

Time commenced 6:17pm  
Time finished 7:54pm

**TAXI LICENSING AND APPEALS COMMITTEE**  
**19 FEBRUARY 2015**

**Present:** Councillor Jackson (Chair)  
Councillors Barker, Eldret, Hezelgrave, A Holmes, J Khan, Pegg,  
Poulter, Redfern, Skelton and Whitby

**18/14 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Hickson, Keith, Sandhu and Wright.

**19/14 Late Items to be Introduced**

There were no late items.

**20/14 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**21/14 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

correct The minutes of the meetings held on 4 December 2014 were agreed as record and signed by the Chair.

**22/14 Taxi Licensing Fees and Charges 2015-2016**

The Committee considered a report from the Strategic Director of Neighbourhoods on the taxi licensing fees and charges 2015-2016.

It was reported that these fees were reviewed annually, and were self-financing and non-profit making. It was noted that the aim was to set the fees at a level to recover the total costs incurred in providing the service.

The officer informed Members that the way in which the fees had been calculated had changed this year following the outcome of a legal case brought against Cardiff City and County Council. The detail ensued that separate accounts must be kept for each type of licence issued. It also determined that any surplus/deficit generated in any financial year for any one type of licence must be used to offset that particular type of licence in the following year.

**Resolved:**

1. To approve, subject to the consideration of representations, the proposed licence fees and charges for driver, vehicle and operator licences and other charges for 2015/16 as set out in the report;
2. To request the Service Director of Environment and Regulatory Services to advertise the proposed variation of fees;
3. To approve that the Chair of the Taxi Licensing and Appeals Committee and the Service Director, Environment and Regulatory Services to consider any representations received within the required period and to take appropriate action if required;
4. To approve the new licence fees to become effective from 1 April 2015 subject to the consideration of any representations received during the required period.

## 23/14 Taxi Licensing Administration and Compliance Activities – Quarter 3 2014/15

The Committee considered a report from the Strategic Director of Neighbourhoods on the activities the taxi licensing service had undertaken during quarter 3 of the 2014/15 financial year.

The Committee noted that officers provided a random sample of the information of the vehicles that were inspected by enforcement officers. It was requested that further detail be provided to Members at a future meeting on the details of the age of the whole fleet.

Members welcomed the information on the See Something, Say Something national campaign. The Committee felt that following the recent Rotherham report this was a key area to be focusing on. Further detail was requested by Members on the Rotherham report and its implications.

Concern was raised by Members with regards to third party drivers being used by private hire operators without the customer having been informed this would be the case. The Committee noted that this issue had been discussed previously and requested that officers carry out an exercise to confirm whether the revised condition of informing the customer was being adhered to. The Committee then raised further concern that third party drivers could be being used by private hire operators for contracts that the Council have, which could include the transportation of vulnerable children and/ or adults. It was noted that the stringent conditions approved by this Committee were to ensure that the safety of the public of Derby, which included those being transported under one of these contracts. The Committee requested that the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and the Cabinet Member for Adults and Health be written to expressing the concerns raised by Members and ask that the conditions of these contracts were investigated and reported back to the next Committee meeting.

**Resolved:**

1. To receive a report at a future meeting on the age of the current fleet of Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles;
2. To receive a summary report of the issues raised within the Rotherham report in relation to Taxi Licensing issues and an officers assessment in relation to the position in Derby;
3. That officers complete an exercise in relation to third party vehicles and confirm whether operators are informing passengers of their potential use at the time of booking;
4. That officers on behalf of the Committee write to the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and Cabinet Member of Adults and Health to express the concern of Members that contracts currently held by the Council in which third party drivers were used could potentially be not adhering to the licensing conditions approved by this Committee.

**24/14      Review of Private Hire Vehicle Specification – Spare Wheel Provision**

The Committee considered a report from the Strategic Director of Neighbourhoods on the review of the private hire vehicle specification in relation to spare wheel provision. It was reported that all vehicles must comply with the Council's specification for private hire vehicles. Currently it sets out that vehicles must have four road wheels and carry one spare wheel, jack and brace, all securely stored in a position not liable to damage passenger's luggage.

Members queried whether VOSA had been contacted for their professional opinion. The officer reported that when previous contact had been made with them, their response had been that they would accept the manufacturer's specification at the time of first registration.

The Committee questioned whether officers had asked comparator local authorities what their conditions were in relation this. It was noted by Members that this varied, but in the majority they allowed the manufacturer to determine the safety measures.

**Resolved to amend paragraph 8 of the Council's Specification for Private Hire Vehicles to state "The spare wheel and tyre must be identical to the size of the four road wheels unless the vehicle has been manufactured with a space saver."**

Councillors Barker, A Holmes, Poulter and Redfern requested that their vote against the resolution be recorded.

**25/14      Executive Use of Private Hire Vehicles**

The Committee considered a report from the Strategic Director of Neighbourhoods on the executive use of private hire vehicles. The results of the consultation exercise were reported and officers proposed the formation of a cross party working group to consider the comments, formulate a view and recommend an approach to deal with the matter.

Members noted that a request had been received from Oakwood Executive Cars Ltd whom operate as an executive car hire business for the requirement of signs and licence places to be displayed, to be reviewed.

**Resolved to approve the formation of a cross party working group to comprise of Councillors Jackson, Skelton, Barker and Wright, to meet at 2pm on Wednesday 18 March, to report back the matter at the next scheduled meeting in April 2015.**

## 26/14      Extension of Approved Testing Station Contract

The Committee considered a report from the Strategic Director of Neighbourhoods on the extension of approved testing station contract. It was reported that the current contract expired on 31 March 2015 but that contained within the contract was the option to extend it for a further twelve months.

Officers were involved in undertaking an exercise to review the current process for approving garages and were investigating a number of options.

**Resolved to note the contents of the report.**

MINUTES END