

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S REPORT TO LICENSING & PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE

13 January 2026

Report Title: Relaxation of licensing hours for the 2026 Men's FIFA World Cup

Submitted by: Service Director - Regulatory Services & Licensing Lead Officer

Portfolios: Finance, Town Centres & Growth

Ward(s) affected: All

<u>Purpose of the Report</u>	<u>Key Decision</u>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
To inform the Committee of a Home Office consultation to allow certain licensed premises to open later than their normal hours. It is in relation to the semi-final and final matches of the 2026 Men's football world cup, should a 'Home Nations' team progress to that stage.			
Recommendation			
That Committee:			
1. Note the contents of the report 2. Agree that the proposed response be submitted prior to the consultation closing.			
Reasons			
The Home Office are holding a consultation on whether to allow a relaxation of licensing hours during the semi-final and final stages of the 2026 Men's football world cup, should a 'Home Nations' team progress to that stage.			

1. Background

- 1.1 Section 172 of the Licensing Act 2003 allows the Secretary of State for the Home Department to make a Licensing Hours Order ('Order') relaxing opening hours for licensed premises (any premises with a premises licence or a club premises certificate) in England and Wales to mark an occasion of 'exceptional international, national or local significance'.
- 1.2 Past national occasions where the government has extended licensing hours have included the late Queen's platinum jubilee in 2022, and the Kings Coronation in 2023. The power was also used during the Men's World Cup in 2014, the 2025 Women's football European Championships.

2. Issues

- 2.1 The Home Office opened a consultation on 4th December 2025. They are consulting on whether it is appropriate to make an Order to extend the times

for licensed premises to be open during the semi-final and final stages of the Men's FIFA football world cup, should a 'Home Nations' team progress to that stage. The consultation is open for a period of 6 weeks ending on 15th January 2026.

- 2.2 If granted, as proposed the Order would authorise all licensed premises that are already permitted to sell/supply alcohol for consumption on the premises until 11pm to operate until 1am the day after. It should be noted that this Order will only have effect should either England or Scotland (already qualified) or Wales or Northern Ireland (currently in the play-offs) or any mixture of teams progress to the semi-final and/or final stages and will only take effect on the date that they are playing. The semi-final matches are scheduled for 14th and 15th July 2026, and the final is scheduled for 19th July 2026. For example, if one of the teams played in the semi-final on 15th July, it would only be 15th July that would benefit from the relaxation. The licensable hours for 14th July would be the normal hours.
- 2.3 The proposed relaxation does not apply to the sale of alcohol for consumption off the premises, regulated entertainment, late night refreshment premises or unlicensed premises.
- 2.4 The alternative would be to rely upon the existing system to requiring Temporary Event Notices to extend licensable hours.
- 2.5 The consultation is made up of the below four questions. Officers' view is that Orders of this nature have been successful in the past, have not created additional problems for regulatory bodies, and as such are supportive of the proposals. Officers' answers in are bold text:

Q1: Do you support the proposal for extending licensing hours in England and Wales in the event that any of the home nations reach the semi-finals of the Men's Football World Cup 2026 - 14 and/or 15 July 2026 - until 1:00am the following morning, providing the match kicks-off at 9:00pm or earlier?

[Yes/No]

Q2: Do you support the proposal for extending licensing hours in England and Wales in the event that any of the home nations reach the final of the Men's Football World Cup 2026 - 19 July 2026 - until 1:00am the following morning, providing the match kicks-off at 9:00pm or earlier?

[Yes/No]

Q3: Do you agree that the contingent order should only apply to the sale of alcohol for consumption on the premises (i.e. it should not apply to the sale of alcohol for consumption off the premises)?

[Yes/No]

Q4: If you disagree with this proposal, or think we should go further (for example, by also extending licensing hours if any of the home nations teams reach the quarter finals), please explain your reasoning below.

Not applicable.

3. Recommendation

3.1 That Committee:

1. Note the contents of the report
2. Agree that the proposed response be submitted prior to the consultation closing.

4. Reasons

- 4.1** To inform Members of amendments to the Licensing Act 2003 and matters of local and national significance.

5. Options Considered

- 5.1** The Council could choose not to respond to this consultation.

6. Legal and Statutory Implications

- 6.1** Not applicable.

7. Equality Impact Assessment

- 7.1** Not applicable.

8. Financial and Resource Implications

- 8.1** It is unlikely to cause any resource implications however if there was to be complaints and incidents as a result of the extended hours then it would require investigation by the appropriate officers. It is not anticipated to be the case, but the resource would be covered by existing staff members.

9. Major Risks & Mitigation

- 9.1** Not applicable.

10. UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)



11. One Council

Please confirm that consideration has been given to the following programmes of work:

One Commercial Council

One Digital Council

One Green Council

It is not thought that the nature of the proposals impacts on any of the One Council streams.

12. Key Decision Information

12.1 Not applicable.

13. Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions

13.1 Not applicable.

14. List of Appendices

14.1 Not applicable.

15. Background Papers

15.1 [Consultation document published on 4th December 2025](#)