

MINUTES OF LICENSING AND PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

MEETING DATE Tuesday, 10 March 2020

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors James Flannery (Chair), Renee Blow (Vice-Chair), Jacky Alty, Jane Bell, Derek Forrest, Mick Higgins, Peter Mullineaux, Alan Ogilvie, John Rainsbury and Gareth Watson

OFFICERS: Tasneem Safdar (Senior Solicitor), Chris Ward (Licensing Officer), Stephanie Fairbrother (Licensing Officer), Coral Astbury (Democratic and Member Services Officer) and Reece Beardsworth (Partnerships and Corporate Support Trainee)

OTHER OFFICERS: Justin Abbotts (Licensing Officer)

PUBLIC: 0

43 Minute Silence

The Chair requested that a minute silence be held, out of respect for Councillor Ken Jones, who was chair of the Licensing and Public Safety Committee from May 2019 to January 2020.

44 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Jacqui Mort.

45 Declarations of Interest

None.

46 Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 14 January 2020 of Licensing and Public Safety Committee

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That the minutes of the Licensing and Public Safety Committee held on Tuesday 14 January 2020, be agreed as a correct record for signing by the Chair.

47 Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 11 February 2020 of General Licensing Sub-Committee Panel

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That the minutes of the General Licensing Sub-Committee Panel held on Tuesday, 11 February 2020 be agreed as a correct record for signing by the Chair.

48 Reports for consultation with Stakeholders

The committee considered a report which sought approval to adopt the National Register of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles Revocations and Refusals Register and for the Licensing section to undertake a period of consultation on the proposed adoption.

The council's Licensing Officer explained that under the current rules, new applicants must advise the Council if they have been refused a licence or had a licence revoked by another local authority. If a driver chose not to disclose this information, there is often no way of finding out. The Local Government Association (LGA) had commissioned the National Anti-Fraud Network (NAFN) to develop and host a register to record all drivers who had either been refused or revoked. Information would be retained on the NR3 for a period of 25 years.

Members received the report positively and agreed that the register had been needed for some time.

In response to a member query, members were advised that the information on the register was limited and only contained the relevant personal information and the decision taken. If the Council wanted to know the reason behind the decision, they would need to contact the relevant authority and request the information in line with data protection policies.

Members sought clarification on who would be liable for data being inputted into the register which was incorrect. The legal advisor to the committee advised that a written answer would be provided outside of the meeting, detailing the relevant information.

The Council's Licensing Officer also provided members with an update on the tinted windows policy and modified vehicle policy. Members were advised that although the two policies had recently finished the consultation period, the consultation was to be re-done. Feedback had been provided by the trade that the questions were too technical, and the internet format was not accessible. The consultations will be undertaken again, with the option of a paper format to increase accessibility. Members were advised that a report detailing the outcome of the consultation would be brought before committee at a future meeting.

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

1. The proposal to adopt the use of the National Register of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles Revocations and Refusals Register to the current South Ribble Borough Council Taxi Licensing Policy be accepted.
2. The Committee agreed that the Licensing section undertake a consultation exercise with stakeholders on the proposed adoption of the register.
3. The Committee agreed to receive a report on the outcome of the consultation exercise at a future meeting.

49 Private Hire Vehicle Livery - Consultation Feedback

The Committee received a report which invited members to recommend the formal adoption of the new proposed private hire signage and corporate signage policy. The

Council's Licencing Officer explained that the new proposed signage would be of an increased size and would only be permitted on the front doors of the vehicle.

Members were advised that a consultation had now been undertaken and 64 responses had been received, all in favour of the proposed changes.

In response to a member query, the Council's Licensing Officer confirmed that once the changes to the policy had been ratified by full Council, the changes would be communicated to the public, highlighting that a private hire vehicle is not insured unless it is pre-booked.

Members requested that the wording within the policy be changed to:

*"A sign indicating the name and/or address and/or telephone number of the proprietor of the vehicle **must** attached, **should the proprietor choose to have signage**, to the front nearside and offside door only."*

The Council's Licencing Officer explained that existing signage would need to be removed in order to comply with the policy change, private hire vehicles would be required to change their stickers on renewal. Operators would also need to change their corporate signage with a deadline being set by the Licensing Section.

Members requested that Licensing undertake a PR awareness exercise for the general public, once the policy had been implemented.

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

1. The wording within the policy shall be amended to, "A sign indicating the name and/or address and/or telephone number of the proprietor of the vehicle **must** attached, **should the proprietor choose to have signage**, to the front nearside and offside door only."
2. The Committee agree that the report be taken to the next Full Council Meeting, with a recommendation to formally adopt the amended policy.
3. That the report be noted.

50 Proposal of Annual Licensing of Vehicles

The Committee received a report which advised members on the outcome of the recent consultation which proposed amending the existing Taxi Policy so that vehicles would be re-issued with plates every twelve months, as opposed to six.

The consultation received 61 responses, with 60 agreeing to the proposed changes. Members received the report positively and were pleased that the trade agreed with the proposals.

Members sought clarification on the current testing procedure and were advised that it would not change. Vehicles would continue to be tested every six months, with plates being issued every twelve months.

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

1. The Committee approve the proposal following the consultation outcome.
2. The Committee agree that the report be taken to the next Full Council Meeting, with a recommendation to formally adopt the amended policy.
3. That the report be noted.

51 Licensing Act 2003 Policy - Consultation Feedback

The Committee considered a report which provided Members with an update on the consultation exercise which was undertaken on the revised Statement of Licencing Policy. The report also sought approval to extend the current Statement of Licensing Policy until the revised statement was ratified by Council.

The consultation received 4 responses, members were advised that a response had been received suggesting that attendance at pub watch should be compulsory, however this was not a condition the Council could make mandatory within a premises licence.

Members received the report positively and thanked Officers for producing comprehensive and accessible reports.

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

1. The committee agree that the current Statement of Licensing Policy be extended until the draft Statement of Licensing Policy is adopted by full Council.
2. The Committee agree that the report be taken to the next Full Council Meeting, with a recommendation to formally adopt the revised Statement.

Chair

Date