

LICENSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COMMITTEE

At a meeting of this Committee held on
19 February 2020

(Present) **Councillor Banks (Chairman)**
Councillors Bell, Cunliffe, Grunewald, J Jackson, P Jackson,
Jones, McQuade, Osundeko, Pearl and Tasker

(Not Present) **Councillors T Long, O' Keefe, Pritchard and Uddin**

46 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors T Long, O'Keefe and Uddin.

47 MINUTES

* **Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2019 be approved.**

48 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS

No Declarations of Interest from Members were made.

49 REVISION OF TAXI LICENSING CONDITIONS FOR DRIVERS, VEHICLES AND OPERATORS TO CONSULT WITH THE TRADE

A report was provided to inform Members of proposed revisions to the Taxi Licensing Conditions and to request a four-week consultation into the proposed changes with the licensed trade.

Members were provided with contextual information and acknowledged the drive from the City Region to align conditions and policies for taxi licensing to maintain standards. The proposal in the report was the continuation of this important work. The conditions in each area were not identical but followed a similar common standard.

In 2018 this Committee implemented revised vehicle conditions which was the first of the conditions to be considered. Members were informed that model conditions had now been drafted by officers for both Licensed Drivers and Private Hire Operators.

As the vehicle conditions were introduced over two years ago, these had also been amended, mainly to include the proposed mandatory use of the 'gold standard' vehicle signage.

It was reported that Private Hire Operator conditions required the most attention and the new Statutory Guidance for Taxi Licensing which was due to be implemented soon would have a focus on this area. In anticipation of this, new conditions had been drafted to tighten up procedures, aiming to improve how operators interacted with the Licensing Authority.

The main changes to these conditions were outlined in the report. It was also reported that previously some Operators had been unstructured in terms of complaint reporting, record keeping of complaints and any action. It was considered that this area required a great deal of improvement.

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Further to this, the vehicle door signage could be confusing with a number of telephone numbers being advertised, some of which did not always appear on the licence. This was further complicated by the use of 'apps'. The new conditions allowed for the display of either a telephone number or an app, plus a requirement that any telephone publicised either by the vehicle or any advertising media, must be part of the Private Hire Operating Licence within a set template.

Members were advised that Licensed Driver Conditions had been revised to avoid discrepancies in the use of language. Licenced Vehicle Conditions has also been revised to include the gold standard badging of vehicles following the 'Know Your Ride' Campaign and would become mandatory in their usage

It was explained that the proposed changes would require consultation with the trade and a 4-week consultation period was proposed, following which the results of the consultation would be presented back to this Committee.

The proposed revised Private Hire Operator Conditions, revised Licensed Driver and Licensed Vehicle Conditions and the proposed artwork for display of Operator signage were attached to the report at Appendices A- D respectively.

* **Resolved that:**

- (1) **the information presented within the report concerning a revision of the Taxi Licensing Conditions be noted; and**
- (2) **the Licensing Manager be authorised to carry out a four-week consultation into the proposed changes with the licensed trade and report any responses back to this Committee prior to a decision upon implementation.**

50 **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

* **Resolved that the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items for the reason stated:**

<u>Minute</u>	<u>Reason (under Local Government Act 1972)</u>
51	Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) Para 3 of schedule 12a.

51 **APPLICATION FOR A NEW HACKNEY CARRIAGE/PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER'S LICENCE (REF: BD)**

A report was presented to the Committee in relation to an application for a new Hackney/Private Hire Driver's Licence (Ref: BD).

In making their application on 11 November 2019, the Applicant declared two traffic convictions on the relevant section of the application.

A DVLA record check on 11 November 2019 confirmed the two reported offences dated 13 February 2019 and 8 April 2019. The Applicant had six live penalty on their DVLA licence which had generated an automatic referral to this Committee.

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Copies of the relevant section of the application and Pre-Committee Referral Interview Notes were attached to the report at Appendices A and B respectively.

The Applicant was in attendance and was given every opportunity to present their case to the Committee and answer questions before being invited to sum up their case.

The Applicant and Licensing Officers then left the meeting whilst the Committee deliberated in private with the Council's Solicitor.

All parties then returned to the meeting and were informed of the Committee's decision.

- * **Resolved that the Application for Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Driver's licence (Ref: BD) be granted for a period of one year, as the Committee was satisfied that the applicant was a 'fit and proper person' to hold a driver's licence pursuant to Section 51 and 59 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions Act) 1976 and the Council's Policy.**

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