

PRIVATE HIRE AND HACKNEY CARRIAGE LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER 2010

PRESENT:- Councillors Junab Ali, John Ballman, Andrew Bennett (Chair), Janet Heenan, Richard Hurley, Kevin Parry (Vice-Chair) and Vera Tomlinson.

14. Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded Members of the need to declare any known interests in any matters to be considered at the meeting. No declarations were made.

15. Minutes

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 23rd August 2010, be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

16. Public Question Time

Mr Johnson noted that the economy was currently in poor shape and further noted that this together with decisions by the Council on the delimitation of Hackney Carriages and reduction of taxi rank space had resulted in financial problems for the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire trade. He asked if the Council would reintroduce a limit on Hackney Carriage for a three-year period to allow the trade to survive and move forward?

The Chair noted that the delimitation of plates was part of a national process and a survey to test demand would cost approximately £30,000 it would not be possible to reintroduce a limit on the number of plate issued. He noted that the number of Hackney Carriage plates issued since delimitation was 13 of which 4 were for replacement vehicles.

Mr. Brian Vann asked about changes to Hackney Carriage Specifications and was informed there were consultations currently being undertaken.

Mr. Linkhurst asked if the Sub-Committee was aware of how few disabled/wheelchair users used taxi ranks preferring to pre-book vehicles.

The Chair responded that he had met with the town's disability coalition and a number of issues had been raised including driver training on mobility issues.

Mr. Johnson asked about driver and passenger safety and the suitability of Hackney Carriage Vehicles and whether new vehicle models would need to meet current standards.

The Chair noted that these issues were currently under review and consultations on any new specifications would be held.

17. Exempt Items - Exclusion of Press and Public

That, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded during the discussion of the matters referred to in Items 6 and 7 of the Notice of the Meeting on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act. (Minutes 18 and 19 refer.)

18. Appeal against Refusal to issue a Private Hire Driver Licence

The Sub-Committee considered (a) a report of the Group Director, Environment, Regeneration and Community setting out an appeal against the decision by officers not to grant a Private Hire Drivers Licence, and (b) representations by the appellant in support of his appeal.

Resolved – That the appeal be upheld and the driver named in the report be issued a Private Hire Drivers Licence with immediate effect.

The Chair reminded the applicant that if felt aggrieved with the decision of the Sub-Committee he had a right of an appeal, which must be made to the Clerk to the Magistrates Court, Islington Street, Swindon, within twenty-one days.

19. Appeal against Refusal to issue a Private Hire Driver Licence

The Sub-Committee considered (a) a report of the Group Director, Environment, Regeneration and Community setting out an appeal against the decision by officers not to grant a Private Hire Drivers Licence, and (b) representations by the appellant, his representative in support of his appeal.

Resolved – That the appeal be refused and the driver named in the report be advised of his right to appeal the decision of this Committee to the Swindon Magistrates Court.

The Chair reminded the appellant that if felt aggrieved with the decision of the Sub-Committee he had a right of an appeal, which must be made to the Clerk to the Magistrates Court, Islington Street, Swindon, within twenty-one days.