

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE LICENSING AND REGULATORY COMMITTEE - 7 JULY 2016

SUBMITTED TO THE COUNCIL MEETING – 19 JULY 2016

(To be read in conjunction with the Agenda for the Meeting)

Present

Cllr Simon Inchbald (Chairman)	Cllr Peter Isherwood
Cllr Patricia Ellis (Vice Chairman)	Cllr Carole King
Cllr Maurice Byham	Cllr Robert Knowles
Cllr Kevin Deanus	Cllr Libby Piper
Cllr John Fraser	Cllr Bob Upton
Cllr Tony Gordon-Smith	

Apologies

Cllr Mike Hodge

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN (Agenda item 1.)

Cllr Simon Inchbald was confirmed as Chairman of the Licensing and Regulatory Committee for the Council Year 2016/17.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN (Agenda item 2.)

Cllr Patricia Ellis was confirmed as Vice-Chairman of the Licensing and Regulatory Committee for the Council Year 2016/17.

3. MINUTES (Agenda item 3.)

The Minutes of the last Meeting that took place on 18 April 2016 were confirmed and signed.

4. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS (Agenda item 4.)

There were apologies received from Councillor Mike Hodge.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Agenda item 5.)

There were no declarations of interest.

LICENSING ACT 2003 ITEMS

There were no items for discussion under this heading.

OTHER LICENSING ITEMS

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COUNCIL

There were no matters failing within this category.

6. SCHEME OF DELEGATION - VEHICLE PLATE EXEMPTIONS (Agenda item 9.)

The Committee was advised that under Section 48(6) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, private hire vehicle proprietors (licensees) were required to exhibit on their vehicles the vehicle licence plates provided by the Council.

The Committee noted that Section 75(1) of the Act enabled the Council, generally, to grant an exemption from the requirement to display licence plates on private hire vehicles on occasions specified by the authority or on an occasion, provided that the notice of exemptions was carried in the vehicle.

The Committee was advised that there was currently no delegation to officers to grant an exemption from the requirement to display a private hire plate which meant that they had to wait until the next Licensing (General Purposes) Sub-Committee for their application to be considered. This placed an additional burden on the Sub-Committee and a lengthy process for the driver.

The Committee noted that the applications were generally straightforward and it was therefore recommended that authority be delegated to officers to be able to grant plate exemptions in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Sub-Committee, subject to the receipt and consideration of supporting documentation and evidence from the application as to why it was essential to their chauffeur or executive business. The Committee therefore

RECOMMENDS that

- 1. authority be delegated to the Head of Policy and Governance, Democratic Services Manager, Licensing Manager, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Licensing (General Purposes) Sub-Committee, to grant an exemption from the requirement to display a vehicle licence plate on a private hire vehicle, and the Scheme of Delegation be amended accordingly.**

PART II - MATTERS OF REPORT

The background papers relation to the following items are as set out in the reports included in the original agenda papers.

7. TAXI POLICY - CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (Agenda item 8.)

The Committee received an update report on Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) training and future proposals for mandatory training regarding CSE and safeguarding for licensed Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers/operators. The Committee was asked to note the work being taken and to ask officers to investigate options for the provision of a training resource for all drivers to undertake and report back.

The Committee was advised that in the wake of recent CSE incidences and as a result of the attention that grooming and other forms of exploitation was now receiving, the Government had put an additional focus on combating CSE. Several recommendations had emerged from the various reports commissioned by the

Government into CSE. A key recommendation had been that Councillors should have a greater appreciation of issues around it. Furthermore, a recommendation highlighted the need of those with a responsibility for confronting and tackling CSE to be aware of the potential role that taxis could play in facilitating abuse, ensure that only those who were fit and proper held a licence and that there were robust procedures in place for dealing with complaints.

The Committee agreed that it was essential that licensed drivers were aware of the warning signs that could indicate when a passenger was at risk of trafficking or CSE, and that training was made available or had been undertaken to assist those in the taxi trade to deal with such scenarios and report them to the relevant authorities.

The Committee noted that last year all licensed Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers/Operators were invited to attend a Safe-guarding Course delivered by Surrey Police. Of 290 Licensees, 45 attended the course. Officers wanted to impose a mandatory course which was envisaged that new applicants would have to undertake as part of their application whilst existing drivers would be given a period of time to complete it.

RESOLVED that

1. the work currently being undertaken by officers on Child Sexual Exploitation be noted and officers report back with any proposed amendments to the Council's Taxi Licensing Policy in due course; and
2. officers be instructed to investigate options for the provision of a mandatory training resource for all drivers to undertake and report back to a future meeting.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 10.09am

Chairman