

MINUTES of a meeting of the LICENSING COMMITTEE held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Coalville on WEDNESDAY, 2 NOVEMBER 2022

Councillors K Merrie MBE, E G C Allman, D Everitt, M French, M D Hay, G Hoult, L Gillard, R Canny, V Richichi, R L Morris, C A Sewell, S Sheahan, J G Simmons and M B Wyatt

Officers: Mr L Mansfield, Mr A Cooper, Ms K Woollett, Ms T Cooper, Ms R Haynes, Mr P Dennis and Wainwright

5. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Clarke, AC Saffell, J Hoult, N Smith and S Gillard.

6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

7. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2022.

It was moved by Councillor G Hoult, seconded by Councillor J Simmons and

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2022 be agreed as a correct record of proceedings.

8. REVIEW OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY

The Environmental Health Team Manager presented the report to members and outlined the way in which the Council's policy had been reviewed and compared against the statutory standards.

It was noted that a consultation process had been carried out with various groups and organisations. Officers informed members that the next steps would be to finalise and publish the policy, make necessary changes to web pages and internal processes, to undertake staff training and to communicate the policy to the licensing trade.

Members thanked the licensing team for a comprehensive report.

Officers highlighted that more work was required before the penalty points system could be implemented. The penalty points system would be a more transparent system, compared with the current approach, whereby officers use professional judgment, as it would eradicate the potential for subjectivity. It was asked whether it would be possible for members to view the scheme prior to its implementation and officers confirmed that this would be acceptable.

A member questioned whether it would be easier to make it mandatory for the licence holder to subscribe to the DBS update service. Officers replied that there were more and more owners registering for the update service of their own volition and that this is something which officers had been promoting with drivers. It was considered that the cost implication of drivers not being signed up for the update service may prove to be a motivating factor in encouraging them to do so. It was confirmed it would not prove cheaper to mandate this. The authority check driver's ID which is built into the authority's charges.

Chairman's initials

A member questioned whether all drivers needed the same safeguarding training as not all drivers were involved in the transportation of school children. They also pointed out that drivers can be a really good source of information in terms of feeding back what they overhear whilst engaged in the transportation of school children and felt that a more robust training document would be better.

Officers responded that the syllabus for the safeguarding training was necessarily broad and acknowledged the importance of all of the authority's drivers sitting thorough safeguarding training.

Officers confirmed that as well as the knowledge test, formal training and reading the safeguarding essentials training, every driver is issued with a safeguarding essentials card which includes key contact numbers in order for them to report concerns. This is something which is over and above statutory requirements.

A member enquired as to what provision was made for those with a disability and officers responded that at present, there are 9 wheelchair accessible vehicles which are licensed and that this is more than sufficient. It was noted that one of these can also carry 2 wheelchairs. That said it is hoped that by offering a discounted licence fee for wheelchair accessible vehicles, the number of licensed wheelchair accessible vehicles will increase.

It was moved by Councillor S Sheahan, seconded by Councillor E Allman and

RESOLVED THAT

- 1) The outcome of the Policy Review and consultation process be considered.
- 2) The Draft Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy be approved. Responsibility be delegated to the Environmental Health Team Manager to implement the policy and to make changes to the Knowledge Test.

The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.04 pm

Chairman's initials