

MINUTES
OF A MEETING OF THE
LICENSING COMMITTEE

held on 12 March 2019
Present:

Cllr D Harlow (Chairman)
Cllr Mrs H J Addison (Vice-Chair)

Cllr M Ali Cllr L S Lyons
Cllr S Ashall Cllr C Rana
Cllr M A Bridgeman

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors I Eastwood and R Mohammed.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Committee held on 22 January 2019 be approved and signed as a true and correct record.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

4. URGENT BUSINESS

The Committee was advised that future meetings would begin at 7.00pm and not 6.30pm to bring the start time in line with other Council Committees. In addition, it was stated that the Taxi Forum was in the process of being re-constituted with the first meeting due to take place during the evening of 8 April. The Forum would be an opportunity for members of the taxi trade to meet with the Chairman of the Licensing Committee and Licensing Officers with the aim of facilitating closer working arrangements.

5. CHANGES TO OPERATOR LICENCES LIC19-006

The Committee received a report which requested that the Licensing Authority undertake a consultation with the Private Hire Trade regarding proposed changes to the Private Hire Operators' licensing regime.

Following a question, it was noted that the pass rate for the knowledge test for the Operators would be set at the same level of 100% as for the taxi drivers, which was considered appropriate by the Licensing Authority given the nature of the test. However, it

was agreed to check the pass rate set by other local authorities and report back to the Committee alongside the results of the consultation exercise.

RESOLVED That the Licensing Authority undertake consultation with the Private Hire Trade in respect of introducing:

- (i) a procedural change in licensing multiple Private Hire Operators, including a fixed fee of £10.50 for each additional name;
- (ii) the requirement to undertake and pass a Knowledge Test for Operators; and
- (iii) a requirement for Operators' door signage to be sticker / vinyl as opposed to magnetic.

6. GUIDANCE IN RESPECT OF DRESS CODE FOR TAXI DRIVERS LIC19-005

The Committee received a report which considered the possibility of introducing a clearer set of standards in relation to a dress code for drivers of both Private Hire and Hackney Carriage vehicles.

The Chairman reported that the paper had been reported in the national press and taken out of context, as most Councils operated dress code policies in their taxi handbooks. Joanne McIntosh, Legal Services Manager, stated that the code was intended as guidance for the Licensing Authority and the taxi drivers, noting that the majority of drivers already adhered to it. Many local authorities were using identical wording as proposed in the report with several making further stipulations on dress.

Following questions, it was noted that once adopted the guidance would be included in the taxi handbooks and that repeated infringements could lead to a warning but would not lead, by itself, to a revocation of a taxi driver's licence. Comments on dress had been received through phonecalls from members of the public and observations had been made by the Licensing Team during its work.

RESOLVED that the guidance be approved and appended to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Handbook.

7. VOTE OF THANKS

On behalf of the Committee, Councillor Addison thanked Councillor Harlow for her hard work chairing the Licensing Committee during the past Municipal Year.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm
and ended at 7.00 pm

Chairman: _____

Date: _____