

Minutes of **Licensing and Public Safety Committee**

Meeting date **Wednesday, 10 February 2021**

Members present: Councillor Matthew Lynch (Chair), Councillor Margaret France (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Terry Brown, Val Counce, Mark Clifford, Jean Cronshaw, Gordon France, Anthony Gee, Danny Gee, Tom Gray, Hasina Khan, Roy Lees, Laura Lennox and Sheila Long

Officers: Nathan Howson (Enforcement Team Leader (Licensing)), Tracy Brzozowski (Customer Services (Enforcement)), Carl Gore (Enforcement Officer (Licensing and Empty Properties)), Jodi Ingram (Solicitor) and Matthew Pawlyszyn (Democratic and Member Services Officer)

Apologies: Councillor Joyce Snape and Councillor Steve Holgate

21.L.1 Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 19 February 2020 of Licensing and Public Safety Committee

Decision: The minutes of the meeting Wednesday, 19 February 2020 were approved as a correct record.

21.L.2 Declarations of Any Interests

No interests were declared.

21.L.3 Public Questions

No public questions were submitted.

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

There have been no meetings of the General Licensing Sub-Committee.

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

a Minutes of meeting Friday, 10 July 2020 of Licensing Act 2003 Sub-Committee

Decision: The minutes of the Friday 10, July 2020 Licensing Act 2003 Sub-Committee were approved as a correct record.

b Minutes of meeting Thursday, 1 October 2020 of Licensing Act 2003 Sub-Committee

Decision: The minutes of the Thursday 1, October 2020 Licensing Act 2003 Sub-Committee were approved as a correct record.

c Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 13 October 2020 of Licensing Act 2003 Sub-Committee

Decision: The minutes of the Tuesday 13, October 2020 Licensing Act 2003 Sub-Committee were approved as a correct record.

21.L.6 Consideration of the Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards, issued by the Department for Transport

Nathan Howson, Enforcement Team Leader presented the report.

Highlighted at paragraph 7, the statutory standards had been issued which helped inform licensing authorities how to exercise their functions so as to protect children and vulnerable individuals from harm.

Consultation on these Statutory Standards ran 12 February 2019 to 22 April 2019, consideration of responses and guidelines by the Department for Transport were released July 2020.

The standards found in Appendix contained recommendations for taxi and private hire which included;

- criminality checks for drivers,
- information sharing with relevant and appropriate authorities and cooperation with the police where necessary
- complaint handling,
- safeguarding and awareness,
- CCTV in licensed vehicles and
- regulations of booking and dispatch staff.

Members asked if there were any issues that directly related to Chorley.

Nathan explained that there were some instances where the policy of Chorley Council matched the guidance or went further, but there were also instances where a change of policy was required to comply with the guidelines. There would be a process of amending policy and consulting with the trade before proposals were presented to Members for a decision. CCTV was highlighted as the guidance does not mandate the implementation of CCTV but recommended it, there were questions around the legality of mandatory CCTV in vehicles related to the data controller and audio recordings. In order for the council to consider imposing CCTV, Chorley Council would have to demonstrate that it was an appropriate response to a local issue, and then a policy would need to be developed that proportionally responded to the local need or issue.

Members believed that CCTV would be beneficial for both drivers and passengers. It was confirmed that the passenger did not need to be verbally informed of the CCTV, signage was sufficient.

Members asked if Licensing would be a shared service. Nathan informed Members that Chorley and South Ribble had a shared Director overseeing both Licensing departments, but the services themselves were not shared and licensing functions and decisions would not be crossed over between Chorley and South Ribble.

Decision: The Report was noted.

21.L.7 Any urgent business previously agreed with the Chair

Nathan Howson, Enforcement Team Leader updated Members of the committee of the work completed over the previous 12 months, and that Licensing was now under the Directorate of Jonathan Noad.

Due to Covid-19, it was understood that the trade had struggled, and it was agreed that instead of medicals being undertaken for the next 12 months, self-declaration of medical health was accepted providing there had been no change to health. This assisted to ease the backlog and prevented overburdening local GP surgeries.

At the Licensing Liaison Panel prior to the Licensing and Public Safety Committee, it was heard that Covid19 had all but eliminated trade for private hire cars other than school contracts and hospital appointments.

Councillor Steve Holgate provided an outline to incentivise the trade to go greener and explored targets.

Members asked if taxis received business support funding similar to pubs and clubs, and Councillor Gordon France felt that due to the current impact of Covid-19 had on the trade, now was not the time to focus on green vehicles.

Chair

Date