

Licensing Committee

Minutes of meeting held in Room 209/210 on the Second Floor, The Marine Workshops, Railway Quay, Newhaven, East Sussex, BN9 0ER. on 29 February 2024 at 10.30 am.

Present:

Councillor Roy Clay (Chair).

Councillors Ian Alexander, Nikki Fabry, Nick Kortalla-Bird, Sean MacLeod, Paul Mellor (Deputy-Chair) and Joa Saunders.

Officers in attendance:

Jo Dunk (Regulatory Services Lead) and Michele Wilkinson (Lawyer (Housing & Regulatory)).

19 Minutes

Minutes of the last meeting, held 14th December 2023, were confirmed as an accurate record.

20 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Brett, Davies, Hoareau and Maples.

21 Declarations of interest

There were none.

22 Urgent items

There were no urgent items.

23 Written questions from councillors

The Chair confirmed no written questions had been received.

24 Supporting the transition to lower or zero emission vehicles in the taxi and private hire sector

Jo Dunk, Regulatory Services Lead, presented the report, which outlined the purpose, process and results of the consultation survey held between May to July 2023 across all authorities in East Sussex (as detailed in Appendix A of the agenda report pack).

The presentation also noted a statement made by the Department of Transport in November 2023 regarding the potential counter-productive outcomes from

setting arbitrary age limits; provided an update on the current status and near future plans for electric charge point network in the Lewes District; and advised on the thinking behind the officer recommendation being brought to the Committee.

The Chair thanked the Regulatory Services Lead for their presentation and the Committee considered the report.

In the following discussions, Members debated the potential positive and negative, or unintended, consequences of including multi-seater vehicles / MVPs within the proposal. Officers confirmed that the Guidance already allowed for drivers to submit requests for exceptional circumstances to be considered on a variety of issues which included the Guidance age restrictions. Officers also clarified that MOT reports and twice-yearly monitoring required by the Guidance provided on-going assurances regarding vehicle emissions.

The high workshop attendance figures reported in the survey were welcomed by Committee Members.

Officers reminded Members that it had been previously agreed by the Licensing Committee that the recently reviewed Guidance would be reviewed every 3 years thereafter. However, Officers considered this minor change to the Guidance to be an exception to that decision on the basis that the consultation survey had been undertaken before that decision was made.

Resolved (unanimously)

That the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Guidance be amended so that new and relicensed vehicles defined by the Vehicle Certification Agency as low, hybrid, ultra-low or zero emission vehicles shall be age exempt.

25 Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting was confirmed for Thursday 13th June 2024, at the new time of 5pm.

The meeting ended at 10.50 am

Councillor Roy Clay (Chair)