

Time commenced : 6.00 pm
Time finished : 6.20 pm

TAXI LICENSING AND APPEALS COMMITTEE
26 APRIL 2006

Present: Councillor Redfern (Chair)
Councillors P Berry, Dhamrait, Hird, Jackson, Lowe, Skelton and Turner

42/05 Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Brown.

43/05 Late Item Introduced by the Chair:

There were no late items.

The Committee thanked Councillor Brown for all of his hard work and hours dedicated to the Committee.

44/05 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

45/05 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2006 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

46/05 Taxi Licensing Policy Priorities for 2006/07

The Committee considered a report from the Director of Environmental Services that set out the policy priorities for the Taxi Licensing Section for 2006/07.

It was reported that following the review of the Taxi Licensing Section in 2002 significant changes and modernisations had taken place. Three priorities were identified from the improvement plan that still required attention:

- Knowledge test
- Enforcement priorities
- Review of the Licensing Sub Committee A guidelines

It was proposed that Licensing Managers focus on the three priorities, with other policy matters being deferred to a later date, unless considered urgent.

Resolved to agree the policy priorities for the Taxi Licensing Section for 2006/07.

4705 Review of Licensing Sub Committee Guidelines

The Committee considered a report from the Director of Environmental Services that set out a proposal for officers from the Licensing and Legal sections to

undertake a review of the Licensing Sub Committee guidelines, following concerns about the adequacy of the current guidelines.

It was reported that the Licensing Sub Committee guidelines were adopted by the Council in December 1993 and updated in December 2004.

It was noted that the implementation of the Criminal Records Bureau checks for Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Vehicle drivers' licences had resulted in more complex cases going to the Sub Committee. It was considered that the current guidelines were somewhat lacking in dealing with complex issues. Any changes to the guidelines would be bench marked with other authorities and best practice.

Resolved

- 1. to note the report**
- 2. to allow officers from the Licensing and Legal sections to undertake a review of the Licensing Sub Committee Guidelines.**

48/05 Taxi Licensing Enforcement Activities – October – December 2005

The Committee considered a report from the Director of Environmental Services that detailed a response to concerns raised at the previous meeting about the enforcement statistics relating to licensed vehicles for the period October to December 2005. The statistics for January to March 2006 were not available at the meeting however it was noted that indications had shown that they were similar to the previous quarter. In order to address the concerns raised the following actions were being taken:

- the Chair had met with both the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Trade, who had agreed to take concerns regarding the standard of vehicle maintenance and routine checks back to their colleagues.
- the Chair was in the process of sending out a letter to proprietors and drivers about the importance to maintain vehicles in a safe and road worthy condition.
- It was proposed that vehicle proprietors or drivers who regularly fail to maintain their vehicles to the required standard be referred to the Taxi Licensing Sub Committee, so that members could consider whether any additional action would be required. It was proposed that this would happen in every instance where a vehicle's licence was suspended on two or more occasions in a rolling 12 month period.

Resolved

- 1. to approve the actions taken**
- 2. to amend the enforcement protocol.**

MINUTES END