

MINUTES of a meeting of the LICENSING COMMITTEE held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Coalville on WEDNESDAY, 15 JUNE 2022

Present: Councillor J Clarke (Chairman)

Councillors D Everitt, G Hault, V Richichi, A C Saffell, S Sheahan and J G Simmons

In Attendance: Councillors

Officers: Mr L Mansfield, Mr A Cooper, Ms R Haynes and Mrs R Wallace

#### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors E Allman, M French, S Gillard, M Hay, J Hault, K Merrie, R Morris, C Sewell, N Smith and M B Wyatt.

#### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 16 February 2022.

It was moved by Councillor V Richichi, seconded by Councillor J Simmons and

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 February 2022 be agreed as an accurate record.

#### **4. REVIEW OF TAXI & PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER AND VEHICLE POLICY**

The Environmental Health Team Manager presented the report and invited questions from members.

A member enquired whether all drivers were aware of the Code of Conduct, what training they received and whether they were issued with a guidebook. Officers responded that the Code of Conduct was available to drivers and that this would be revised and brought into the new policy. Members were also informed that at the time a driver applies for their licence, they are required to read the Code and to sign a declaration acknowledging that they had done so.

With regards to training, members were informed that drivers currently received safeguarding training from Blue Lamp and would be trained to identify any potential safeguarding issues. It was also noted that several options for safeguarding training would be put out to consultation and this would potentially be an online program and could theoretically be included as part of the knowledge test which drivers take prior to gaining their licence.

Officers advised the meeting that throughout the pandemic they had provided taxi firms with monthly updates in order to keep them abreast of the latest advice and guidance.

A member asked how the new "48 Hours" notification policy would be implemented, whereby drivers were required to inform the council within 48 hours if they were arrested under suspicion of an offence. Officers responded that on occasion, the police force contacted the authority with this information but that an online reporting tool was available for drivers to self refer.

Chairman's initials

In response to a question regarding the possibility of increasing fares, members were advised that fares were revised in February 2022 and that North West Leicestershire District Council were in the top 3 of the Leicestershire Fares Table. It was noted that officers were reluctant to introduce changes that the trade did not support but added that they would ask taxi firms whether they believed an increase was necessary at the current time.

Officers informed the meeting that as part of the consultation process, a drivers' forum would be implemented in order to gain feedback on issues which would impact them.

Members enquired as to how many drivers the authority had lost due to the pandemic. Officers advised that as of April 2020, the start of the pandemic, the council had 128 licensed drivers. In December 2021 this figure had decreased to 93 and that the current figure stood at 95.

It was moved by Councillor G Houtt, seconded by Councillor T Saffell and

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The outcome of the policy review be noted.
2. The commencement of the consultation following the process detailed in the report be endorsed.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.01 pm

Chairman's initials