

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
LICENSING AND APPEALS COMMITTEE
HELD ON THURSDAY 27 MARCH 2008 FROM 6.30PM TO 7.10PM**

Present:- Pauline Helliar-Symons (Chairman), Gerald A Cockroft, Mrs K Gilder, Kirsten Miller, and Bob Wyatt

Also present:- Steve Richardson, Public Protection Manager, Julia O'Brien, Principal Environmental Health Officer, Liz Sykes, Legal Assistant, Neil Allen, Senior Lawyer, Allan Tiplady, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

PART I

44. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 21 January 2008 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

45. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted from Andrew Bradley, Chris Bowring, Sam Rahmouni, Malcolm Storry and Pam Stubbs

46. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

47. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions.

48. MEMBER QUESTION TIME

There were no Member questions.

49. HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY CONSULTATION

The Committee considered a report on the draft policy and consultation responses.

In discussing the matter the following points were noted:

- The lack of submissions was a good reflection on the good relationship Council staff had with drivers.
- Some minor wording and format changes had been made by Legal Services to the original draft but nothing had changed the substance or intent of the draft policy.
- The comments made by the Council's Access Officer regarding alternative training in assisting disabled and vulnerable people were accepted so long as those trainers meet required standards.

RESOLVED:- That:

- 1) The Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy as attached to the report be approved subject to the following amendments:

- a) Existing paragraph 1.2.9 be replaced by: "1.2.9 Assistance of Disabled Persons Training: All applicants must be able to show that they have undergone training in the assistance of disabled persons, to a standard acceptable to Wokingham Borough Council. Current examples of acceptable standards are the Passenger Assistance Training Scheme (PATS) or the Council's in-house Disability Awareness Training."
- b) Existing paragraph 1.2.10 be deleted and paragraph 1.2.11 renumbered as 1.2.10
- c) Insert a new paragraph 2.5.3: "No Hackney Carriage vehicle licence will be granted for a vehicle that exceeds 8 years old, from the date of first registration, unless the vehicle complies with the requirements of 2.9 of this policy."
- d) Existing paragraph 2.5.3 be renumbered to 2.5.4 and amended to read: "Please note that the age restrictions detailed in paragraphs 2.5.1 to 2.5.3 above....."
- e) Paragraph 1.2.1 (ii) be amended to read: "a passport with a valid UK visa, which allows the holder to work as a Private Hire or Hackney Carriage driver....."
- f) Paragraph 3.3.1 (ii) to read: " a passport with a valid UK visa, which allows the holder to work as a Private Hire operator....."

2) Officers be authorised to make the necessary presentation and layout amendments to the Private Hire School and Community Services Licensing Policy, in order to make it consistent with the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy.

50. TAXI LICENCE FEES

The Committee considered a report on the responses to the consultation on the proposed taxi licence fees. In discussing the matter the following points were made:

- It would be more prudent to review the fees every two years rather than annually because the cost of the review is very significant in relation to the additional revenue generated.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1) The Taxi Licence Fees as attached to the report be approved, with effect from 1 April 2008.
- 2) The review period for Taxi Licence Fees be amended to be every two years with the next review to be 1 April 2010.

These are the Minutes of a meeting of the Licensing and Appeals Committee

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