

Minutes of Licensing

Meeting Date: Tuesday, 1 November 2022, starting at 6.30 pm
Present: Councillor S Brunskill (Chair)

Councillors:

J Alcock	R Newmark
R Bennett	D O'Rourke
I Brown	S O'Rourke
S Farmer (arr 6.40pm)	J Rogerson (arr 6.40pm)
G Hibbert	G Scott
A Humphreys	R Walsh

In attendance: Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Solicitor

437 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for the meeting were received from Councillors S Hore and S Rainford.

438 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 September 2022 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

439 DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY, OTHER REGISTRABLE AND NON REGISTRABLE INTERESTS

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary, other registrable or non-registrable interests.

440 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

441 NATIONAL REGISTER OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER REVOCATIONS (NR3) POLICY

The Chief Executive submitted a report seeking Committee's approval of the adoption and use of a policy in respect of requests for information, disclosure of information and use of information as a result of an entry onto the National Register of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Driver Revocations (NR3).

Committee had been informed on 10 April 2018 of the introduction of a voluntary national database, which allowed Councils to record details of why a taxi or private hire driver's licence had been refused, revoked, or suspended, which enabled authorities to check new applicants against the register. Committee had authorised for the Council to sign up to the database, and the National Anti-Fraud Network (NAFN) which administered the register. The register and database had now been made mandatory by statute.

The NAFN had issued guidance on adoption of the register (NR3), and a template policy. The policy had been reviewed and customised to reflect application by the Council and was contained within the report.

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

- Formally approve the adoption of the Ribble Valley Borough Council policy in respect of requests for information, disclosure of information and use of information as a result of an entry on NR3.

442

TAXIS AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES DISABLED PERSONS ACT 2022

The Chief Executive submitted a report seeking Committee approve the amendments to taxi policies and procedures as a consequence of the provisions of the Taxi and Private Hire vehicles (Disabled Persons) Act 2022 ("Act").

The Act had come into force on 28 June 2022, and had made amendments to the Equality Act 2010, to ensure disabled people received help and could travel with dignity and confidence, and were protected against extra charges and fares. The government had issued statutory and non-statutory guidance on the implementation of these duties, the main provisions of which were set out in the report.

The matter had been raised with licenced drivers and vehicles at the Annual Taxi meeting in September, and a letter would be sent to all driver and operator licence holders to inform them of their additional duties, and remind them of their existing duties. A press release would also be sent to inform the public of their rights and where to access the list of disabled accessible vehicles.

It was also proposed that training be a requirement for all licence holders, upon renewal of a licence and for all new licence holders. The online training would be provided by the Blue Lamp Trust at a cost of £40. It was confirmed at the meeting that the Blue Lamp Trust also provided other online training for the Council, and attendees would undergo ID checks and have to remain on screen for the duration of the training.

The required changes to the Council's conditions of licence for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire, Drivers, Vehicles and Operators, Infringement Points Scheme and Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licence Policy were included with the report.

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

1. Approve and authorise and Head of Legal and Democratic Services to consult upon the proposed amendments as listed in report:
 - Conditions of licence for Private Hire Operators
 - Conditions of licence for Private Hire Driver's
 - Conditions of licence for Hackney Carriage Driver's
 - Private Hire Infringement Scheme
 - Hackney Carriage Infringement Scheme
 - Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licence Policy

2. Approve and authorise the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to consult upon the introduction of training on the Equality Duties to the requirement for a private hire and hackney carriage driver licence. Such training to be provided by the Blue Lamp Trust.

443

HACKNEY CARRIAGE SIGNAGE

The Chief Executive submitted a report informing Committee of issues in relation to signage for Hackney Carriages, and to seek approval on proposals that might be put out for consultation.

The report listed the Council's current conditions for Hackney Carriage vehicles, which did not allow for the provision of door signage. There was also no requirement in relation to signage imposed by either the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 or the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. There was a requirement for a plate to be displayed in each case, but otherwise appropriate signage could be determined by the licensing authority.

Corresponding conditions for signage for private hire vehicles licenced in the Ribble Valley were set out in the report. At the Annual Taxi meeting held on 21 September 2022, a private hire vehicle driver and operator commented upon the differences in signage. There was concern around difficulties for the travelling public, and the activities of Hackney Carriages licenced by other authorities operating in the Ribble Valley.

It was therefore proposed the conditions be amended to provide for the introduction of door signage for Ribble Valley licensed Hackney Carriages, which would enable the public to identify they were using a vehicle which conformed to local licensing requirements and conditions and were licensed to ply for hire in the Ribble Valley.

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

1. Approve the introduction of a requirement for door signage for Hackney Carriages reading "Ribble Valley Licensed Hackney Carriage".
2. Authorise the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to consult with licensees on amendment of condition 25 of the Hackney Carriage Vehicle conditions.

444

HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARES UPDATE

The Chief Executive submitted a report informing Committee of the outcome of advertisement of proposed Hackney Carriage fares, the response to the advertisement and actions taken.

Committee had approved the revised fares on 6 September 2022, and the changes had been publicised on 15 September 2022. The increase in fares had been welcomed by Hackney Carriage Drivers at the Annual Taxi Meeting on 21 September 2022. In the absence of objections, the new fares had been operating from 1 October 2022.

445

TAXI/PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE LICENSING OPERATION

The Chief Executive submitted a report informing Committee of the results of an inspection of licensed private hire and hackney carriage vehicles.

On 14 October 2022, the Council's Taxi Enforcement Officer had carried out the inspections, in a joint operation with the Police and the Vehicle and Operator Standards Agency. Of the 10 vehicles inspected, 8 were licensed by Ribble Valley Borough Council, and all 8 were found to be of the required standard.

The 2 vehicles licensed by other authorities were found to have defects, which resulted in the issue of prohibition notices. The authorities concerned had been notified.

446 MINUTES OF LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE

Committee received the minutes of the Licensing Sub-Committee meeting of 10 August 2022 and 22 September 2022.

447 MINUTES OF THE RIBBLE VALLEY EVENT SAFETY ADVISORY GROUP (ESAG)

Committee received the minutes of the Ribble Valley Event Safety Advisory Group (ESAG) meeting of 13 October 2022.

448 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

There were no reports from representatives on outside bodies.

449 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no items under this heading.

The meeting closed at 7.08 pm

If you have any queries on these minutes please contact the committee clerk, Rebecca Tait rebecca.tait@ribblevalley.gov.uk.