

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

LICENSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE

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

FRIDAY, 8TH OCTOBER 2010 (10.30AM)

Present:

Councillors: J Baker (Chairman), A J Buckley, J Greener, I Hardiman, P B Harrison, M B Kelly, M Price, D R Sheppard and N J Thomas.

Observers:

There were no members present as observers.

LIC.48 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P V Hayward (Vice-Chairman), H E Dyke and B T Glass.

LIC.49 Appointment of Substitutes

Councillor I Hardiman was appointed as a substitute for Councillor P V Hayward. Councillor N J Thomas was appointed as a substitute for Councillor B T Glass.

LIC.50 Declaration of Interests

No declarations of interest were made.

LIC.51 Minutes

Decision: The minutes of the meeting held on 20th August 2010 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

LIC.52 Application to change the Licence Conditions relating to Mechanical Inspection of Taxis operating within the district of Wyre Forest

The Committee received a report from the Director of Planning & Regulatory Services which asked the Committee to consider an application from the Taxi Trade to reduce the number of annual mechanical inspections required by Hackney Carriages/Private Hire Vehicles operating within the district of Wyre Forest.

Members were informed that one of the reasons for reducing the number of mechanical inspections was because of the associated workload it put on officers to fix appointments. Secondly the technicians in the Council garage in Green Street, Kidderminster who undertook the tests were under pressure because there was not the capacity to carry out the required work.

Members were informed that once the consultation had been carried out and Stakeholders agreed with the recommendation, this would be presented to Council for approval.

Agenda Item No. 4

Members were advised that the government were currently looking at national conditions with respect to taxis and private hire vehicles.

The Council was well ahead of other council's on the work they had done with regard to the way it handled its taxi fleet.

In response to a Members' question, it was confirmed that a vehicle would have 2 mechanical tests and on the second test, the car would have to be driven on and off the ramp for the MOT to be carried out.

Members were advised that national guidelines were followed regarding mechanical testing and MOTs and it was likely that the taxi test was more rigorous because of the conditions attached to the licence in terms of operation and fare meters.

Decision:

- 1. A period of consultation commence with Stakeholders, to establish if the Council should change its policy to reduce the number of mechanical inspections required for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles operating within the district of Wyre Forest.**
- 2. If the consultation was agreed, then a recommendation would be made to Council for approval for a change in the policy.**

LIC.53

Application to begin a period of public consultation with a view to recommending a change to the colour of Private Hire Vehicles operating within the district of Wyre Forest

The Committee received a report from the Director of Planning & Regulatory Services which asked the Committee to consider an application from the taxi trade to change the colour of Private Hire Vehicles operating within the district of Wyre Forest.

It was confirmed to Members that the consultation on the colour from red to black of the Private Hire Vehicles and the number of mechanical inspections of taxis could be carried out at the same time.

Members were informed that if the recommendation was agreed, once the consultation had been carried out and Stakeholders were in agreement with it, then the recommendation be presented to Council for approval.

Members were informed that the lead time period for taxis to change vehicles was granted for 7 years.

Decision:

- 1. A period of consultation should commence with Stakeholders with a view to recommending to Council that a change of policy is required regarding the colour of Private Hire Vehicles operating within the district of Wyre Forest.**

- 2. If the consultation was agreed, then a recommendation would be made to Council for approval for a change in colour to Private Hire Vehicles operating within the district of Wyre Forest.**

LIC.54 Exempt Information

Decision: Under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of “Exempt Information” as defined in paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 5 and 7 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.

LIC.55 Application for the Grant of a Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Driver’s Licence

The Committee received a report from the Director of Planning & Regulatory Services which asked the Committee to consider an application for the grant of a Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Vehicle Driving Licence.

The applicant was in attendance at the meeting and handed in two character witness statements. Members were informed that the application had been signed and dated as a true record.

The Licensing Officers withdrew from the meeting whilst the Committee took a decision.

Decision: The Committee has decided not to grant the application for a hackney carriage/private hire driver’s licence.

The meeting ended at 11.29 am.