

Licensing Committee

Wednesday, 5th October, 2016

PRESENT: Councillor B Selby in the Chair

Councillors R Downes, J Dunn, S Field,
B Flynn, J Heselwood, G Hussain, G Hyde,
A Khan and G Wilkinson

61 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals against the refusal of inspection of documents.

62 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 confidential nature of the business to be considered.

63 Late Items

There were no late items of business.

64 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests made at the meeting.

65 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: N Buckley and M Harland, M Coulson, C Townsley and B Gettings

66 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 6th September 2016 be accepted as a true and correct record.

67 Matters Arising from the Minutes

Joining Police Officers on a Night Time Patrol of the City Centre – Minute No. 55 refers – Both Councillors Hussain and Downes reported that they had recently participated in the night time visit of the City Centre.

In providing feedback both said it was an experience and was interesting how the police responded to situations given the limited resources and the pressure that was put on them.

It was suggested that a meeting be arranged with Members from this Committee, officers from Entertainment Licensing and WYP to discuss issues arising from the night time patrols.

Members also requested if additional dates for further night time patrols of the City Centre could be arranged.

RESOLVED

- (i) That a meeting be arranged with Members from this Committee, officers from Entertainment Licensing and WYP to discuss issues arising from the night time patrols.
- (ii) That arrangements be made for further night time patrols of the City Centre.

68 Taxi & Private Hire Licensing Service Improvements Overview

The Head of Elections, Licensing and Registration submitted a report which provided an overview of the developments to the Taxi and Private Hire service over the past 12 months and service improvements currently underway.

Addressing the report the section Head, Taxi and Private Hire Licensing said the purpose in bringing this report before Members was to highlight some major changes to the licensing operation, in particular; a move to a cashless office and the introduction of an on line system to undertake vehicle licence renewals.

Detailed discussion ensued on the contents of the report which included:

- Digitising the service
- Webpage Review
- Emails
- Telephone enquiries
- Resources
- Wi-Fi
- Systems –IT and Business
- Workplace

Members generally welcomed the proposal to introduce new processes / new technology into the Licensing Service but queried if adequate consultation was taking place.

In responding officers reported that further consultation would be undertaken with the licensed trade on the key issues as proposals were developed and prior to implementation.

A query was raised as to how members of the trade who did not have access to new technologies could respond to consultation.

In responding Officers reported that a counter service would continue to operate at the Taxi and Private Licensing offices, it was further suggested that the new Community Hubs would also provide an opportunity to access licensing functions

A discussion ensued on waiting times at the Taxi and Private Licensing offices and a suggestion that extra staff be allocated to counter services during busy periods.

In responding officers reported that extra staff could be employed but that cost would be reflected in the licence fee. The intention of the changes was to bring the trade up to date as well as the service with more modern ways of handling business.

Drawing the debate to a conclusion the Chair welcomed the report and suggested that a further progress report be brought back to this Committee in six months' time.

RESOLVED –

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (ii) That a progress report be brought back to this Committee in six months' time

69 Hackney Carriage Vehicle Conditions - Signs and Markings - Update Report following Consultation.

The Head of Elections, Licensing and Registration submitted a report which set out proposed changes to the existing policy in respect of the age in which vehicles could continue to apply for a “corporate wrap”.

The report also proposed changes to the rear Council License Plate and to also bring that LCC plate into line with the more visible, modern licence plate already approved to be on LCC Private Hire Vehicles.

Appended to the report were copies of the following documents:

- Representations from two taxi associations objecting to the proposals (Appendix A referred)

The Section Head, Taxi and Private Hire Licensing presented the report and responded to Members' questions and queries.

Detailed discussion ensued on the contents of the report which included:

- Hackney Carriage – Wheel Chair Accessible Vehicles – Corporate Livery
- Hackney Carriage Vehicles – Rear LCC Licence Plates
- Consultation and Engagement
- Representations from two taxi associations objecting to the proposals

In the discussion that followed Member were generally supportive of the proposals.

RESOLVED –

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Tuesday, 1st November, 2016

- (i) That in respect of Hackney Carriage Vehicle Corporate livery, to approve in principle the changes to the age considerations in the existing policy as set out in paragraphs 3.3 and 3.4 of the submitted report, and that officers prepare a report for Executive approval
- (ii) That in respect of Hackney Carriage Signs and Markings (LCC licence plate improvements) – to approve in principle a change to the policy both in respect of the rear LCC licence plate and the displaying of LCC plates to the side of the vehicle when fitted with corporate livery, and that officers prepare a report for Executive approval
- (iii) That the introduction of the new requirement be undertaken at the time of vehicle transfer: licence renewal; age extension; at the point the suspension of a defective vehicle is lifted; when a new application for a “corporate wrap” is approved.

70 Licensing Committee Work Programme 2016/17

Members considered the contents of the Licensing Committee Work Programme for 2016/17.

It was noted that in view of the decisions made earlier today, the following items had been added to the Committees Work Programme:

Taxi & Private Hire Licensing Service Improvements Overview (Progress Report)

Following a Deputation to Council on 14th September 2016, a report on Student Safety would be brought to the November meeting of this Committee.

Two reports currently scheduled to be considered in November: Large Casino Annual Report and CIP City Centre Review would be moved back to the December meeting.

RESOLVED – That with the inclusion/ amendments referred to above, to approve the contents of the Licensing Committee Work Programme for 2016/17

71 Date and Time of Next Meeting

RESOLVED – To note that the next meeting will take place on Tuesday 1st November 2016 at 10.00am in the Civic Hall, Leeds.