

Time commenced – 6.42pm
Time finished – 7.33pm

TAXI LICENSING AND APPEALS COMMITTEE
16 DECEMBER 2009

Present: Councillor Redfern (Chair)
Councillors Baxter, Berry, Jackson, Leeming, Poulter, Rawson,
Tuplin and Williams

21/09 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Hird, Hussain and Skelton.

22/09 Late items introduced by the Chair

There were no items.

23/09 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

**24/09 Confirmation of the minutes of the Taxi Licensing
and Appeals Committee held on Wednesday 14
October 2009**

The minutes of the meetings held on 14 October 2009 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair subject to Councillors Rawson and Williams being removed from the attendance list.

25/09 Use of Mobile Phones in Licensed Vehicles

The Committee considered a report from the Director of Environmental Services on Use of Mobile Phones in Licensed Vehicles. It was reported that the Licensing Section had received 23 complaints since April about licensed drivers using mobile phones and blue tooth appliances whilst conveying passengers.

Members noted that it was the Council's principal duty within its licensing role to protect the public.

It was stated that members felt that the proposed new set of standards should be incorporated in to the licence conditions rather than a voluntary agreement. It was noted that this would ensure that the conditions could be enforceable. The

legal officer reported that for Private Hire Drivers there would not be a problem in changing their conditions but for Hackney Carriage Drivers there would need to be a bye-law introduced.

Members raised concerns about the use of satellite navigational systems, it was felt that these caused drivers to take their eyes off the road. It was reported that drivers did have to pass a knowledge test but were not required to know every street within the city boundary and may also be contracted to carry out work outside of the city boundary. For the avoidance of doubt it was noted that these systems should be pre programmed before the journey commenced.

Members questioned the guidelines for other council vehicles as it was understood that they used radio communication systems. It was agreed that this information could be obtained from the relevant department and reported back to the Committee.

Members queried what other neighboring authorities licensing conditions were with regard to mobile phone use and whether it would be useful to carry out a benchmarking exercise. It was noted that this exercise could be carried out and reported back to the Committee.

Members welcomed the report but felt that further information was required before a decision could be reached as the conditions needed to be right for the safety of the passengers, which was paramount to the Committee.

Resolved:

- 1. To request the Director of Environmental Services to begin consultation with the hackney carriage and private hire trades on new rules relating to the use of mobile phones and other equipment in licensed vehicles;**
- 2. to report back to Committee in April 2010.**

26/09 Review of Sub Committee Guidelines

The Committee considered a report from the Director of Environmental Services on Review of Sub Committee Guidelines. It was reported that the guidelines were based upon Home Office model guidelines.

Members noted that it was important that these guidelines were regularly reviewed to ensure they remain relevant and up to date.

It was suggested that the members of the CPWG canvass their own group so that all members views could be accommodated.

Resolved:

- 1. To agree to review the Sub-Committee guidelines.**
- 2. To agree the membership of the CPWG as Councillors Redfern, Poulter and Tuplin .**

27/09 Taxi Marshals

The Committee considered a report from the Director of Environmental Services on Taxi Marshals. It was reported that Taxi Marshals have been working at key hackney carriage ranks in the city centre on Friday and Saturday evenings between 10.30pm and 3.30pm since April 2007.

Members noted that success of the Taxi Marshals scheme, along with Street Pastors who had recently been further recognised by a prestigious safety award for Derby.

The Committee welcomed the report and felt that the cost was good value for money considering the conflict that could arise if the Taxi Marshals were not in place.

Members congratulated the Chair for meeting with the Director and negotiating the funding.

Resolved to note the information set out in this report.

28/09 Minor Change to Licensing Sub Committee Administration

The Committee considered a report from the Director of Environmental Services on Minor Change to Licensing Sub Committee Administration. It was reported that following a recent incident at a Taxi Licensing Sub-Committee applicants will now be asked to read and sign the officer's hand written notes at the end of the interview. These notes will be available at Sub-Committee hearings for reference by members if required.

Resolved to note the report.

MINUTES END