

LICENSING COMMITTEE
Tuesday, 29 October 2019

PRESENT – Councillors, , Batan, Gee, Groves, Salton, Akhtar, Rawat and Taylor.

OFFICERS - Denise Andrews, Shelagh Lyth and Donna Riding

RESOLUTIONS

27 **Welcome & Apologies**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Councillors Brookfield, Casey, I Hussain and Pearson

28 **Declaration of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest received.

29 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 16th July 2019 were approved as a correct record and were duly signed by the Chair.

30 **Licensing Policy 2020**

Members were updated on the outcome of the consultation undertaken regarding the revision of the Licensing Act 2003 Statement of Licensing Policy.

The Statement of Licensing Policy would become the Council's policy with respect to dealing with applications for licences and those holding licences to sell alcohol or provide regulated entertainment within the Borough.

The Committee were informed that the Licensing Authority, on behalf of the Council, had consulted on a revised Policy Statement for the Licensing Act 2003. The consultation lasted from 9th August 2019 until 28th October 2019.

Three responses had been received and were shared with the Committee. It was noted that the Officers had reviewed the responses and taken necessary action.

Members were asked to note the report and put forward any recommendations they had for inclusion in the revised policy.

Approval of the policy was deemed a key decision and would be considered by Full Council at the meeting scheduled for 23rd January 2020.

RESOLVED – That the Committee noted and approved the report for it to be considered by Full Council on 23rd January 2020.

31 **Update on the work of Public Protection and Environmental Health**

Service

Members were updated on the work of the Council's Public Protection and Environmental Health Services (PPS) where there was a connection with businesses and persons who required a licence from the Council. It also provided an update for Members on national policy changes and proposals affecting licencing work.

Taxi Safety Operation

In August 2019 a joint taxi safety operation was undertaken in Hyndburn with officers from Hyndburn District Council, the police and VOSA.

6 vehicles licensed by Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council were stopped and checked. Only minor issues were found.

Routine work carried out

Key figures on work carried out by members of staff working in the Licensing Team from 1 January 2019 to 30 September 2019 were shared as:

Vehicle licences processed	962
Driver licences processed	454
Licensing Act licences processed	163
Inspections of premises/vehicles carried out	176

Clean Air

The Air Quality (Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles Database) (England and Wales) Regulations 2019 came into force on 1st May 2019. They require all licensing authorities in England and Wales to send to a central portal on a minimum weekly basis certain information about the taxis and PHVs that they have licensed. This would include the Vehicle Registration Mark, the start and expiry date of the vehicle licence, whether the vehicle was a taxi or PHV, the name of the licensing authority, the licence plate number and an indication of whether it was a wheelchair accessible vehicle.

There was to be a phased introduction in readiness for the start dates for the first charging "Clean Air Zones" in Leeds and Birmingham expected in 2020.

Fixed Odds Betting Terminal Stakes

Members heard that on 1st April 2019 the reduction of the maximum stakes on fixed odd betting terminals (FOBT) came into effect.

The reduction in maximum stakes saw stakes reduced from £100 to £2.

Taxi statistics for 2018/19 released

Members were updated on the statistics released on taxi and private hire vehicle (PHV) in England show at the end of March 2019. It was noted that figures are updated every year through surveying each licensing authority in England and Wales.

Licensing Act 2003 – Councillor’s Handbook

The Committee were informed that the Local Government Association had updated its Councillors Handbook about the Licensing Act 2003.

RESOLVED – That the Committee noted the report.

32 Application for an increase in Hackney Carriage Fares

Members were asked to consider an application received from the Hackney Carriage trade requesting for an increase in hackney carriage fares. Appendix 1 showed the proposed fares and Appendix 2 highlighted the existing fares.

Increases in fares were only triggered by requests made from the trade. It was noted that the last increase was in 2011. The trade have borne the increases in fuel prices and overheads during this period.

In balancing the increase fare per mile of journey the trade had suggested that additional costs for luggage and additional passengers would be removed.

Members heard that if they approved the increase a public consultation would take place and if no objections were received the increase would come into force.

A table of hackney carriage fares for all local authorities in the UK was published on the internet. Currently Blackburn with Darwen’s fares ranked 344 out of 358 listed authorities. For a 2 mile journey on Tariff 1 the fares ranged from £4.20 to £10.60, with Blackburn with Darwen at £4.70. If the increase was approved, Blackburn with Darwen would still be in the lowest quartile of the table with a 2 mile fare costing £5.40. There were 15 other authorities nationwide currently charging £5.40 for the same journey length.

The use of calanderised meters would be the only way to ensure the correct fare tariff was used at different times of day and night. Some hackney vehicle proprietors will need to upgrade to this type of meter to ensure compliance.

RESOLVED – That the Committee noted the report and approved for recommendations to be put forward to the Executive Member for Environment.

33 PART II - THE PRESS AND THE PUBLIC MAY BE EXCLUDED DURING CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS

34 Minutes of the Licensing Sub Committees

The Committee received the proceedings of the following Sub Committees:

Licensing Act Sub Committee held on 18th July 2019

Licensing Act Sub Committee held on 1st August 2019

General Licensing Sub Committee held on 13th August 2019

General Licensing Sub Committee held on 10th September 2019

General Licensing Sub Committee held on 8th October 2019

RESOLVED – That the proceedings of the Sub Committees as outlined above were approved as a correct record and were duly signed by the Chair.

Signed:

Date:

Chair of the meeting
at which the minutes were confirmed