

Licensing Committee

Minutes of meeting held in Telscombe Room - Southover House, Lewes on 3 July 2018 at 10.00am

Present:

Councillor Sam Adeniji (Chair)

Councillors Liz Boorman, Jackie Harrison-Hicks, Isabelle Linington and Tony Rowell

Officers in attendance:

Stewart Bryant (Senior Specialist Advisor, Licensing)

Zoe Downton (Committee Officer)

Ed Hele (Functional Lead – Quality Environment)

Sue Lindsey (Specialist Advisor, Licensing)

Michele Wilkinson (Housing & Regulatory Lawyer)

Also in attendance:

One member of the press

1 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

2 Apologies for absence/declaration of substitute members

An apology for absence had been received from Councillor S Gauntlett.

3 Declarations of interest

No declarations were made.

4 Taxi Licensing guidance review

The Committee considered the report which requested members to review the proposed Lewes District Council Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing

Guidance (as set out under appendix 2 of the report), and agree an 8-week consultation with the trade and public on the reviewed document.

Members' discussion included:

- A suggestion by the Cabinet Member whose portfolio included licensing that she, in addition to the Chair of the Licensing Committee, be made aware of any minor changes to the guidance document that arose from the consultation (and which would not be reported to a future meeting of the Committee).
- The guidance on CCTV and why executive private hire vehicles were exempt from having compulsory CCTV. Members noted that CCTV was there to protect both drivers and passengers and discussed the possible likelihood of vulnerable passengers using executive private hire vehicles, such as stretch limousines.
- Whether the guidance on engine size (under Vehicle Specification on page 57 of the agenda) was up to date and relevant, in light of electric vehicles and the development of low-emission vehicles that may still meet the other vehicle specification criteria.
- The possible inclusion of diversity awareness training and speed awareness training for all drivers as part of the licence application process.

Officers responded that:

- From a legal perspective, the review of the guidance document was a licensing function and not an executive function (ie. that of the Cabinet), and therefore it was not necessary to consult with the Cabinet Member whose portfolio included licensing on any minor amendments. However, there was no reason why the relevant Cabinet Member could not be made aware of any minor changes made to the guidance as part of the review process.
- The Functional Lead – Quality Environment would amend the CCTV guidance (on page 56 of the agenda) to remove the exemption of executive private hire vehicles so that all licenced vehicles would be required to have CCTV in operation.
- Under the Vehicle Specification guidance (on page 57 of the agenda), the Functional Lead – Quality Environment would include reference to electric vehicles, and would review the current engine size and replace with an appropriate reduced figure, prior to the document going out for consultation.

- The Functional Lead – Quality Environment would review and amend the guidance on the knowledge test (on pages 59 and 60 of the agenda) to include training on diversity awareness and speed awareness.
- The Functional Lead – Quality Environment would also add the header 'Formal Action' to separate the relevant paragraphs under Part 7 on page 65 of the agenda.

Resolved:

1. That the Licensing Committee's review of the proposed Lewes District Council Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Guidance be noted;
2. That the Licensing Committee authorises the Senior Specialist Advisor to start an 8-week consultation with the taxi trade and the public; and
3. That it be agreed that the results of the consultation be reported to a subsequent meeting of the Licensing Committee, unless only minor changes are proposed as a result of the consultation responses, in which case any changes may be made by the Functional Lead – Quality Environment in consultation with the Chair of the Licensing Committee and the Cabinet Member whose portfolio includes licensing.

Reason:

The current Lewes District Council Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Guidance had become outdated.

5 Amendment to the District Council's film authorisation procedures

The Committee considered the report which detailed amendments to the Film Authorisation Procedures, as set out in the appendix, in order to make provision for classification requirements when films were not viewed in advance.

Members' discussion included:

- A suggestion by the Cabinet Member whose portfolio included licensing that she, in addition to the Chair of the Licensing Committee, be made aware of any future minor changes to the procedure (ie. those which would not be reported to a future meeting of the Committee).

Officers responded that:

- As had been noted earlier in the meeting, from a legal perspective, amendments to the procedure was a licensing function and not an executive function (ie. that of the Cabinet) and therefore it was not necessary to consult the relevant Cabinet Member on minor amendments. However, there was no reason why the Cabinet Member whose portfolio included licensing could not be made aware of any future minor amendments as they arose.

Resolved:

1. That the amended Film Authorisation Procedures, as detailed in paragraphs 3.2 and 3.3 of the report, be approved; and
2. That it be agreed that future minor amendments to the Film Authorisation Procedures may be agreed by the Functional Lead – Quality Environment, in conjunction with the Chair of the Licensing Committee and the Cabinet Member whose portfolio included licensing.

Reason:

Lewes District Council was the responsible authority for authorising the public exhibition of films. The Council had an existing Film Authorisation Procedures guidance document.

6 Written questions from councillors

No questions had been received.

7 Date of next meeting

Resolved:

1. To note that the next meeting of the Licensing Committee will be called as necessary.

The meeting ended at 10.50am

Councillor Sam Adeniji (Chair)