

**MINUTES OF THE LICENSING COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD AT 7.00PM, ON
13 FEBRUARY 2020
ROOM, TOWN HALL, PETERBOROUGH**

Committee Members Present: Ayers (Chair), Councillors Allen, Hiller, Fox, Farooq, Wiggan, Holdich O.B.E, Hussain, Ellis and Hog.

Officers Present: Peter Gell, Head of Regulatory Services
Terri Martin, Regulatory Officer
Kerry Leishman, Licensing & Business Manager
Colin Miles, Litigation Lawyer
Karen S Dunleavy, Democratic Services Officer

6. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Iqbal and Coles, Councillors Holdich and Farooq were in attendance as substitution.

Apologies were also received from Councillor Joseph.

7. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

8. MINUTES OF THE LICENSING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 1 OCTOBER 2019

The minutes of the Licensing Committee meeting held on were agreed as a true and accurate record.

It was agreed that agenda item 5 Licensing Committee Meeting Start Time 2020 - 2021 would be discussed next.

9. LICENSING COMMITTEE MEETING START TIME 2020 - 2021

Members received a report in relation to the start times for the Licensing Committee for the municipal year 2020 – 2021.

The Democratic Services Officer introduced the report and requested that Members consider and agree the start time of Licensing Committee meetings for the municipal year 2020 – 2021.

- Some Members felt that the start time of 7:00pm was later than it needed to be. In addition, it was felt that Full Council meetings had already implemented a start time 6:00pm and this had not caused any issues for Members.
- Some Members felt that a start time of 7pm allowed members to go home to take a break period after work commitments or avoid congestion with traffic and for that reason 6:00pm would not be a suitable time for the Licensing Committee meetings. However, most members felt that they were happy to go

with the majority.

RESOLVED:

The Licensing Committee considered the report. A motion was proposed and seconded to a start time of 6:00pm for Licensing Committee meetings for the Municipal Year 2020-2021. The Committee **RESOLVED** (5 in favour, 4 against and 1 abstention) to the start time of 6.00pm for 2020 - 2021.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

The recommendation allows the Licensing Committee to debate the start time of the meeting and make recommendations following debate.

10. LICENSING SERVICES ANNUAL UPDATE AND VARIATION TO TAXI POLICY

The Committee received a report which requested Members to consider and agree the Annual Licensing Services update.

The Licensing & Business Manager and Regulatory Officer introduced the item and requested members to note the annual report and agree the recommendation to modify the Taxi Hire and Private Hire Licensing Policy.

The Licensing & Business Manager and Regulatory Officer responded to comments and questions raised by Members. The responses included:

- Members were advised that the company used for the marshalling service was commissioned through a contract operated by the prevention and Enforcement Team. In addition, the marshal role was to identify rogue traders or plying for hire and make sure that customers of the night-time economy accessed a safe mode of transport.
- There were two marshals employed for the pay day weekends, which increased to four over the festive period and could be identified by their high visibility jackets. The marshals also had access to the City's Closed-Circuit Television system (CCTV).
- Members were advised that the recent recruitment of the enforcement officer vacant position had been unsuccessful; however, a third phase of recruitment was being undertaken and the team were hopeful that this round would be successful following the interview process.
- Members commented as to whether two marshals were enough to cover all hot spot areas within the City? The Regulatory Officer advised that the marshal scheme concentrated on certain areas within the trial period, which had identified certain areas within the City where attention was required during closing times. In addition, the team worked closely with the Police to ensure the service continued to operate effectively.
- Members were informed that the marshal service was introduced to the City to challenge taxi companies and this would be applied by requesting to see a copy of the driver's bookings and accessing their PDA units.
- The marshals would also approach and identify drivers that operated outside of the City's licensing rules.
- Members commented that the Authority ought to be exploring ways in which to reduce engine idling. The Regulatory Officer advised that the Licensing Team were in constant contact with landowners to combat the idling issues. The Authority were unable to enforce any action to reduce these issues, however, the team shared intelligence and allegations of idling with the Police.
- Members were informed that the team intended to present a report to the Committee about widening the scope of licensing requirements for the types of Hackney Carriages in order to meet ultra-low emission standards to meet the Authority's own Climate Impact Change objectives for 2030. Discussions were

underway with the Authority's Group Manager for Transport and the Environment, and a report would be presented to Committee in due course. The process would also involve a public consultation period.

- Members commented that there should be more action the Authority could implement to force landowners to take responsibility for the way vehicles operated on their land in terms of engine idling. The Regulatory Officer advised that she would liaise with the relevant Council departments and the Police to explore whether there were plans in place to tackle the issues raised.
- Members were advised that it was illegal for drivers to idle their engines unnecessarily and of the legalities around not turning off a car engine when asked to do so, this however would be a constant challenge to resolve.
- Members were advised that the Marshals were Security Industry Authority (SIA) licensed.
- The Regulatory Officer informed Members that it was uncertain as to whether vehicle stop start technology could be retrospectively fitted, however, discussions would be held in respect of the type of vehicles to license in order to meet the Authority's 2030 Climate Change objective going forward. In addition, the team was exploring the cost of vehicles in terms of reasonable affordability for the taxi and private hire companies.
- The 80 percent suspension notices for non-payment of licence fees, which had been issued was a very small percentage in terms of the number of premises that were registered.
- Members commented that the street trading consents seemed high. The Licensing and Business Manager advised that these were quarterly consents.
- Members commented that it seemed perfect sense to take the swivel seat out requirement out of the Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policy.
- Members commented that the Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policy recommendation had also been endorsed by the disability forum.
- Members we advised that a consultation was conducted with the Hackney Carriage companies and the outcome showed that the converted pivot seats were not used by passengers.
- The Licensing and Business Manager advised that there would be no requirement to remove previously installed swivel seats and it was felt that that there would be no concerns in the future, as the seats were not currently in use.
- Members commented that there may be certain medical conditions that require a passenger to sit at a higher level, which would be achievable from the front seats currently fitted with a swivel seat.
- Members were advised that there had been no structural concerns raised directly from the Hackney Carriage operators in relation to the swivel seat.

RESOLVED:

The Committee **RESOLVED** (Unanimously) to:

1. Note the contents of the annual report; and
2. Approve an amendment to the Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policy.

REASON FOR THE DECISION:

The recommendation addressed the safety risks associated with the retrofitting of the occasional swivel seat.

Chairman
7.00 – 7:40pm
13 February 2020

