

Licensing Policy Consultation

Consultation response analysis report produced by the
Consultation and Engagement Team – Dorset Council

Report produced January 2026

Consultation Response Report

What was the consultation about?	Licensing Authorities are required by the Licensing Act 2003 to publish a Licensing Policy that they propose to apply when exercising their functions under the 2003 Act. The Statement must be published at least every five years and can be reviewed from “time to time” with any amended parts re-consulted upon. The 2025-2031 Draft Licensing Policy was consulted on for a period of eight weeks. The objective of the Licensing Policy is to inform interested parties of the principles the Licensing Authority proposes to apply when exercising its functions under the Licensing Act 2003.
Over what period did the consultation run?	The consultation ran from 17/11/25 to 11/01/26.
What consultation methods were used?	This consultation was available through an online survey and a paper version of the survey.
How many responses were received overall?	8 responses were received.
How representative is the response to the wider population?	50.0% (4) of responses were from members of the public and 12.5% (1) on behalf of an organisation and 37.5% (3) from Town or Paril Councils

	57.1% (4) of respondents were male, compared to 14.3% (1) that were female. 42.9% (3) of respondents were aged between 25 to 49, 14.3% (1) were aged 50-59 and 14.3% (10) were 65 plus
Where will the results be published?	Results will be published on the council's website www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk and on Dorset Council's consultation platform
How will the results be used?	Results from this survey will be used to inform the next steps of the process.
Who has produced this report?	Consultation and Engagement Team, Dorset Council, January 2026

Background

The Council, as Licensing Authority under the Licensing Act 2003, is required to publish a Licensing Policy at least every five years. The purpose of the policy statement is to define how the Council will exercise its responsibilities under the Act: Statement of Licensing Policy 2021-2026.

The Statutory Guidance issued under section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003 advises however that any Cumulative Impact Area(s) are reviewed every three years. The Dorset Licensing Policy contains one Cumulative Impact Area in Weymouth Town Centre. Officers have reviewed the evidence base for the Weymouth Cumulative Impact Area and a report has been made for consideration.

It is proposed to undertake a public consultation regarding the retention of the Cumulative Impact Area, with the results of the consultation being considered by the Licensing Committee and a recommendation made to Full Council.

A Cumulative Impact Area can be integrated within a Council's Statement of Licensing Policy if it can be shown that the number or type of licence applications granted in a particular area are having a cumulative impact and this is leading to problems which are

undermining the licensing objectives. There is a rebuttable presumption that any new applications, or applications to substantially alter existing permissions, will be refused unless the applicant can demonstrate to the Authority that the proposals will not add to the existing problems in the area.

The Consultation

The consultation survey was aimed at Dorset Council residents. It asked for their thoughts on the changes to the policy or the policy in general.

Analysis Method

Responses to closed questions were reviewed and summarised, with the source of each dataset clearly shown in the report's base notes. All consultation questions and their results are included. For open-ended comments, they have been listed verbatim due to the number of responses.

Note: Figures may not always total precisely due to rounding.

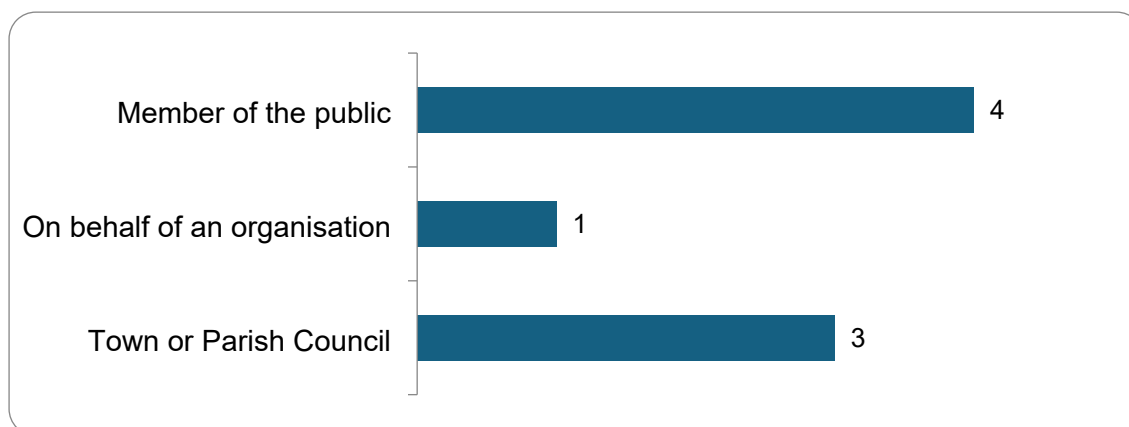
Executive Summary

Due to the response size, the survey doesn't provide sufficient evidence to support any changes to the service. Feedback from this consultation could still be useful in shaping future decisions, but it can't be the sole basis for change.

Data Analysis

Q. I am responding as a:

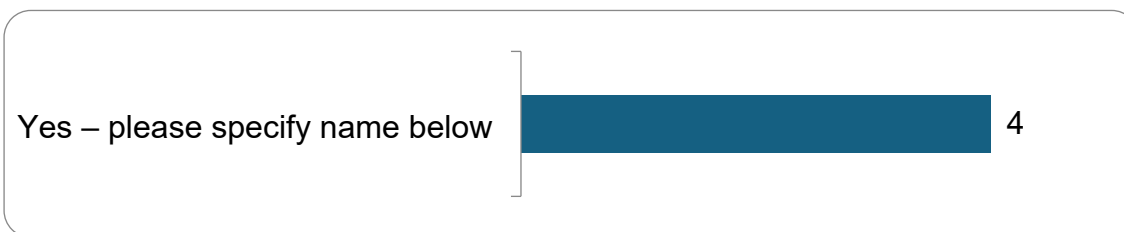
Base: (n=8)



Option	Total	Percent
Member of the public	4	50.0%
On behalf of an organisation	1	12.5%
Business	0	0.0%
Town or Parish Council	3	37.5%
Elected Member	0	0.0%
Other – please specify below	0	0.0%

Q. Is this an official response for an organisation or business?

Base: (n=4)



Option	Total	Percent
Yes – please specify name below	4	100.0%
No	0	0.0%

Name of your organisation or business
Weymouth Town Council
Narcotics Anonymous
Wareham Town Council
Lyme Regis Town Council

Q. Please let us know if you have any comments on the changes to the policy or the policy in general

Base: (n-6)

Respondent type	Name of your organisation or business	Comment	Response from Officers
Town or Parish Council	Weymouth Town Council	The Planning and Licensing Advisory Committee supports the policy, but urges Dorset Council to emphasise the positives within it, including improving the entertainment and hospitality offer for residents and visitors and, ultimately, increasing spending to support local businesses.	No change to the policy proposed at this time. The Government have recently consulted on proposals to make significant changes to the Licensing Act 2003 regulatory regime and Officers expect to conduct a major refresh of the Council's Licensing Policy in the next 18-24 months. This recommendation will be considered as part of that review, along with the ongoing retention of the Cumulative Impact Area in Weymouth.

On behalf of an organisation	Narcotics Anonymous	You need to make significant changes to your licensing and how you monitor certain venues regarding keeping individuals safe and criminal activity. We have multiple young people attend our meetings on a regular basis to get help. All of them have sourced and sourcing drugs from [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], some have been close to death taking contaminated ketamine and overdosing, you will have death on your hands very soon if you do not tighten up your licensing with these venues and Weymouth as a whole. When someone dies in either of these venues, which will 100% happen soon we will note we raised our concerns today.	No change to the policy proposed at this time. This intelligence has been shared with Dorset Police's Licensing Team and enquiries are being made. Specific venues and company names have been redacted pending corroboration of allegations. Any complaints about licensed premises can be reported to Dorset Police or to the Council's Licensing Team on licensing@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk
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Member of the public	N/A	Let's break this down Project young people from harm - you have drug infested night clubs and bars on Weymouth seafront where they allow young people to go outside , across the road to take drugs behind the beach huts, then come back in, no-entry after midnight, and why do young people need alcohol and drugs in a venue until 6am. Fighting and violence until 5am, who are you protecting there, you are contributing to a massive addiction problem in Weymouth Needs of residents - every weekend the noise is horrendous on Weymouth seafront where, outside terrace parties, people in the street until 5am, drug use everywhere, that's not looking at residents. Encourage tourism - Weymouth voted most dangerous nightlife , people won't come here to drug fuelled venues full of kids. Reduce alcohol misuse - kids full of drugs drinking until 5am, that's school misuse, nobody needs to drink until then, venues can close earlier, they won't lose money, they'll save money on staffing. Have better security, [REDACTED] are a joke, just bullies, having security that all live in Weymouth is a conflict of interest, they let there mates sell drugs, don't put them on pub watch , they favour locals. Venues with outside security don't have that problem, look at the drug alerts to [REDACTED] venues to venues that have outside companies.	No change to the policy proposed at this time. This intelligence has been shared with Dorset Police's Licensing Team and enquiries are being made. Specific venues and company names have been redacted pending corroboration of allegations. Any complaints about licensed premises can be reported to Dorset Police or to the Council's Licensing Team on licensing@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk
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Member of the public	N/A	I don't believe that reports of misconduct of the general public are reported or handled very well. I have been to two local establishments in recent weeks, firstly The [REDACTED] where both my 15 year old daughter and her mum were verbally abused and on the receiving end of threatening behaviour. I reported to the police but I've heard nothing back. Then this last weekend at [REDACTED] two incidents occurred, one of mild violence and one where the drug users were becoming agitated and abusive, again involving minors one being my daughter. There should be a system where reports can be made by the general public of incidents that have occurred and whether the police involved at the time or not. If not, how was the incident dealt with as the staff members at both establishments didn't seem to know how to deal with the issues.	No change to the policy proposed at this time. This intelligence has been shared with Dorset Police's Licensing Team and enquiries are being made. Specific venues and company names have been redacted pending corroboration of allegations. Any complaints about licensed premises can be reported to Dorset Police or to the Council's Licensing Team on licensing@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk
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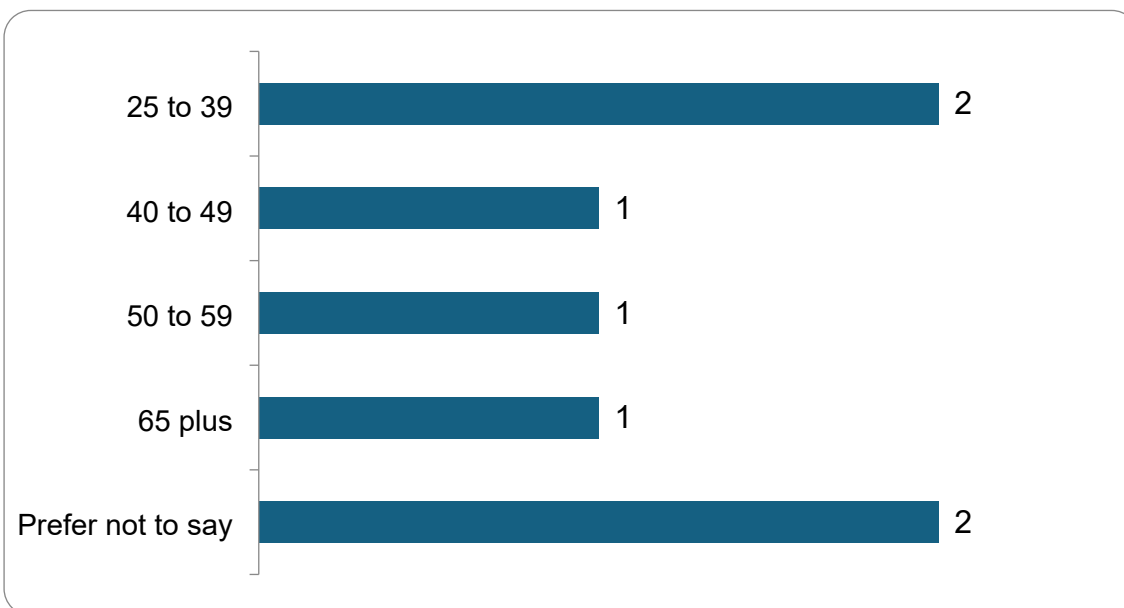
Town or Parish Council	Wareham Town Council	Wareham Town Council broadly supports the aims, purpose and spirit of Dorset Council's Draft Licensing Policy. Wareham Town Council notes that "Capacity limits will not be imposed as a condition of the licence on fire safety grounds" is contained as part of the provision within 'Public Safety 4.14'. Wareham Town Council notes its concern that this may be interpreted in a way which undermines fire safety provisions for residents as the speed at which a building can be evacuated in an emergency is directly related to the number of persons within a building at any one time. By separating the capacity limits entirely from the capacity a building can safely be evacuated in the event of a fire or similar emergency, Wareham Town Council bears concerns that residents and visitors are being put at risk.	No change to the policy proposed at this time. The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 places a legal requirement on Responsible Persons to set capacity limits through a risk assessment process. Any deficiencies can be dealt with by the Fire Authority. It is not recommended to duplicate existing regulatory requirements via conditions on Premises Licences issued under the Licensing Act 2003.
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Town or Parish Council	Lyme Regis Town Council	Lyme Regis Town Council (LRTC) supports the draft licencing policy and proposed updates. The council has comments to make on paragraph 1.4 (please note the draft policy numbering goes from 1.4 to 1.6) and the section on Representation. LRTC recommends including in the policy of the current practice of informing town and parish councils of licencing application within their boundaries. LRTC would also like the draft policy to require the relevant licencing committee or sub-committee to be notified of and to consider any licencing objections from town and parish councils in their decision making.	No change to the policy proposed at this time. Officers have checked the Policy and cannot locate the formatting/numbering error identified. The Licensing Team notifies the relevant Town or Parish Council of new applications received within their respective areas, along with the relevant Dorset Council Ward Member. Officers do not believe it is necessary to add this practice to the Licensing Policy at this present time.
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Demographic information

Q. Please select your age group.

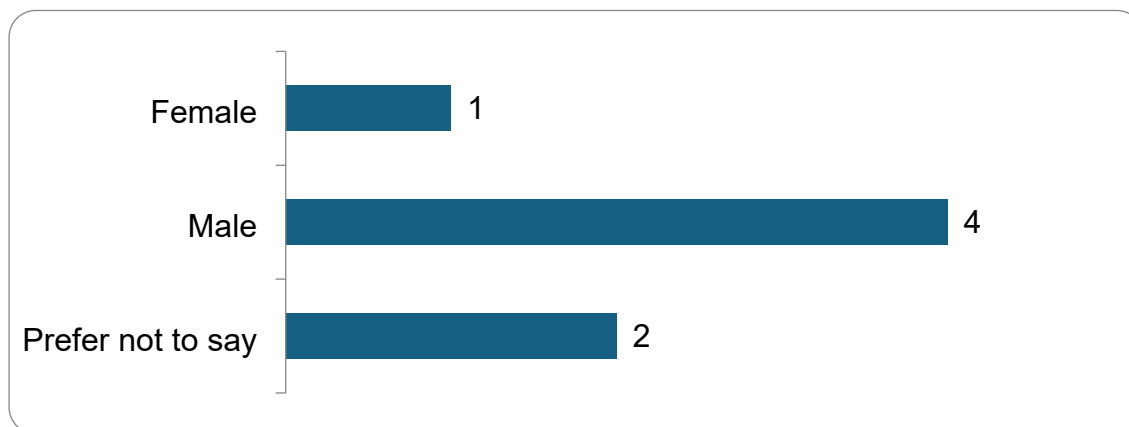
Base: (n-7)



Option	Total	Percent
Under 18	0	0.0%
18 to 24	0	0.0%
25 to 39	2	28.6%
40 to 49	1	14.3%
50 to 59	1	14.3%
60 to 64	0	0.0%
65 plus	1	14.3%
Prefer not to say	2	28.6%

Q. What is your sex?

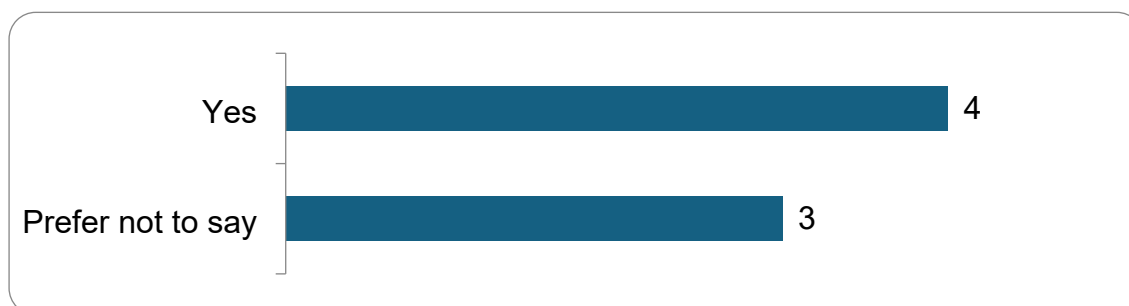
Base: (n-7)



Option	Total	Percent
Female	1	14.3%
Male	4	57.1%
Prefer not to say	2	28.6%

Q. Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?

Base: (n-7)

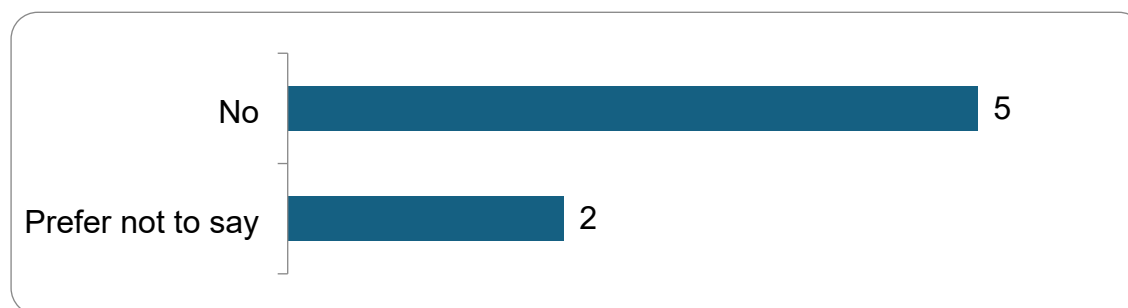


Option	Total	Percent
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Yes	4	57.1%
No	0	0.0%
Prefer not to say	3	42.9%

Q. Do you consider yourself to be disabled as set out in the Equality Act 2010?

Base: (n-7)



Option	Total	Percent
Yes	0	0.0%
No	5	71.4%
Prefer not to say	2	28.6%

Q. If at the previous question you stated you consider yourself to have a disability, please state the type of disability which applies to you.

Base: (n-1)

If you prefer to use another term

1

Option	Total	Percent
Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)	0	0.0%
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)	0	0.0%
Autistic Spectrum Conditions	0	0.0%
Blind	0	0.0%
Dyscalculia	0	0.0%
Dyslexia	0	0.0%
Dyspraxia	0	0.0%
Deaf	0	0.0%
Hearing loss	0	0.0%
Long term health condition	0	0.0%
Mental health issues	0	0.0%
Physical impairment	0	0.0%
Sign Language User	0	0.0%
Visually impaired	0	0.0%
Medical conditions	0	0.0%
Mobility issues	0	0.0%
Learning disability	0	0.0%
Specific learning differences	0	0.0%
Wheelchair user	0	0.0%
If you prefer to use another term, please specify below	1	100.0%