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Licensing & Appeals Committee

Minutes of a Licensing & Appeals Committee meeting held at 6.00 pm on Tuesday, 5th December, 2023 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Matlock, DE4 3NN.

PRESENT

Councillor Steve Wain - In the Chair

Councillors: Dawn Greatorex, Anthony Bates, John Bointon, Geoff Bond, Neil Buttle, Peter Dobbs, Marilyn Franks and Lucy Peacock

Tim Braund (Director of Regulatory Services), Eileen Tierney (Licensing Manager), Angela Gratton (Democratic Services Officer) and Tommy Shaw (Democratic Services Team Leader)

Note:

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APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor(s): Steve Flitter, Susan Hobson, Joanne Linthwaite, Laura Mellstrom, Peter Slack and Mark Wakeman

234/23 - APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was moved by Councillor Anthony Bates, Seconded by Councillor Neil Buttle and

RESOLVED (unanimously)

That the minutes of the meeting of the Licensing and Appeals Committee held on 27 June 2023 be approved as a correct record.

The Chair declared the motion **CARRIED**.

235/23 - INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

236/23 - PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

237/23 - LICENSING ACT 2003 AND GAMBLING ACT 2005 - ANNUAL REPORT

The Licensing Manager introduced a report which provided a summary of the work relating specifically to the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005, undertaken by the Licensing Team during the last financial year, and the previous three financial-year periods, to allow comparisons to be made.

Members were also provided with details of compliance and enforcement work carried out in partnership with other statutory authorities, which contributes to the Licensing Service Plan Actions.

It was moved by Councillor Peter Dobbs, seconded by Councillor Geoff Bond and

RESOLVED (unanimously)

- 1) That the Licensing Team continues to work, with other Responsible Authorities where possible, to carry out licensing awareness, compliance, and enforcement visits to licensed premises within the district.
- 2) That the Licensing Team continues to contribute to the work of the Community Safety Partnership's VAL (Violence, Alcohol and Licensing) Group, and support the initiatives promoted by the Institute of Licensing and the Gambling Commission.

The Chair declared the motion **CARRIED**.

238/23 - REVIEW OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE (TAXI) AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY 2023 - PROGRESS REPORT

The Licensing Manager introduced a report which provided Members with an update on the review of the Council's Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policy. The report sought Committee support for the Council to be recommended to approve and adopt the final draft of the taxi and private hire licensing policy.

Following the introduction of Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards by the Department for Transport (DfT) in 2020/21, it was deemed necessary for the Policy to be reviewed in order to ensure that the Council's approach to taxi and private hire licensing supported the national standards and contributed to a consistent country-wide approach. It was noted within the report that Members were regularly informed of the progress made throughout the review process.

The report detailed the outcomes of the consultation process undertaken, including the proposed alterations to the draft policy document. These proposed changes were highlighted within the draft policy document included at Appendix 1 to the report. Members were informed of a proposed amendment to the draft policy, to be included in Appendix C, to incorporate the requirement for an enhanced DBS check and online subscription to the DBS update service for owners/part owners of a vehicle to be licensed as a taxi or for private hire.

During the discussion of this item, Members expressed concerns regarding the shortage of Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAVs) licensed by the Authority. The discussion also considered the low number of electric/other non-combustion vehicles currently licensed. It was recommended that Officers would investigate ways in which the number of WAVs, and electric/other non-combustion licensed vehicles might be increased, by working closely with the taxi trade and other stakeholders in the service, such as representatives of vulnerable groups.

The timetable for implementation of the revised Policy was recommended to take effect from 1st February 2024, subject to Council approval. It was also noted that the revised policy would be kept under close review during 2024 – with regard being paid to any recommendations contained in the Department of Transport’s Best Practice Guidance, as released on 17th November 2023.

It was moved by Councillor Neil Buttle, seconded by Councillor Lucy Peacock and

RESOLVED (unanimously)

That Council be recommended to approve and adopt the draft Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policy subject to the following amendments:

1. That the requirement for an enhanced DBS check and online subscription to the DBS update service for owners/part owners of licensed vehicles be incorporated at Appendix C to the draft policy document.
2. That the introduction of an option to license vehicles for a period of 6 months in exceptional circumstances be incorporated into the draft policy document.

The Chair declared the motion **CARRIED**.

Meeting Closed: 6.43 pm

Chairman