

Minutes of Licensing Committee

Meeting Date: Tuesday, 10 September 2019, starting at 6.30pm
Present: Councillor G Mirfin (Chairman)

Councillors:

J Alcock	D O'Rourke
R Baxter	S Rainford
D Berryman	M Robinson
S Hirst	G Scott
S Hore	N Walsh
A Knox	

In attendance: Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Solicitor.

Also in attendance: Councillor B Buller.

195 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors R Bennett, B Hilton and S O'Rourke.

196 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 June 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Committee received the minutes of Licensing Sub-Committee held on 4 June 2019.

197 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interest.

198 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

199 HACKNEY CARRIAGE-LIMIT ON NUMBER OF VEHICLE LICENCES

The Chief Executive submitted a report seeking Committee's views on the retention of the policy restricting the number of hackney carriage vehicle licences in the Ribble Valley. The Council currently restricts the number of hackney carriage vehicle licences to 53, 4 of which are fully wheelchair accessible and 8 of which have elap seats. Maintaining this restriction is generally supported by hackney carriage operators who can charge a premium on the transfer of a plate. The Council was not aware of any evidence from residents or other consumers that there are not enough hackney vehicles at present.

Any decision to restrict the number of hackney vehicles should be based on a survey which had evidenced that there is no unmet demand for the provision of

such services. Due to budgetary constraints, the Council has never carried out such a survey but has kept the provision of hackney carriage vehicle licences under review and has responded to requests for consideration of additional licences.

The cost of a full Department for Transport compliant survey was estimated to be in the region of £8,500 plus VAT. However, if the preliminary view of the Committee was that they wished to seek to maintain the restriction and therefore seek evidence to support that course of action, aspects of the survey could be carried out on a preliminary basis at a significantly lower cost for each component. Preparation of an outline summary would incur a cost of £750 plus VAT.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services explained that any application for a hackney carriage licence submitted currently would be considered on its merits, with a view to referral to Committee for determination if the relevant criteria were met.

Committee discussed the various aspects of the proposal and raised several queries.

RESOLVED: That

1. Committee instruct the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to consult with existing hackney carriage vehicle licence holders, the highway authority and the police to seek their views as to whether or not the restriction should be retained;
2. the results of such consultation be reported to a future meeting of this Committee and note that the Council is able to receive applications for hackney carriage licences which would, where necessary be referred to Committee.

200 LICENCING SUB-COMMITTEE TRAINING

The Chief Executive submitted a report to inform Committee of training to be provided on Licensing Sub-Committees. Licensing Sub-Committees are held periodically to determine licensing applications and/or review licences. It is important that Councillors receive training on this aspect of their role. The Solicitor delivered training focusing on procedural and legal issues surrounding Sub-Committees in the context of the Licensing Act 2003. Committee thanked the Solicitor for his presentation.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

201 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That by virtue of the fact that the following items of business be exempt information under Category 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be now excluded from the meeting.

202

LICENCED PREMISES INTERVENTION REPORT

The Chief Executive submitted a report to inform Committee of the outcomes of visits to licensed premises by the Licensing Volunteer for Lancashire Police. Committee were given details of visits to 4 off-licenced premises in the Ribble Valley. No issues were raised at 3 premises and Committee were given further details including of a follow-up visit by a Council Enforcement Officer at one premise.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 8.02pm.

If you have any queries on these minutes please contact Diane Rice (414418).