

Licensing & Regulatory Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 20 February 2017, at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 4.00 pm.

Present: Councillor Illingworth (Chairman); Councillors Ashford, Bromley, Cain, Davies, Mrs Evetts, Mrs Falp, Gifford, Gill, Murphy, Mrs Redford, Mrs Stevens and Weed.

27. **Apologies and Substitutes**

- a) Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Gallagher and Miss Grainger; and
- b) Councillor Cain substituted for Councillor Mrs Cain and Councillor Bromley substituted for Councillor Quinney.

28. **Declarations of Interest**

Minute 30 – Record of Licensing & Regulatory Panel Hearings – 5 September 2016

Councillor Gifford declared an interest as a County Councillor because the application was from Shire Hall. He explained that he had no interest in the minutes.

29. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 31 October 2016 were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

The Committee Services Officer explained that an error had been discovered in the numbering of the minutes, which should have started from minute number 19, and not 16. The set to be signed by the Chairman had been corrected in readiness to be signed.

30. **Record of Licensing & Regulatory Panel Hearings**

The minutes of the Panel Hearings held on 14 June 2016 – 10am, 4 July 2016, 5 August 2016, 5 September 2016, 7 September 2016, 12 September 2016, 20 September 2016, 24 November 2016, 21 December 2016 were noted.

31. **Consideration of Hackney Carriage Vehicle Limitation Policy**

The Committee considered a report from Health & Community Protection which introduced Members to the findings of the Warwick District Council Hackney Carriage Unmet Demand Survey – Final Report (The Report) carried out by CTS Traffic and Transportation and to request approval to carry out a public consultation on the proposed options.

In 1974, Warwick District Council agreed to restrict the number of hackney carriage licences in its area. The main reason at the time was to ensure, as far as possible, that an adequate service was provided during off-peak hours. This position was considered again in 1999, when it was reported that there appeared to be an unmet demand for wheelchair accessible vehicles. Subsequently the

cap on numbers was rescinded and it was agreed that new licences would only be granted when there were facilities for carrying people with disabilities necessitating a wheelchair.

In 2003, following representation from taxi proprietors, Members were asked to consider whether to agree in principle, to reintroduce the limit on the number of hackney carriage licences and officers were requested to obtain quotes for a survey. However, no record could be found of any such survey having been commissioned.

In August 2015, the Council appointed CTS Traffic and Transportation to undertake a survey of demand for hackney carriages in Warwick District. The review was carried out between September 2015 and February 2016. The review methodology included on-street pedestrian surveys, consultation with drivers, rank surveys and communication with other stakeholders such as local business and police and town councils. The final report was submitted to the Head of Health & Community Protection in September 2016 and shared with the Drivers and Operators Forum in November 2016, the report was then uploaded to the Council website for public view.

The Chairman provided Members with a graph he had prepared using figures on page 21 of the CTS Traffic and Transportation survey, and this gave a very clear indication of the way the number of hackney carriages had tripled since 1994 to 2016.

Members noted that the drive to reduce the number of hackney carriages in the Warwick area and put a cap on numbers had come from the trade itself; therefore, they should not find a small increase in costs unreasonable. It must be made clear to the trade that they would be paying for the changes and a survey would be required every three years.

Members felt it important that the consultation make it plain to the public that the consultation was about hackney carriages and not private hire vehicles, and to give a clear definition of what constituted a hackney carriage because many people mistakenly believed that only vehicles which looked like London cabs were hackney carriages.

Resolved that

- (1) a six week consultation with stakeholders on the four options for hackney carriage licences (HCL) as outlined in "The Report" is approved.

The potential options are:

1. retain the status quo – no change to existing policy*;
2. return a limit at a fixed level*;
3. option 2 but also take opportunity to work to develop fleet*; and
4. return a limit but on the basis of no issue of any new plates (therefore number of plates reduces over time)*.

(See page 61, chapter 7. Summary and Conclusions and page 65, chapter 8. Recommendations: The Report).

(* page 64, The Report)

- (2) the consultation must make it explicit that it concerns hackney carriage vehicles only, and give a clear definition of what is a hackney carriage vehicle; and
- (3) the above to be undertaken with a view to a full report back to Licensing and Regulatory Committee at the earliest opportunity, which will confirm the outcome of the consultation (projected to be 30 May 2017) and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of applying a limit be noted.

32. **Public & Press**

Resolved that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item by reason of the likely disclosure of exempt information within paragraphs 1 and 2 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006,

33. **Record of Licensing & Regulatory Panel Hearings**

The confidential minutes of the Licensing & Regulatory Panel Hearings on 7 June 2016, 14 June 2016 – 2pm, 30 June 2016, 28 July, 2016, 9 August 2016, 23 August 2016, 4 October 2016, 18 October 2016, 3 November 2016, 14 December 2016 – 10am, and 29 December 2016 were noted.

(The meeting ended at 4.42 pm)