

LICENSING COMMITTEE
11TH FEBRUARY 2020

PRESENT: The Chair (Councillor Pacey)
The Vice Chair (Councillor Lowe)
Councillors Capleton, C. Harris, Paling, Popley,
Ranson, Tillotson and Ward

Head of Regulatory Services
Licensing Manager
Democratic Services Manager
Democratic Services Officer (NC)

APOLOGIES: Councillor Brookes and Savage

The Chair stated that the meeting would be recorded and the sound recording subsequently made available via the Council's website. He also advised that, under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, other people may film, record, tweet or blog from this meeting, and the use of any such images or sound recordings was not under the Council's control.

9. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 22nd October 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and signed.

10. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY AND PERSONAL INTERESTS

No disclosures were made.

11. QUESTIONS UNDER OTHER COMMITTEE PROCEDURES 12.8

No questions had been submitted.

12. REVIEW OF THE NEW HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY

Considered a report of the Head of Regulatory Services to consider the new Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy following consultation with trade (item 5 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

Assisting with consideration of the report: The Head of Regulatory Services and the Licensing Manager.

The Licensing Manager drew the Committee's attention to the comments received during the consultation, the licensing improvement project and that certain administrative processes still required further finalisation. If the recommendation in

the report was agreed the Head of Regulatory Services would, under delegated authority, make any necessary minor amendments and alterations to the policy.

Summary, key points of discussion:

- (i) as the Safeguarding Vulnerable Passenger Training was now available online, it could be difficult to guarantee it was the applicant completing the training. The application form would be updated to include a signature of the applicant to confirm they had completed the online training and a declaration informing them of the seriousness of signing fraudulently. It was noted that validity and DBS checks were in place prior to the applicant being able to take the training.
- (ii) concerns were raised whether the process, by being too complicated and paper heavy, was discouraging new taxi license applicants. The Council had considered processes by other neighbouring local authorities and amended its process accordingly to be more efficient and in line with these councils.
- (iii) the current data collection software had limited ability to assess if the changes were making a difference to the number of new applicants.

Councillor Capleton joined the meeting.

- (iv) it would be beneficial to have a minimum national standard for taxi licensing. At present there was no such requirement and every council could set its own procedures.

It was noted that an additional meeting of the Committee had been scheduled for 19th May 2020 to review the cumulative impact policy which was last reviewed by the Committee at its meeting in April 2017 alongside the Statement of Licensing Policy and would require renewing in June 2020.

RESOLVED

1. that the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy attached in Appendix A, be approved following consultation with the trade, and be implemented from 1st April 2020;
2. that the Head of Regulatory Services be given delegated authority to make minor amendments and alterations, to the final approved policy, in respect of administration procedures and as required to comply with changes to legislation and Government guidance, to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy, in consultation with the Chair of the Licensing Committee.

Reasons

1. To ensure that, the Council has a policy that sets out the requirements and standards that must be met and guides the Council in the way that it carries out its functions.

2. To ensure that minor and necessary amendments to the policy can be made in a timely manner.

NOTES:

1. No reference may be made to these minutes at the Council meeting on 24th February 2020 unless notice to that effect is given to the Democratic Services Manager by five members of the Council by noon on the fifth working day following publication of these minutes.
2. These minutes are subject to confirmation as a correct record at the next meeting of the Licensing Committee.