

Minutes

Licensing Committee

21st May 2008



Present:

Councillors	Present	Councillors	Present
M J Banthorpe (Chairman)	Yes	T McArdle	Yes
J C Collar	Yes	A M Meyer	Yes
J G J Elliott	Yes	Mrs R O'Shea	Yes
J H G Finbow	Yes	Mrs J A Pell	Yes
Mrs S A Howell	Apologies	D E A Rice	Apologies
P J Hughes	Yes	A F Shelton	Yes
E R Lynch	Apologies	F Swallow	Yes
M Lynch	Apologies		

3 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

INFORMATION: There were no interests declared.

4 **MINUTES**

DECISION: That the minutes of the meetings of the Licensing Committee held on 9th and 21st April 2008 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5 **QUESTION TIME**

INFORMATION: There were no questions asked or statements made.

6 **GUIDANCE FOR THE LICENSING OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES – PROPOSED REVISION**

INFORMATION: Consideration was given to a report on the proposed revision of the Council's 'Guidance for the Licensing of Vehicles for Hackney Carriage or Private Hire'.

DECISION: That the proposed amendments to the Guidance as set out in the report be approved, subject to:-

- (1) The final paragraph of section 2 e) 'A fully charged and functional Fire Extinguisher31 March 1999)' being deleted.
- (2) The deletion of the reference to 'cigarette burns' in section 3 e).
- (3) Section 3 g) 'Headlining and Other Trim' being amended to read – 'All interior trim, including headlining, shall be clean, complete, properly fitted and also free from serious cuts and tears'.

(4) The reference in section 3 i) to paragraph '3 e)' being amended to '2 e)'.

7 REVIEW OF VEHICLE FARES

INFORMATION: The Committee considered a request from Braintree District Taxi Association for an amendment to current Hackney Carriage fares. The request sought an amendment to the 'yardage' rate. The amendment proposed that after the initial 0.4 mile flag fall of £2.60, the yardage be decreased from 117 yards to 111 yards. The Association had made the request in response to escalating fuel and maintenance charges over the past two years. The Committee was advised, that if approved, the amendment would increase the standard fare for a two mile journey from £5.00 to £5.14.

DECISION: That the Hackney Carriage fares yardage, following the initial 0.4 mile flag fall, be decreased from 117 yards to 111 yards.

8 VEHICLE LIVERY

INFORMATION: Members received a report on the possible introduction of additional livery for display on Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles. It was noted that this issue had been discussed in the past following the publication of the Taxi Best Practice Guide 2005.

The Guide recommended that local authorities should consider imposing a condition requiring improved signage for all licensed vehicles, particularly at the front and side of the vehicle. It was suggested that the signage should display the vehicle's identity, the name of the licensing local authority, the licence number and the number of passengers that the vehicle was licensed to carry.

The Committee was advised that the Council had initially consulted the Private Hire and Hackney Carriage trade about the proposal in October 2006 and copies of the representations received were attached to the Agenda. Samples of possible livery were available for inspection at the meeting.

Members supported the introduction of additional livery in order to provide improved protection and reassurance for members of the public.

DECISION: That the introduction of additional livery for display on Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles be supported and the Officers requested to determine a timetable for implementation.

9 HACKNEY CARRIAGE VEHICLES – UNMET DEMAND SURVEY

INFORMATION: The Committee considered a verbal report on the possibility of an unmet demand survey of Hackney Carriage vehicles being undertaken. Members agreed that deregulation of the trade would not be appropriate and that the Council's continued regulation of Hackney Carriages should be supported.

DECISION: That an unmet demand survey of Hackney Carriage vehicles be undertaken.

10 **APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO PANELS**

(1) **Braintree and District Taxi Association Liaison Panel**

DECISION: That Councillors M J Banthorpe, Mrs S A Howell, M Lynch, Mrs R O'Shea, Mrs J A Pell, D E A Rice and A F Shelton be appointed to the Braintree and District Taxi Association Liaison Panel for the 2008/09 Civic Year

(2) **Taxi Association Liaison Panel – Wheelchair Accessibility Sub-Group**

DECISION: That this Sub-Group be disbanded as it has completed its work.

(3) **Drivers' Panel**

DECISION: That all Members of the Licensing Committee be appointed to the Drivers' Panel.

The meeting commenced at 7.15pm and closed at 7.55pm.

M J BANTHORPE
(Chairman)