

LICENSING COMMITTEE

29 March 2011

Present:

Councillor Norman Shiel (Chair)

Councillors Sterry, Branston, S Brock, Mrs Danks, Newby, Newton, Robson, Ruffle, Wadham and Winterbottom

Head of Environmental Health Services, Principal Licensing Officer, Licensing Solicitor and Member Services Officer (HB)

12 **Minutes**

Subject to the amendment of Min. No. 1 by replacing the words "a future" by the words "the next", the minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2011 were taken as read and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

13 **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made by Members.

14 **Clarification of decision to end the requirement for certain Hackney Carriages to be disabled accessible vehicles**

The Chair referred to correspondence received from the taxi trade raising issues relating to disabled accessible vehicles. As specific issues were being raised which did not relate to the substance of the report, he felt that it would be more appropriate for them to be raised at a future meeting when general policy matters were to be considered. This report would be brought to this Committee after changes in primary legislation arising from the Equality Act 2010 had been introduced.

The Head of Environmental Health Services presented the report clarifying the situation in relation to the decision made by this Committee on 30 November 2010 to end the requirement placed on the remaining hackney carriages in the fleet that were not accessible by disabled users, to become disabled accessible vehicles (DAVs). He explained why the draft minute of that decision had differed from the published minute.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) the report be noted;
- (2) future reports pertaining to Licensing policy follow the normal convention for Committee reports and contain a clear recommendation by officers;
- (3) a report be brought to a future meeting of this Committee on a comprehensive taxi policy; and
- (4) Min. No. 35 of the Licensing Committee meeting of 30 November 2010 be approved.

(Report circulated)

15 **Review of Demand for Hackney Carriage Services in Exeter 2011**

In support of the Head of Environmental Health Services' report setting out the outcome of the top-up survey into unmet demand carried out by Mouchel Ltd., the Chair welcomed Mr Ian Millership, Study Manager of Mouchel. Mr Millership reported that a top-up survey had been undertaken on 12 and 13 March 2011 at the taxi ranks at Sidwell Street, Fore Street and Bailey Street and at locations near Rococo and Arena nightclubs between 2300 hours and 0500 hours late Saturday/early Sunday. Overall demand had been 40% of that in May 2010 and passenger queues had been less than when the full survey had been undertaken. Therefore the cessation of the agreement between certain nightclubs and a private hire company to collect club goers had not impacted significantly on demand. He further reported on the pattern of usage observed during the survey period. He responded to Members' queries. The Principal Licensing Officer also responded to Members' queries advising that full consultation with interested parties had been undertaken as part of the May 2010 survey. Mr Millership also advised that the Sidwell Street rank should be improved as part of the upgrading to the pavement area outside the new John Lewis store.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) the top-up survey be received and the results showing that it remained the case that there was no significant unmet demand in relation to Hackney Carriages in Exeter be noted;
- (2) in light of (1) above, this Committee was not required to exercise its obligation to grant additional hackney carriage licences and does not wish to review its policy of not exercising its discretion to grant hackney carriage licences above the level of significant unmet demand; and
- (3) a Special Meeting of this Committee be held as soon as possible to consider the 11 outstanding applications for hackney carriage licenses.

(Report circulated)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) ACT 1976

16 **Licensing of Purpose Built Hackney Carriage Vehicles**

The Head of Environmental Health Services presented the report seeking the approval for the Head of Environmental Health Services to deal with the grant of purpose-built hackney carriage vehicle licences, normally referred to as London-type cabs, from up to four years old rather than the current three years, without the need for an independent mechanical inspection report.

RECOMMENDED that the scheme of delegations in the Council's Constitution be amended to authorise the Head of Environmental Health Services to determine hackney carriage vehicle licenses relating to London-type cabs that are no more than four years old, without the need for an independent mechanical inspection report.

(Report circulated)

The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 6.35 pm

Chair