

LICENSING COMMITTEE - 12 February 2020

MINUTES

Present: Councillors: K Allsopp, J Butler (Chairman), P Davies, T Diccico, R Grinsell, B Groom, J Hamilton, P Hogarth MBE (Vice-Chairman), K Macnaughton, F Nash and P Thomas

Officers: David Acton, Louise Baggott, Anne Bettison, Santokh Gill and Alison McGrory.

1. APOLOGIES

No apologies received.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. QUESTIONS AND DEPUTATIONS

No questions or deputations received.

4. POLICY FOR HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE APPLICANTS AND LICENCE HOLDERS

Members were advised that following their decision on 10 December 2019, consultation with key stake holders including the trade, elected members, police, business sector, special interest groups and the public, had been undertaken between 13 December and 19 January 2020.

Responses were received from the trade, Guide Dogs for the Blind Association, Suzy Lamplugh Trust, A2Z Licensing on behalf of a local taxi company, and in excess of 600 via Survey Monkey.

Whilst a number of comments were received they generally agreed with the draft policy with 91% agreeing with the 'fit and proper' principle. The current policy was based on best practice guidance from 2010 which did not give clear enough sanctions for officers to apply to applicants and licence holders. The proposed policy ensures that clear guidance removes ambiguity and focuses on safety first being paramount.

Members expressed their concerns about most matters being dealt with by officers. They felt drivers whose licences needed to be reviewed should come to committee as soon as possible, and wished officers to reflect that when deciding to use their delegated power or whether to bring to the Licensing Sub-Committee.

By implementing the new policy for new and existing drivers from the 1 April 2020, it would enable the trade time to consider its impact on them.

RESOLVED

Members noted the comments made during the consultation and:-

1. Approved the updated policy for determining the suitability of applicants and licence holders in the hackney carriage and private hire trades;

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2. Agreed to implement the new policy from 1 April 2020, for all new and existing drivers; and
3. Agreed the Assistant Director Stronger Communities, upon attaining the agreement of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, can respond to concerns on public safety grounds with immediate effect.

The meeting ended at 7.15 pm