



LICENSING COMMITTEE

4.30pm – 5.35pm

14 June 2012

Present: Councillors Kendrick (chair), Haynes (vice chair), Barker, Button, Henderson, Lay, Manning, Price, Neale, Sands (M), Stammers and Wright

Apologies: Councillor Thomas

1. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR

RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Haynes as vice chair for the ensuing civic year 2012-13.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED to agree the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2012.

3. HACKNEY CARRIAGE VEHICLE AND DRIVER LICENSING

(Mick Warren of Diamond Licensing and Mr T Williment, David Scott and James Marriot of the Norwich Hackney Trade Association attended the meeting for this item)

The solicitor presented the report. Tony Williment, secretary of the Norwich Hackney Trade Association introduced the representation submitted on behalf of the association and said that he was concerned that demand was on the decrease whilst supply continued to increase and that the association wanted some protection in the current economic climate. He asked members to consider a temporary restriction on the issuing of new hackney carriage vehicle licences; to delay the adoption of the proposed hackney carriage vehicle licence conditions for six months to provide adequate time for existing members of the trade to implement the changes; and to ask officers to consider the impact of Euro V on insurance payouts. He said that the association were in support of an increased number of taxi rank spaces and that they would be keen to work with officers to develop the route knowledge test and review the byelaws. In response to members' questions he said that proposed charges relating to vehicle age and emissions would likely discourage new entrants to the trade; and that it was not possible to compare the current number of hackney carriage vehicle licences with three years ago due to discrepancies in available data.

In response to members' discussion and suggestion of a survey to assess demand, the solicitor explained that the council **did not need to justify its current stance of no limitation of numbers but** would need to be able to justify the reasons for any restriction placed on the number of hackney carriage vehicle licenses should it consider it appropriate to resolve upon any such limitation. He also advised that adoption of the proposed hackney carriage vehicle licence conditions was a policy issue and that the decision could be deferred to the following meeting if members required further information.

Mick Warren, Diamond Licensing, provided a brief presentation of a multi-choice knowledge test for drivers. In response to questions he explained that implementation of the software would cost an initial £2,000 and then £300 per year thereafter for maintenance. He also confirmed that council's usually used an invigilator during the test. James Marriet of the Hackney Carriage Association said that the association would be keen to work with officers to develop the test.

RESOLVED:

- (1) with seven members voting in favour (Councillors Barker, Button, Kendrick, Lay, Manning, Price and Wright) and two members against (Councillors Neale and Stammers), not to place a numerical limit on the number of hackney carriage vehicle licences issued by the authority;
- (2) to defer consideration of the adoption of the proposed hackney carriage vehicle licence conditions detailed in paragraph 32 of the report and the potential impact on accident insurance to the next licensing committee;
- (3) to implement a computerised system to test the route knowledge, language, numeracy skills and 'Green Book' knowledge of applicants for hackney carriage drivers licences;
- (4) to agree a review of the byelaws, regulations and conditions applicable to hackney carriage and private hire vehicle proprietors, drivers and operators ('The Green Book'); and
- (5) to ask the head of city development services to consider the feasibility of providing additional taxi rank spaces.

4. SEXUAL ENTERTAINMENT VENUES

The solicitor presented the report and explained that the provisions of section 27 of the Policing and Crime Act 2009 would enable members to regulate sexual entertainment venues within the city. If members were minded to adopt the provisions, those premises already offering lap dancing etc would be provided a transition period in which to comply. In response to members' questions he explained that the committee would need to consider development of a relevant policy which could include the location and number of venues, and the criteria against which applications from premises would be assessed. The policy would probably be developed in consultation with the public and undergo an equality impact assessment.

RESOLVED to adopt with effect from 27 July 2012 the amendments made to Schedule 3 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 by section 27 of the Policing and Crime Act 2009 and to delegate to the head of law and governance the power to take any such further or additional steps and decisions as may be necessary to implement the committee's decision.

5. STANDING ITEM - REGULATORY SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES

RESOLVED to note the minutes of the regulatory sub-committee meetings held on 20 February 2012, 19 March 2012, 16 April 2012 and 21 May 2012.

CHAIR