

ITEM 4a

Time commenced : 6.10 pm
Time finished : 7.30 pm

TAXI LICENSING AND APPEALS COMMITTEE 11 JULY 2007

Present: Councillor Dhamrait (Chair)

Councillors Baxter, Berry, Hird, Jennings, S Khan, Leeming, Lowe,
Redfern and Skelton

01/07 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jackson, Poulter and Rawson

02/07 Late items introduced by the Chair

There were no late items.

03/07 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

04/07 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 April 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

05/07 Request for Approval of the Peugeot/Cab Direct 'New E7' as a Hackney Carriage

The Committee considered a report from the Interim Director of Environmental Services that detailed a request for the Councils specification for Hackney Carriages to be amended to include the Peugeot/Cab Direct New E7.

David Dowbenko - Principal Licensing Officer - reported that the vehicle had been examined by Licensing Officers and a specified testing station and was found to meet all of the specification requirements apart from 'turning circle' and overall width and length, requirements that have previously been waived. The New Peugeot E7 is the replacement for the original E7 that was approved by the Council in September 2004.

The additional facilities in the vehicle for wheelchairs and disabled people and the fact that the vehicle exceeded the European emission standards were welcomed.

Resolved

- 1. to approve the Cab Direct/Peugeot 'New E7' for use as a Hackney Carriage within the City of Derby**
- 2. to request the Interim Director of Environmental Services to amend the Council's specification for Hackney Carriages to include the Peugeot/Cab Direct New E7.**

06/07 Taxi Licensing Section - Statistics for Licensing and Enforcement Activities - Quarter 1 2007

The Committee considered a report from the Interim Director of Environmental Services that provided details of performance and workload relating to taxi licensing activities. The Committee considered the statistics for January to March 2007.

David Dowbenko reported that the proportion of licences suspended was similar to the previous quarter and the team were still working to improve on the statistic. He also reported that he had seen the April and June 2007 statistics and they were encouraging.

Concerns were raised about the number of lighting defects on Private Hire Vehicles, 14 out of 17. Councillor Khan asked what the defects were and if they were deliberate attempts to ignore them.

Councillor Jennings asked if it would be effective to have a reporting procedure for serious and minor defects. David Dowbenko responded that they were all serious defects.

Councillor Baxter considered that more offenders should be brought before the Taxi Licensing Sub Committee. David Dowbenko replied that 18 months ago Members had agreed that if a vehicle was suspended twice within a 12 month rolling period the driver would be brought before Committee.

Resolved to note the report.

07\07 Revised Taxi Licensing Sub Committee Guidelines

The Committee considered a report from the Interim Director of Environmental Services that detailed the draft version of the revised Taxi Licensing Sub

Committee Guidelines. It was reported that at the Taxi Licensing and Appeals Committee on 25 April 2007 the Committee considered an amendment to Part 2 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 (c.57).

The Committee agreed to set up a cross party working group to examine the effects on existing taxi licensing guidelines for existing and new applicants. It was agreed that the guidelines required amendment to reflect a two stage procedure if Members consider that a suspension or revocation of a license was warranted.

Resolved

- 1. to approve the recommendations of the Cross Party Working Group as shown in the report**
- 2. to adopt the draft version of the revised Taxi Licensing Sub Committee Guidelines**
- 3. to note the comments and information obtained from the consultation process.**

08/07 Removal of 'Contract Hire' Exemption - The Road Safety Act 2006 (England and Wales) Order 2007

The Committee considered a report from the Interim Director of Environmental Services that detailed that Section 53 of the Road Safety Act 2006 would remove contract exemption from vehicles that are used for contract work.

It was reported that currently in England and Wales (outside London) a vehicle was exempt from the requirement to be licensed as a Private Hire Vehicle if it was used for contract work that lasted for more than seven days. The Section 53 provision that repeals the contract exemption comes into force in January 2008. Contact will need to be made with all those that would be affected by the changes. It was noted the Private Hire trade welcomed the changes.

Resolved

- 1. to note the information set out in the report**
- 2. to approve the work that the Taxi Licensing team intended to carry out to provide information about the changes in legislation and identify the potential increase in workload.**

MINUTES END