

PUBLIC PROTECTION SUB-COMMITTEE

24 SEPTEMBER 2015

PRESENT

Councillor M. Whetton (in the Chair).

Councillors B. Sharp (Vice-Chairman), S.K. Anstee, J. Coupe, A. Duffield, M. Freeman, M. Sephton and J. Smith

In attendance

I. Veitch	- Head of Regulatory Services
J. Marriott	- Public Protection Manager
J. Boyle	- Licensing Team Leader
D. Goldstein	- Solicitor
N. Owen	- Democratic and Scrutiny Officer

Also Present

Councillor W. Stennett (Substitute for Councillor D. Jarman)

APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor D. Jarman

21. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Public Protection Sub-Committee meetings held on 20th August and 27th August 2015 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

22. HACKNEY CARRIAGE UNMET DEMAND SURVEY 2015

The Head of Regulatory Services submitted a report requesting Members to consider the findings of a study conducted on behalf of the Council into the demand for hackney carriage services in Trafford.

Representations were made from Mr. I. McDonald from Vector Transport Consultancy. Mr. McDonald also responded to questions raised by members of the Sub-Committee.

RESOLVED -

- (1) That the report and options detailed in the report be noted.
- (2) That a further report be brought to a future meeting of the Sub-Committee.
- (3) That the plate numbers of the drivers who had acted inappropriately whilst the survey was carried out are sought from Vector Transport Consultancy and the incidents are investigated.

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23. PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE HACKNEY CARRIAGE/PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

The Head of Regulatory Services submitted a report outlining the outcome of a review of the current taxi driver application procedure following an increase in the number of potential applicants for a licence.

Recommendations were detailed in the report to change the current requirements in respect of English language skills; and local area knowledge and training, in order to reduce delays in the application process whilst maintaining driver standards.

A four week consultation had taken place with the trade on these proposals and the responses received were detailed in the report. Representations were received from the trade at the meeting.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the range of acceptable qualifications to prove English language skills be extended as follows:

Any UK qualification – degree, A/O level, GCSE; or

A non-UK degree in English; or

ESOL qualification at Entry 2 from any accredited UK College

Qualification certificate to be produced on application for a hackney carriage/private hire driver's licence.

- (2) That the requirement for applicants to pass a local area knowledge test be removed and a condition that all drivers must carry a working satellite navigation system be introduced. All new drivers must comply with this requirement from the implementation of the new policy; and all existing drivers must comply after three years from that date.

- (3) That all applicants complete a driver induction course consisting of:

Licensing conditions and legislation framework

Customer Care

Wheelchair access and disability awareness

Child sexual exploitation awareness

24. AMENDMENTS TO HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE POLICY AND FEES FOLLOWING THE DEREGULATION ACT 2015

The Head of Regulatory Services submitted a report informing Members of changes to legislation effecting hackney carriage and private hire licences; and proposing amendments to the fees for driver and operator licences to reflect that change.

The proposed fees were advertised in a local newspaper giving 28 days for objections to be made. A number of objections had been received including a petition and were available for consideration by members of the Sub-Committee.

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RESOLVED –

- (1) That from 1st October 2015 all private hire operator licences are issued for five years, unless the operator requests a one year licence.
- (2) That from 1st October 2015 all new and renewed hackney carriage and private hire driver's licences are issued for three years; except in certain circumstances, namely:
 - Where the renewal of the licence does not coincide with the DBS check as outlined in the report;
 - Where the applicant requests a one year licence;
 - Where an applicant's right to work visa is due to expire;
 - Where matters arise that the Sub-Committee or Licensing Manager believe make it appropriate, in the circumstances, to issue a licence for less than three years.

25. EXCLUSION RESOLUTION (REMAINING ITEMS)

RESOLVED: That the public be excluded from this meeting during consideration of the following items on the agenda because of the likelihood of disclosure of "exempt information" which falls within one or more descriptive category or categories of the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A, as specified.

26. PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER - ALLEGATION OF SERIOUS MISCONDUCT

The Head of Regulatory Services submitted a report advising the Sub-Committee of the decision of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Opposition Spokesperson to suspend a private hire driver's licence with immediate effect following a charge for a serious offence; and advising of the outcome of the prosecution case.

The driver attended the meeting and answered questions raised by members of the Sub-Committee.

Members of the Sub-Committee considered the report, the submissions of the Private Hire driver and the police officer who attended the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the suspension of the Private Hire driver's licence be removed.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and finished at 9.20 pm