

**WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**LICENSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE**

**THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC CENTRE, STOURPORT-ON-SEVERN**

**17TH JULY 2006 (10.30AM)**

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**PRESENT:**

Councillors: J Baker (Chairman), G W Ballinger, J-P Campion, N J Desmond, P Dyke, G H Eeles, B T Glass, Mrs A T Hingley, M B Kelly, D R Sheppard.

**OBSERVERS:**

There were no members present as observers

**LIC.13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: S J M Clee (Vice-Chairman), Mrs P V Hayward

**LIC.14 APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTES**

Councillor N J Desmond was a substitute for Councillor S J M. Clee

**LIC.15 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

No declarations of interest were made.

**LIC.16 MINUTES**

**DECISION:**

**The minutes of the meeting held on 5th June 2006 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

**LIC.17 REQUEST TO CHANGE DETAIL CONTAINED WITHIN THE HACKNEY CARRIAGE/PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE DRIVER'S BADGE**

A report was considered from the Head of Planning, Health and Environment regarding a request received from Mr. R.K. South that a driver's name should not be displayed on the Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Vehicle Driving Licence issued by the Council.

Mr. South was present at the meeting and addressed the Committee with his reasons for this request. He expressed concern that members of the public could easily trace taxi drivers from the names on their badges and that as he worked every night his family could well be vulnerable because of this. He had recently had a threat made against him when someone found out where he lived. He was of the opinion that the Driver Number and a photograph should be sufficient to identify him.

The Committee gave full consideration to this request and took into account the fact that the name of each Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Vehicle driver is entered on a register that is available for public inspection.

**DECISION:**

**The current format of the Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Driving Licence containing the full name of the Licence holder, be supported and, consequently no recommendation be made to the Cabinet to change this policy at the present time, but that a further review be carried out in 2008.**

**LIC.18 WYRE FOREST TAXI LIAISON GROUP MEETING FRIDAY 2<sup>ND</sup> JUNE 2006**

A report was considered from the Head of Planning, Health and Environment regarding a request by Representatives of the Wyre Forest Taxi Trade. At the last meeting of the Wyre Forest Taxi Liaison Group on the 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2006, a review was requested of the new licensing conditions for hackney carriages and private hire vehicles which came into force in the District on the 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2005. The following requests were made:-

- a) All existing licensed saloon cars should be subject of a moratorium for seven years.
- b) The silver livery should apply to new entrants to the trade only.
- c) The Council maintains the policy of less than two years as a lower age limit and seven years as an upper age limit for saloon cars which are renewed.
- d) All wheelchair accessible vehicles have an upper age limit of ten years, in line with proposed London Carriage Office guidelines.

A further letter was received from Mr. T. Owen, Regency Vehicle Hire on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2006. This letter on behalf of Regency Vehicle Hire only, asks the Council to give a 12 months moratorium (Oct 06 – Oct 07) on the full introduction of new hackney carriage licence conditions, whilst further negotiations could take place.

A letter was circulated at the meeting from P & P Central Taxis supporting

the above request.

Mr. Trevor Owen, proprietor of Regency Vehicle Hire, was present at the meeting and spoke in support of the request for a review of the licensing conditions. Mr. Owen informed the Committee that he wished for the following request to be withdrawn:

“All existing licensed saloon cars should be the subject of a moratorium for seven years”.

Mr. R.K. South, Wyre Forest Taxi Drivers Association, spoke in support of the requests made by the Wyre Forest Taxi Liaison Group.

Mr. G. Bianco, P&P Central Taxis, declined to speak on the subject.

The Committee fully considered the request and in the light of the deregulation plan allowing a phased introduction lasting until 2013 felt that any further phasing would not appear to be justified. However, the proposal in recommendation 2 below was supported as it complemented London Carriage Office guidelines.

#### **RECOMMENDED to CABINET**

- 1. The silver livery should apply to all new and replacement hackney carriage vehicles.**
- 2. Approval be given to the proposal that wheelchair vehicles have an upper age limit of ten years to accord with London Carriage Office Guidelines as opposed to the current seven years.**
- 3. The request from Mr. T. Owen, Regency Vehicle Hire for a twelve month moratorium on new licensing conditions for hackney carriage vehicle conditions be refused.**

#### **LIC.19 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

##### **DECISION:**

**Under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of “Exempt Information” as defined in paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.**

LIC.20 **MINUTES**

**DECISION:**

**The exempt minutes of the meeting held on 5th June 2006 be confirmed as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.**

**The meeting ended at 11.45 a.m.**