



Minutes of **Licensing and Public Safety Committee**

Meeting date **Wednesday, 4 October 2023**

Members present: Councillor Matthew Lynch (Chair) and Councillors Aaron Beaver, Mark Clifford, Margaret France, Gordon France, Terry Howarth, Hasina Khan, Roy Lees, Samantha Martin, Dedrah Moss, Debra Platt, Jean Sherwood, Craige Southern and Neville Whitham

Officers: Tracy Brzozowski (Customer Services Manager (Enforcement)), Tasneem Safdar (Legal Services Team Leader), Sushma Nayee (Solicitor) and Nina Neisser-Burke (Democratic and Member Services Officer)

Apologies: Councillor Michelle Le Marinel (Councillor Aaron Beaver in attendance as substitute)

A video recording of the public session of this meeting is available to view on YouTube [here](#).

23.L.1 Declarations of Any Interests

There were no declarations of any pecuniary interests.

Councillor Aaron Beaver advised that he was a taxi driver in a neighbouring authority. As he did not have a disclosable pecuniary interest and was entitled to remain in the room to participate.

23.L.2 Public Questions

There were no public questions.

23.L.3 Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 4 October 2022 of Licensing and Public Safety Committee

Resolved:

That the minutes of the last meeting be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.

23.L.4 Minutes of the General Licensing Sub-Committees

a Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 21 September 2022 of General Licensing Sub-Committee

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.

b Minutes of meeting Monday, 27 March 2023 of General Licensing Sub-Committee

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.

23.L.5 Minutes of the Licensing Act 2003 Sub-Committees

a Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 18 October 2022 of Licensing Act 2003 Sub-Committee

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.

b Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 2 November 2022 of Licensing Act 2003 Sub-Committee

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.

c Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 23 November 2022 of Licensing Act 2003 Sub-Committee

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.

d Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 15 March 2023 of Licensing Act 2003 Sub-Committee

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.

e Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 5 April 2023 of Licensing Act 2003 Sub-Committee

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.

f Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 9 May 2023 of Licensing Act 2003 Sub-Committee

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.

g Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 24 May 2023 of Licensing Act 2003 Sub-Committee

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.

h Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 2 August 2023 of Licensing Act 2003 Sub-Committee

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.

i Minutes of meeting Thursday, 3 August 2023 of Licensing Act 2003 Sub-Committee

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.

23.L.6 Consideration of Amendment to Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy

Tracy Brzozowski, Customer Services Manager (Enforcement) presented the report of the Chief Executive which advised the Committee that a request to make an amendment to the Council's current licensing policy had been received from the Trade. The Committee were to determine whether such an amendment be made.

The Committee noted that when the Private Hire and Taxi Policy was approved by the Licensing and Public Safety Committee in 2017, the policy included new requirements

for all vehicles relating to emissions standards, namely, to meet a minimum Euro 5 emissions standard. Section 21 of the Vehicle Type Conditions states:

'd) Require all existing vehicles to comply from 1st January 2024'.

Following the impact of Covid restrictions and the cost of living crisis, correspondence was received from the Trade Association on behalf of its members which requested that the implementation of this policy be delayed by 12 months and the paragraph above be amended to state;

'd) require all existing vehicles to comply from 1st January 2025'.

The Customer Services Manager (Enforcement) was satisfied that legitimate considerations had been presented by the Trade regarding the ability of some licence holders to replace their vehicles in order to comply with the current policy requirements. The amendment would also only have a small negative impact on the council's Air Quality and sustainability targets.

Members noted that the vast majority of the licensed fleet comprised of vehicles which either met or exceeded the Euro 5 emissions standard. However, it had been identified that eight private hire vehicles and four hackney carriage vehicles did not meet this standard. Each of these four hackney carriage vehicles was a wheelchair accessible vehicle. The Committee recognised the significant need for wheelchair accessible vehicles in the borough, and it was considered that the risks associated with not granting the extension would negatively impact the availability of wheelchair accessible vehicles.

The Committee discussed the option of putting a deadline on this extension to not exceed 12 months, on the basis that the Euro 5 rating had been in policy for a substantial period of time and the potential age of vehicles to meet this standard. Reassurances were provided that taxis in the borough were subject to testing twice a year and processes were in place for vehicles that did not meet the required standard. Overall, Members agreed that putting a deadline on the 12-month extension would be unfavourable due to the current state of flux and uncertainty.

Members understood the challenges faced by the Trade and therefore supported the request for an extension.

Resolved (Unanimously):

- 1. To consider the contents of the report and any other comments made,**
- 2. To grant an extension to the Euro 5 Emissions requirement in the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy for a period of 12 months until 1 January 2025.**

Chair

Date