

Licensing Committee

Wednesday, 4th October, 2017

PRESENT: Councillor B Selby in the Chair

Councillors N Buckley, R Downes, J Dunn,
B Flynn, M Harland, G Hyde, A Khan,
C Townsley, G Wilkinson, A Garthwaite
and J Pryor

51 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There were no items identified where it was considered necessary to exclude the press or public from the meeting due to the nature of the business to be considered.

52 Late Items

There were no late items

53 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests made at the meeting.

54 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor K Groves.

55 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 5th September 2017, were accepted as a true and correct record subject to the following:

- Minute 46 – Taxi and Private Hire Enforcement Update

To include the following – That concern was expressed regarding the number of Uber vehicles using the short stay car park outside the rail station and concerns regarding safeguarding as drivers licensed from other areas were not subject to the same rigorous standards as required in Leeds. The Executive Officer confirmed that the rear of the rail station was being given a higher priority in daytime and night-time enforcement activity.

56 Matters Arising from the Minutes

Further concerns were expressed regarding private hire vehicles parking and waiting to the rear of the St John's Centre. Members were reminded of the impending city centre evening visit where such spots could be visited.

57 Taxi and Private Hire - Schedule for Consultation and Review of Policies and Conditions

The report of the Head of Licensing and Registration provided a schedule for the review and consultation of Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policies and conditions. It brought attention to the likely areas where the Council's current policies and conditions may need to be updated.

It also advised the Committee of the likely policies and conditions where the closer working with West Yorkshire and York authorities may require consultation on 'harmonised' policies or conditions.

A timetable for the review of the Taxi and Private Hire Licensing policies and conditions was appended to the report.

Andrew White, Taxi & Private Hire Licensing presented the report.

Issues highlighted from the report included the following:

- Other factors that may affect existing policies including the Clean Air Zone and work with neighbouring authorities.
- The policies and conditions covered a range of issues including vehicles, drivers and safety.
- The need for the policies to reflect changes in technology, particularly relating to vehicle manufacture and the increase in electric/hybrid vehicles.
- It was suggested that the consultation on the various policies and conditions be grouped together where possible to avoid repeated consultations with stakeholders.
- Members' attention was brought to Section 3.3 of the report which outlined some suggested areas for consultation in relation to the policies and conditions. The Committee was asked to discuss these suggestions and any other areas that could inform the consultation.

In response to Members comments and questions, the following was discussed:

- Enforcement powers with relation to out of district vehicles – there was ongoing work with surrounding authorities to provide consistency with enforcement across West Yorkshire and York and it would be useful to develop a county wide policy. There were no powers to revoke licenses that had been issued by other authorities but prosecutions could and had been taken where necessary.
- Guide (visually impaired) and assistance (deaf) dogs – drivers were obliged to take these where requested, but not dogs which were not guide or assistance. There had been complaints where guide and assistance dogs had been refused. There was only one driver licensed in Leeds who had a certified medical reason not to transport dogs.
- Introduction of air quality control and what incentives could be given to the trade to invest in hybrid/electric vehicles. It was reported that by 2020 there would, due to the Clean Air zone, be implications on licensing of certain vehicles. There had been discussions with the Clean Air Project Team and vehicle charging points would be installed across the city. It was not yet known whether any would be ring fenced for the use of the hackney carriage/private hire trade. There had been an unsuccessful application to the Department of Transport for those who change diesel vehicles for hybrid to

get the following three years of their vehicle licence paid. The policy would need to reflect any timescales involved and there would need to be information on where support was available for changing to hybrid vehicles.

- Consultation would involve all relevant stakeholders including trade representatives and the Licensing Committee. Most recent consultation had involved the use of online questionnaires and surveys. Adults and Children's Safeguarding Boards would be consulted where applicable.
- It was suggested that the Licensing Committee establish a working group to consider the review of the policies and conditions.
- Use of CCTV in vehicles – there was due to be a meeting with Rotherham MBC to see the system used there. Specifications of CCTV systems needed to be defined and there would be a procurement exercise to identify approved suppliers. There was some funding available from Safer Leeds for CCTV in vehicles. Further issues included who would have to have CCTV installed; whether it would be all vehicles upon renewal of licenses or just new vehicles and whether systems would be transferable to new vehicles. Potential for funding through West Yorkshire Police or the Police and Crime Commissioner was also discussed.
- Review for Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles.
- Age extensions for vehicles – the need to provide clear guidance particularly on timescales to apply for this.
- Driver training and knowledge of the city and surrounding areas. Driver training included some knowledge testing of navigation and areas of the city centre. Examples of training materials used could be made available.
- The universities and students would be involved in consultations.
- The use of driver hailing apps and consultation to be involved with regards to what requirements would be needed.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the report and discussion be noted.
- (2) That a working group be established for the review of Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policies and conditions.
- (3) That the Clean Air Zone be added to the Licensing Committee Forward Plan for further consideration of issues relating to the Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policies and Conditions.

58 Licensing Committee Work Programme

It was agreed to bring the Cumulative Impact Policy forward to the November meeting and include the Clean Air Zone for December.

RESOLVED – To approve the contents of the Licensing Committee Work Programme for 2017/18

59 Date and Time of Next Meeting

RESOLVED – To note that the next meeting will take place on Tuesday 7th November 2017 at 10.00am in the Civic Hall, Leeds.