

LICENSING COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 5 OCTOBER 2020

PRESENT:- Councillors Abdul Amin, John Ballman, Alan Bishop, Steph Exell, Steve Heyes, Vinay Manro, Nick Martin, Stan Pajak, Imtiyaz Shaikh, Bazil Solomon, Caryl Sydney-Smith and Rahul Tarar.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Vera Tomlinson, Nadine Watts and Robert Wright.

7. Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded Members of the need to declare any known interests in any matters to be considered at the meeting. Councillor Abdul Amin made a non prejudicial declaration of interest in respect of Agenda Item No. 5 as he had a number of friends in the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire trade.

8. Minutes

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 17th September 2020, be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

9. Public Question Time

The Committee was advised of the contents of an email received from Mr John Stocker opposing relaxation of rules restricting private hire drivers being employed by more than one company on the grounds of public safety.

10. Review of the licensing policy in regard to allowing private hire licence holders to work for more than one operator at a time - Results of Consultation exercise

The Committee considered (a) a report of the Council's Licensing Manager setting out the responses received during the 12 week consultation period of the review of the private hire drivers licence known as the 'green form' and to consider any amendments to the policy and driver licence requirements, (b) advice received from the Committee's Legal Advisor, (c) the options available to the Committee as set out in paragraphs 4.1 to 4.3 of the report, (d) representation made to the Committee by from Messrs Desmond Broster, Andy Lucas, opposing changes to the current policy, and (e) answers to questions from the Council's Licensing Manager and comments of Councillors Abdul Amin, John Ballman, Alan Bishop, Steve Heyes, Vinay Manro, Bazil Solomon.

Resolved – That there be no change to the current policy that enables them to work for only one licensed operator at any time.

11. Review of licensing policy in regard to emissions standards for licensed vehicles, and the age at which vehicles are first licensed - Review of Consultation exercise

The Committee considered (a) a report of the Council's Licensing Manager Review of licensing policy in regard to emissions standards for licensed vehicles, and the age at which vehicles are first licensed, (b) advice received from the Committee's Legal Advisor, (c) the results of a consultation exercise undertaken with the private hire and hackney carriage trade, (d) representation made to the Committee by from Messrs. Andy Lucus supporting changes to the current policy, and (e) answers to questions from the Council's Licensing Manager and comments of Councillors Abdul Amin, John Ballman, Alan Bishop, Vinay Manro, Bazil Solomon and Rahul Tara.

Resolved – (1) That the amendment of the age policy so that the age at which vehicles are first licensed is lowered from 5 years to 4 years from 1st January 2021 be approved.

(2) That it be agreed that all vehicles currently licensed be required to meet the Euro 6 emissions standards by 31st December 2024, except that well maintained existing vehicles meeting mechanical standards be permitted to continue until the end of the upper age limits (as linked to the introduction of an emissions policy linked to the Swindon Air Quality Action Plan).

(3) That the wording of the revised policy be forwarded to all Members of the Committee be comment.