anti-social behaviour affecting or emanating from the premises which has required police

involvement.

4. Privacy and Security

- i. The licence holder shall take reasonable steps to manage the premises in such a way as to respect and protect the privacy and security of neighbours.
- ii. The licence holder shall take reasonable steps to ensure:
 - i. guests know and understand any particular rules applying to any shared areas and entrances;
 - ii. guests understand that shared doors should be properly and securely closed after use; and
 - iii. the provision of access codes or keys to guests cannot be used by guests to gain access to shared areas after they have finally departed.

5. Littering & Waste Disposal

- i. The licence holder shall take reasonable steps to ensure that adequate facilities, to the satisfaction of the Council, are provided for the storage, recycling and disposal of all waste and shall ensure that all common areas of the premises and all common external areas within the curtilage of the premises are kept in a clean, tidy, and well-maintained condition to the satisfaction of the Council.
- ii. The licence holder shall be responsible for advising residents of the refuse collection day and for making arrangements for the presentation of wheeled bins for collection at the appropriate time and day (if applicable).
- iii. The licence holder shall take reasonable steps to:
 - i. clearly label bins as belonging to the premises
 - ii. ensure guests are made aware of how to correctly use the bins provided for the premises (if applicable)
 - iii. ensure bins/sacks are available (if applicable)
 - iv. ensure that guests manage their waste properly, including when they depart (if applicable)
 - v. ensure guests are made aware as to what items should not be disposed of by flushing down the toilet

6. Preventing damage to property

- i. The licence holder shall not affix a key box, or other device to facilitate guest entry to the property, to any public or jointly owned private infrastructure without prior consent of the relevant authority or owner(s).

The licence holder must be able to produce evidence of permission to the licensing authority on request

7. Maintenance of property

- i. Where there is a hot tub provided at the premises for use by guests, the holder of the licence shall take reasonable steps to ensure: -
 - i. that it is suitably located and maintained so as to ensure it can be safely operated and used by guests;
 - ii. that suitable and sufficient cleaning and disinfection procedures are in place;
 - iii. that guests are provided with clear instructions on its safe use and any restrictions on its use;
 - iv. that it is kept securely covered when not in use.

8. Requirement to produce on demand any policy, certificate etc.

- i. The licence holder shall require to produce, as soon as is reasonably practicable, to any authorised person any policy, certificate, document, record, certificate of inspection or safety, licence or plan required by or issued in terms pursuant to any condition of this licence.

Additional conditions that may be applied following on from investigations of concern regarding noise:

Note – These conditions are published in accordance with Scottish Government guidance that any proposed additional conditions should be publicised. These are not applied to all licences. These will only be recommended to Committee following specific case investigations by the Council's Environmental Health team and if the use of the condition is deemed appropriate and proportionate for the specific case by enforcement officers following the Enforcement Policy for Environmental Health.

Noise:

- i. The licence holder must take reasonable steps to ensure that the bedrooms, living room and hallway in the premises have a suitable floor covering in order to minimise impact and airborne noise affecting any properties below. (i.e. carpet or vinyl floor covering with quality underlay)
(Condition may be applied following investigation of concerns regarding noise and would be applied to properties located at 1st floor and/or above where a residential property is located below.)
- ii. The licence holder must take reasonable steps to ensure that noise monitoring equipment [of type x] is maintained in full working order [in location y] and that the maximum reading does not exceed [a] decibels between 7 am and 11 pm, nor [b] decibels between 11 pm and 7 am.
(Condition may be applied following investigations of concerns regarding noise.)
- iii. The licence holder must take reasonable steps to ensure that guests do not first arrive or finally depart from the property between the hours of 11 pm to 7 am. The licence holder must advise guests of this as part of their booking terms and conditions. (Note: “reasonable steps” allows for exceptions, such as significantly delayed transport.)
(Condition would only be applied following investigations of concerns regarding noise where a property is located at 1st floor and/or above where a residential property is located below, in close proximity to a neighbouring property or whether there is a shared

entrance/communal

areas.)

- iv. The licence holder must take reasonable steps to ensure that guests do not use the hot tub after 2200hrs
(Condition may be applied following investigation of concerns regarding noise associated with hot tubs and where a hot tub is positioned in close proximity or overlooked by neighbouring property.)
- v. The licence holder must take reasonable step to ensure that guests do not play amplified music within the garden or external areas after [23:00 hours] where it would impact neighbouring residents.

(Condition may be applied following investigation of concerns regarding noise associated with playing music in outdoor areas.)