

Eastbourne Licensing Committee

Minutes of meeting held in Court Room at Eastbourne Town Hall, Grove Road, BN21 4UG on 24 May 2021 at 6.00 pm.

Present:

Councillor Robin Maxted (Chair).

Councillors Peter Diplock (Deputy-Chair), Josh Babarinde, Colin Belsey, Sammy Choudhury, Penny di Cara, Amanda Morris, Colin Murdoch, Jim Murray, Colin Swansborough, Barry Taylor and Candy Vaughan.

Officers in attendance:

Paul Thornton (Specialist Advisor – Licensing), Jo Dunk (Senior Specialist Advisor – Environmental Health), Danielle Ball (Specialist Advisor – Licensing), Michele Wilkinson (Lawyer – Housing & Regulatory) and Emily Horne (Committee Officer).

1 Introductions

Members of the Committee and Officers present introduced themselves via roll call during the meeting.

2 Minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2021 were submitted and approved, and the Chair was authorised to sign them as a correct record.

3 Apologies for absence/declaration of substitute members

There were none.

4 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs) by members as required under Section 31 of the Localism Act and of other interests as required by the Code of Conduct.

There were none.

5 Questions by members of the public

Councillor Maxted, Chair, read a written statement on behalf of Mr Everson, Chairman EEAN Transport Group, who was unable to attend the meeting. The statement was published on the Council's website and circulated to the committee members. The statement questioned if there were plans to move the sector forward in reducing its carbon emission in the very near future. Danielle Ball (Specialist Advisor – Licensing) confirmed that a further report

would be brought before the Licensing Committee on ultra-low emissions, a statement had been placed in the Taxi Licensing Guidance, and that a written response would be sent to Mr Everson.

6 Urgent items of business

There were none.

7 Right to address the meeting/order of business

The Chair allowed two speakers, both raising different points, to speak on behalf of their respective groups.

Mr Chris Rowkins, Eastbourne Access Group Member, addressed the Committee stating that as a wheelchair user he found it extremely difficult to book an accessible taxi; the designated list of accessible vehicles lacked information and was out of date, and more needed to be done to encourage co-operation with the trade for residents and visitors alike.

Mr Kevin Coleman, Secretary of 720 Taxis addressed the Committee stating that he fully endorsed the proposals and raised a number of questions regarding the implementation of CCTV in vehicles. In response, SAL confirmed that the implementation of CCTV had not yet been discussed by the Committee and agreed, and as such specific details were not available at the time.

8 Taxi Licensing Guidance Review

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Service Delivery which requested the Committee consider the result of the public consultation regarding the Eastbourne Borough Council Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Guidance and to agree a final Guidance document to be adopted on a date to be agreed.

The Specialist Advisor – Licensing (SAL), Paul Thornton, presented the report and its findings.

Several typographical amendments to the report were noted:

- o) Replace the word 'off' with 'of' the English Language.
- y) Delete the word 'annually' after 'annual basic disclosure'.

Members discussed and agreed on the following changes to the Guidance:

- (a) Changes in Licensing (Part 1) – Agreed to implement.
- (b) Relicensing of vehicles (Part 3, Maximum age of vehicles) – Agreed to implement.
- (c) Vehicle Door Signs (Part 3, Livery). In discussion, Members considered the response received from the trade and public and were of a mixed opinion. This was put to a vote and it was agreed to

- implement, by 9 votes for and 3 votes against.
- (d) Insurance Write Offs (Part 3, Vehicle Specification) – Agreed to implement.
 - (e) Intended work area (Part 3, Intended Use) – Agreed to implement.
 - (f) In-vehicle visual recording CCTV (Part 3). In discussion, Members felt they needed further details to consider the implications. Councillor Babarinde proposed to agree in principle the implementation of CCTV, subject to receipt of further details to determine the installation date for consideration at a future Licensing Committee meeting. This was seconded by Councillor Diplock. This proposal was put to a vote and it was agreed by 7 votes for and 5 vote against.
 - (g) Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle Licences (Part 3, Wheelchair Accessible). In discussion, Members questioned enforcement. SAL confirmed it was part of the vehicle inspection check and would be on the suitability test – Agreed to implement.
 - (h) Plate and Livery exemptions (Part 3, Executive Private Hire Vehicles) – Agreed to implement.
 - (i) Dual Drivers Licences (Part 4, Licences) – Agreed to implement.
 - (j) Stretched Limousines (Part 3, Stretched Limousines and Other Specialist Vehicles) – Agreed to implement.
 - (k) Fit and Proper Test (Part 4, Fit & Proper Test) – Agreed to implement.
 - (l) Disclosure Barring Service (DBS Update Service (Part 4, DBS and Part 5, Private Hire Operators) – Agreed to implement.
 - (m) Overseas Applicants (Part 4, DBS) – Agreed to implement.
 - (n) DVLA Drivers Licence checks (Part 4, DVLA Licence Checking) – Agreed to implement.
 - (o) Introduction of English Language Proficiency Test for all new applicants (Part 4, English Language Proficiency Test) – Agreed to implement.
 - (p) Safeguarding Awareness Training (Part 4, Safeguarding Training) – Agreed to implement.
 - (q) Mandatory Disability Awareness Training (Part 4, Safeguarding Training) – Agreed to implement.
 - (r) Clarifies process to apply for an exemption certificates from carrying assistance dogs (Part 8) – Agreed to implement.
 - (s) Card Payments (Part 9) – Agreed to implement.
 - (t) Vaping (Appendix 3, Paragraph 26) – Agreed to implement.
 - (u) Criminality Checks on Vehicle Proprietors (Part 3, Vehicles) – Agreed to implement.
 - (v) Licensee Self Reporting (Appendix 3, Paragraph 15 and Appendix 6, Section 6.3) – Agreed to implement.
 - (w) Sharing Licensing Information (Part 4, DBS) – Agreed to implement.
 - (x) Private Hire Vehicle Operators (Part 5, DBS Disclosures) – Agreed to implement.
 - (y) Private Hire Vehicle Operators (Part 5, DBS Disclosures) – Agreed to implement.
 - (z) Operators (Part 5, Complaints about drivers) – Agreed to implement.
 - (aa) Operator records (Appendix 4, Records) – Agreed to implement.
 - (bb) Use of PCV licensed Drivers (Appendix 4, Section 5) – Agreed to implement.

- (cc) Convictions Policy (Appendix 6) – Agreed to implement.
- (dd) Penalty Points Scheme (Appendix 7) – Agreed to implement.
- (ee) Common Law Police Disclosure/Referrals to the Police/DBS (Part 4) - Agreed to implement.

Resolved

(Unanimous) That the Committee delegate the Senior Specialist Advisor to take the necessary steps to implement the changes outlined above, produce a final Guidance for publication and implement it on a date to be agreed with the Chair of the Licensing Committee, subject to consideration at a future Licensing Committee meeting of the date of introduction for CCTV.

9 Date of the next meeting

That the next meeting of the Licensing Committee which is scheduled to commence at 6.00pm on Monday, 11 October 2021, be noted.

The meeting ended at 7.52 pm

Councillor Robin Maxted (Chair)