

MINUTES OF GENERAL LICENSING COMMITTEE

MEETING DATE Tuesday, 23 January 2018

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors John Rainsbury (Chair), Mike Nelson (Vice-Chair), Jane Bell, Mary Green, Claire Hamilton, Harry Hancock, Ken Jones, Jim Marsh, David Watts and David Wooldridge

OFFICERS: Tasneem Safdar (Senior Solicitor), Andy Glover (Interim Licensing Manager) and Andy Houlker (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

CABINET MEMBER: Councillor Jacqui Mort (Public Health, Safety and Wellbeing)

OTHER MEMBERS AND OFFICERS: Peter Haywood (Revenues Manager), Stephanie Fairbrother (Licensing Officer) (Licensing Officer), Chris Ward (Licensing Officer)

PUBLIC: 1

58 Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Barbara Nathan.

59 Declarations of Any Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

60 Minutes of the General Licensing Committee

RESOLVED (Unanimously):

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 28 November 2017 be approved and signed.

61 Proposed Changes to the Licensing Policy

The Interim Licensing Manager presented a report following the outcome of recent consultation carried out and asked the committee to consider three proposed revisions to the Council's existing Licensing Policy. These were detailed in section 4.1 of the report and centred on vaping devices / e-cigarettes, relevant signage for same and, that all operators' dispatch staff must undertake appropriate Safeguarding training.

Whilst the report indicated that this would be presented to the meeting of Council on 28 February 2018 it was felt the following meeting on 21 March 2018 was more appropriate. This was due to the heavy budget agenda at the next meeting of the Council.

RESOLVED (Unanimously):

That the Committee recommends to Council at its meeting on 21 March 2018, the formal adoption of the three proposed revisions to the Council's current Licensing Policy (as detailed in section 4.1 of the report).

62 Proposed Change to the Licensing Policy (Professional Qualifications) and Revised Approach to Future Changes

The Interim Licensing Manager presented a report following concerns expressed by the trade in its ability to recruit new drivers under the Council's existing policy requirement that all new driver applicants must obtain a relevant professional qualification before being granted a licence.

This had arisen following issues which drivers and operators had raised with the Council of drivers actually being unable to take/obtain the relevant professional qualification. An alternative approach was proposed (as set out in sections 7.3 and 7.6 of the report) to alleviate this whilst a remedy to the issue was explored further.

The Committee discussed in length the pros and cons of the proposed changes. It was conscious that at this stage it was only deciding whether or not to approve a consultation exercise on the matter.

RESOLVED (Yes: 9, Abstention: 1) that:

1. the trade's concerns regarding professional qualifications expressed in section 6 of the report be noted;
2. a consultation exercise be carried out in respect of the proposed amendments to the Licensing Policy as set out in sections 7.3 and 7.6 of the report and this be in line with the methodology as set out in section 8 of the report;
3. following the close of consultation the Committee receive a further report on its outcome for consideration;
4. any subsequent proposed amendment to the Council's Licensing Policy be recommended for adoption to an appropriate future meeting of the Council;
5. the approach to future policy changes be that they are considered by the Committee on a six-monthly basis unless a matter is felt to need consideration sooner.

63 Establishment of Working Group

Further to Minute No. 55 of the meeting held on 28 November 2017, the Interim Licensing Manager presented a report on a number of aspects including the appointment of chair, proposed scope/terms of reference and, possible co-option on to the working group. In respect of the latter co-option, it had been suggested that the council approach Disability Equality North West.

It was envisaged that the working group not meet more than twice to consider the matter and then report its findings to the next appropriate meeting of this Committee.

RESOLVED (Unanimously) that:

1. the working group's title be the Working Group on Differential Age Limits for Licensed Vehicles;

2. the Chair of the working group be Councillor David Wooldridge;
3. the draft terms of reference of the working group (Appendix 1 to the report) be noted;
4. the suggested co-option of two representatives from the trade and a representative from a local disability group (Disability Equality North West) be agreed;
5. the draft agenda for the first meeting of the working group (Appendix 2 to the report) be agreed; and
6. the draft documentation (Appendix 3 to the report) be agreed.

64 Update on Recent Licensing Activity

The Interim Licensing Manager provided an update on licensing activity since the last meeting of the Committee. These related to; the previously agreed consultation on mobile homes, taxi trade forum, joint training event and, pro-active promotional work over the Christmas period.

It was intended that a report on the results of the consultation on mobile homes would be presented to the committee at its meeting on 20 February 2018. In view of the responses received to date and subsequent potential attendees at this meeting it was suggested the Committee meeting be moved to a larger room.

The Committee was reminded that the next Taxi trade Forum would be in the Civic centre at 5.00pm on Thursday 1 February 2018.

Regarding the joint training event there had been some confusion concerning the date of the training. This had been confirmed today as being on **Friday 9** March 2018 (10.00am to about 2.30pm) at Chorley Town Hall. In view of the fact that members had previously experience parking issues at this venue, it was agreed that transport would be organised from/to the Civic Centre for attending members.

The Committee appreciated officers' pro-active work, particularly the use of social media to promote the use of taxis over the Christmas period.

RESOLVED (Unanimously) that:

1. the information on consultation exercise on mobile homes be noted and that those that had responded to the consultation be notified of the meeting and in view of that a larger room be booked for the meeting of the Committee on 20 February 2018;
2. the date of the next Taxi trade Forum be noted;
3. Committee members be re-invited to attend the joint training session at Chorley Town Hall on **Friday 9** March and transport be provided for their attendance; and
4. officers be thanked for their pro-active work over the Christmas period.

Chair

Date

