

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE LICENSING COMMITTEE
HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, PETERBOROUGH ON 13 MARCH 2014**

Members Present: Councillors Thacker (Chairman), Peach (Vice Chairman), Kreling, Nawaz, Serluca, Jamil, Miners and Saltmarsh.

Officers Present: Peter Gell, Strategic Regulatory Services Manager
Adrian Day, Licensing Manager
Gemma George, Senior Governance Officer

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Allen and Davidson.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Changes in the Licensing Policy for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing – Limousine and Speciality Vehicles

The Committee received a report which followed on from its decision at the meeting held on 21 January 2013.

A full consultation had been launched in relation to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy in order to ensure that it remained appropriate and fit for purpose.

The purpose of the consultation was to seek responses from all stakeholders who had an interest in or may have been affected by the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy.

The consultation covered many areas of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing, but for the purposes of the report the Licensing Committee was asked to consider only the licensing of Limousine and Speciality vehicles. Therefore only responses relating to that area were included. The other areas of consultation were to be included in further reports to the Committee at a later date.

The Officer's recommendation was that the Committee approved the licensing of Limousine and Speciality Vehicles as set out in the report with or without changes under Section 75 (1) (b) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 and that the Committee approved the draft Licensing Conditions for Limousine and Speciality Vehicles with or without changes.

The Licensing Manager presented the report. Key points highlighted included:

- The Police were happy with the proposals to license limousines;
- Peterborough had a number of companies which offered the services of limousines and special event vehicles;
- At the current time, the operators, drivers and vehicles were not subject to any form of checks as was usual in the private hire trade;

- Amey had been approved by VOSA to carry out tests for limousines; and
- The vehicles would not be brand-new, as they were likely to be imported and ensuring their safety was important.

Mr Wayne Fitzgerald had submitted a response to the consultation, as included within the report and had further requested permission to address the Committee. This was agreed and in summary, Mr Fitzgerald raised the following key points:

- Weddings and funerals were exempt from private hire legislation and therefore currently it was not possible to provide a service to everybody who would request it i.e. for proms;
- There were only three limousine companies in Peterborough and it would be beneficial for them to be regulated;
- The test currently for private hire vehicles was no different from the MOT test but was nonetheless more expensive;
- As the cars were not likely to be used very often, six monthly testing would most likely be unnecessary;
- There should be no age restriction on licensing speciality vehicles providing they were roadworthy;
- Older, vintage vehicles did not have seatbelts fitted;
- Rather than carrying number plates in the boot of the vehicle, could a sticker be made for the window instead?
- There was no need for the Council to do anything extraneous to what was already legally required.

Members were invited to comment on the report and comments and responses to questions included:

- The mileage of the vehicles would be significantly less than an ordinary private hire vehicle, so twelve month testing may be more appropriate;
- The MOT testing of vehicles was currently under review;
- Making a number plate to keep in the boot of the vehicle was nonsensical and a waste of money; and
- Because there were only a small number of limousines, many depots were not willing to adapt their workshops.

Members further debated the report and possible exemptions. Further concerns were highlighted in relation to the proposed testing cost and frequency of testing for speciality vehicles.

RESOLVED:

The Committee:

1. Approved the licensing of limousine and speciality vehicles as set out in the report, under Section 75 (1) (b) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 with the following change;

‘that speciality vehicles be standard MOT tested annually, and should be licensed for a three year period with the current fee being set at £198’.

2. Approved the draft licensing conditions for limousine and speciality vehicles with the requirement for seatbelts and the display of licence plates being exempt in relation to speciality vehicles.

Chairman
7.00pm – 7.45pm