

LICENSING COMMITTEE
Wednesday 14th June 2017

PRESENT – *Councillor John Wright, (in the Chair) Ali, Brookfield, Davies, Gee, Humphrys, Hussain I, Hussain S, Pearson and Vali.*

RESOLUTIONS

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed Members to the meeting and received apologies from Councillors Casey.

2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 6th December 2016

The minutes of the meeting held on 6th December 2016 were submitted.

The Committee was informed that the Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Policy had been delayed due to the Election and that it would be released for publication once approved by the Leader in July.

RESOLVED- That the minutes of the meeting held on 6th December 2016 be approved as a correct record.

3. Minutes of the Licensing Act Sub-Committee held on 7th March 2017

The minutes of the meeting held on 7th March 2017 were submitted.

The Committee was informed that with respect to Item 2 in the Minutes, Application for a Premises Licence – Cherry Tree Cricket Club, that objections of the residents had been reviewed and there had been no serious issues.

RESOLVED- That the minutes of the meeting held on 7th March 2017 be approved as a correct record.

4. Declarations of Interest in items on this agenda

There were no Declarations of Interest received.

5. Hackney Carriage Unmet Demand Survey

The Committee were asked to consider the findings of the latest Hackney Carriage Vehicle Unmet Demand Survey conducted by Ian Millership – CTS Traffic and Transport, a survey commissioned to determine the number of licences required to meet any identified unmet demand in Blackburn with Darwen.

The last survey had been conducted in 2013 and further to a consultation with the Taxi Forum it was agreed to commission a further unmet demand study. It was noted that the cost of the survey would be borne by the Hackney Carriage

Vehicle owners which would be recovered through licence fees over the coming three years.

The findings of the survey showed that there was no significant unmet demand and it was agreed to retain the existing policy on restricting Hackney Carriage licenses to 70.

RESOLVED – That the Committee accept the findings of the survey.

6. Update on the work of Public Protection and the Environmental Health Service

The Committee were updated on the Council's Public Protection and Environmental Health Service during the period December 2016 to April 2017.

During this period, 3 operations for under age sales test purchasing were carried out with the help of under age volunteers and during this period, there had been 30 attempts to buy alcohol from off licenses across Blackburn with Darwen with alcohol having been sold on 2 occasions.

The Committee were also informed that all new applicants for hackney carriages and private hire driving licenses were given safeguarding awareness training before being issued with a badge. Training for existing drivers was being rolled out with the aim to have all drivers trained within the current year.

There had been 4 evening taxi safety operations in Blackburn with Darwen which were joint operations with the Police, Licensing enforcement officers and a vehicle examiner from the Council's motor vehicle service station. 117 vehicles in total were stopped for vehicle safety and driver licenses checks, with 11 vehicles identified as having tyre faults.

Since the introduction of the Penalty Point Scheme in January 2016, 41 penalty point notices had been issued with 3 drivers having appealed. None of these appeals were upheld. One private hire company did reach the trigger of 20 points for having vehicles with faulty tyres however it was agreed that they would continue to be monitored as the company had brought evidence of improvement.

Further to the Immigration Act that came into force on 1 December 2016, the Committee were informed that the Licensing team were now checking on an applicant's right to work in the UK. This applied for both taxi and alcohol licenses. It was noted that employers were also required to carry out relevant checks.

13 Members of staff from both on and off licenses attended a Responsible Alcohol Retailing Course. Feedback received from the attendees was helpful and positive.

The Committee were informed that a scrutiny update was available on the House of Lords Select Committee's findings of the Licensing Act 2003. One of

the recommendations in the report included bringing planning and licensing under one regime. Licensing officers would be attending an event being held by the Institute of Licensing which would be looking at the report's recommendations and findings from this event would be provided at a future meeting.

The Committee were provided with figures on work carried out by officers in the Licensing Team from 1st December 2016 to 5th June 2017. The Chair thanked all officers involved for their hard work.

The Chair asked that the Penalty Point Scheme be reviewed this year as concerns had been raised about the effectiveness of the scheme.

RESOLVED – That the Committee note the updates contained in the report.

7. Minutes of the Licensing Sub Committees

The Sub-Committee received the proceeding of the following Sub Committees-

- General Licensing Sub-Committee held on 17th January 2017**
- General Licensing Sub-Committee held on 7th February 2017**
- General Licensing Sub-Committee held on 14th February 2017**
- General Licensing Sub-Committee held on 7th March 2017**
- General Licensing Sub-Committee held on 14th March 2017**
- General Licensing Sub-Committee held on 11th April 2017**

RESOLVED - that the proceedings of the Sub Committees as outlined above be approved.

The Chair urged Members to attend all Licensing Committees including Sub-Committees and reminded Councillors that it was their responsibility to find a suitable substitute.

The Panel also agreed that it was easier to read reports via hardcopy rather than electronically using tablets. The Chair informed the Committee that he would consult with the Executive Member for Resources with regards to a dispensation to print paper copies of the reports.

Signed.....

Chair of the meeting at which the Minutes were signed

Date.....