

MINUTES
OF A MEETING OF THE
LICENSING COMMITTEE

held on 11 June 2019
Present:

Cllr M Ali (Chairman)
Cllr K Howard (Vice-Chair)

Cllr G W Elson	Cllr R Mohammed
Cllr D Harlow	Cllr L M N Morales
Cllr S Hussain	Cllr C Rana
Cllr R N Leach	

Also Present: Councillor M I Raja

Absent: Councillor M A Bridgeman

1. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Committee held on 12 March 2019 and 20 May 2019 be approved and signed as true and correct records.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor M Bridgeman.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, Councillor R Mohammed declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in minute items 7, Joint Warranting, and 8, National Registration of Refusals and Revocations, arising from his position as a taxi operator. The interest was such that Councillor Mohammed left the Chamber during consideration of the items.

4. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of Urgent Business.

5. ANNUAL LICENSING TRAINING

Jon Herbert, Licensing Officer, presented the Annual Training on Licensing to Members of the Committee, which included information on taxi licensing and premises licensing. Topics raised by Members included the process for dealing with taxi driver medicals; Uber

drivers being licenced directly by Transport for London; and personal licences no longer including a set expiry date.

6. OVERVIEW OF LICENSING 2018-19

Joanne McIntosh, Legal Services Manager, introduced the report which set out an overview of the activities of the Licensing team during 2018/19. Section one set out project information, section two provided statistics for taxi, licensed premises and temporary event notices, and section three contained details of refusals, revocations and suspensions carried out in line with the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. The Committee was advised that Best Bar None had just been launched; the Gambling Statement of Policy was about to go out to consultation; and the deadline for completing the mandatory training on Child Sexual Exploitation was close and so the Licensing team was contacting taxi drivers yet to complete the training. The Annual Statistics showed that the statutory timescales had been met over the past year.

It was noted that the next meeting of the Taxi Licensing Forum was being arranged, with consideration as to whether the Forum should be kept open for all drivers to attend or alternatively just three or four representatives from both the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire trades. Taxi-related policies would be consulted on at the Forum. Members of the Licensing Committee were welcome to attend the meetings.

The Committee was advised that the future project relating to increasing the frequency of Disclosure Barring Service checks to six monthly along with the suggested charge of £88 per year was to be consulted on and discussed by the Committee at a future meeting. The Electric Cars Viability Project had now reached the stage of contacting taxi drivers to request volunteers for the three month trial period, following which a report would be received by the Committee. The Project was noted to be at a very early stage and no changes were currently planned to the Council's Policy for vehicle specifications.

Matthew Cobb, Senior Licensing Officer, undertook to email the link for the Department of Transport national consultation on the possible introduction of the language proficiency test for all taxi drivers.

The Committee noted that it was important that the information set out in the report was available to the public, to ensure transparency for members of the taxi trade. Members were asked to put forward ideas for future discussion by the Committee.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

7. JOINT WARRANTING

Joanne McIntosh introduced a report which sought approval for making arrangements between Surrey Licensing Authorities to introduce joint warranting for Licensing officers to enable improved enforcement of the taxi and private hire trade across the County. It was noted that the policy did not apply to Uber drivers at the moment, as Transport for London was yet to sign up to the policy. Members welcomed the proposal.

RESOLVED

That authority be given to a scheme of delegations whereupon Licensing Officers from neighbouring Surrey Authorities are given authorisation to carry out requisite enforcement on Woking licensed vehicles and drivers.

8. NATIONAL REGISTRATION OF REFUSALS AND REVOCATIONS

Matthew Cobb, Senior Licensing Officer, introduced the report which sought approval for Woking Licensing Authority to be included and participate in the Local Government Associations National Register of Taxi Licence Revocations and Refusals. The standards and methods set out by the Policy were set out in Appendix 1 to the report. It was noted that there would be no additional cost to the Council as it was already a member of the National Anti-Fraud Network. Members agreed that the Policy would be beneficial for the Council to adopt.

RESOLVED

That the Local Government Association's National Register of Taxi Licence Revocations and Refusals (NR3) be adopted as policy and implemented in line with the guidance and timeframes laid out in the report.

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and ended at 8.20 pm

Chairman: _____

Date: _____