

Monday 10 March 2008  
at 6.00pm



# General Licensing Committee

**MEMBERS:** Councillor Mrs MORRIS (Chairman) Councillor THOMPSON (Deputy Chairman), Councillors BELSEY, BLOOM, ELKIN, Mrs GOODALL, GOODWIN, GOODYEAR, HARRIS, Mrs HEAPS, Mrs MADELL and PURCHESE.

(Apologies for absence were reported from Councillors Hough, Mrs Salsbury and Miss Woodall).

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## 12 Minutes.

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2007 were submitted and approved and the Chairman was authorised to sign them as a correct record.

## 13 Declaration of Interests.

None were received.

## 14 Taxi and Private Hire Vehicles - Plates.

The Committee considered the report of the Licensing Manager regarding progress in respect of changes to the rear and internal identification plates for both taxis and private hire vehicles which were agreed at the meeting held on 16 October 2006.

The Committee was advised that the revised form and content of the plates would improve visibility and provide the public with better information regarding the identification of licensed vehicles.

Members of the trade had been consulted via the Taxi and Private Hire Forum and the proposal for larger, more visible plates at the rear and a smaller internal plate was supported.

Mock up plates were circulated at the meeting and the Committee discussed the design details. A slight revision to the form of the internal identification plate for both hackney carriage and private hire vehicles was proposed with the inclusion of wording directing the public to contact the Licensing team in the event of a complaint.

At the meeting in October the Committee had agreed the use of the Council crest as the preferred design for the plates. Some Members considered that the logo should also be included. It was also agreed that the vehicle type should also be reinstated on the external plate.

Councillor Goodwin indicated that the hologram should not be placed over text and suggested that prior to the production of the final versions of the

plates the Council's Access Officer be requested to assess the clarity of the design.

The Committee was advised that a preferred supplier had been selected to supply the plates following an advertisement inviting expressions of interest.

**RESOLVED: (1)** That progress in relation to the form of the permanent internal and rear identification plates as approved by Committee at its meeting on 15 October 2007 be noted.

**(2)** That revisions to the form of the plates be approved as follows:

(i) A slight revision to the form of the internal identification plate for hackney carriage and private hire vehicles, as detailed in paragraph 7.2 of the report.

(ii) That the Council's logo be included on both the external and internal plates.

(iii) That the vehicle type be included on the external plate.

## **15 Hackney Carriage Proprietors Licence Allocation - Update.**

The Committee considered the report of the Licensing Manager regarding an update on the allocation of Hackney Carriage Proprietors licenses.

The Committee at its meeting on 23 January 2007 had agreed the mechanism for allocating the six additional hackney carriage licences which had been agreed for release at the meeting held on 1 November 2006.

A number of conditions had been attached to the issue of the licences which included that a licence shall only be released and approved for use at all times by wheelchair accessible vehicles.

A further report to Committee on 12 March 2007 had reviewed the allocation process that had been applied to the release of the licenses.

Currently all parties wishing to express an interest in obtaining a hackney carriage proprietors licence in future must register with the Council's Licensing Team, using a form as detailed in appendix 1 to the report.

A list of expressions of interest was kept and reviewed on an annual basis and any person wishing to maintain their interest was required to re-register annually. The current list which contained 56 expressions of interest had been updated in January 2008 and was effective until 22 January 2009.

Should the Committee agree to release further licences in the future an advertisement inviting expressions of interest from the wider public would also be sought.

The Committee was advised of the requirement to undertake a survey to assess the overall demand for hackney carriage services if a policy of restricting the number of licenses available was maintained. The last survey was undertaken in 2006 and was valid for a maximum of 3 years.

The Licensing Manager advised the Committee that the cost of administering taxi and private hire licensing was recovered via the licence fee income. The cost of undertaking a future survey would also be recouped via the fee income but it was anticipated that an increase in the licence fee may be required.

The Committee requested that a report be submitted to the October meeting regarding options for the future allocation of licences to include the findings of the Scrutiny Committee in respect of the review of taxi rank provision in the Town. It was also agreed that prior to the meeting the hackney carriage and private hire trade be consulted on the options for the future allocation of licences.

**RESOLVED:** That a report be submitted to the meeting of the General Licensing Committee in October regarding the allocation of hackney carriage proprietors licences.

The meeting closed at 7.05 p.m.

**Mrs S Morris**  
**Chairman**