



REGULATORY COMMITTEE

11.00 a.m. – 1.40 p.m.

24 November 2009

Present: Councillors Dylan (Chair), Banham, George, Hooke, Jago, Lay,
Ramsay

Apologies Councillor Blower

1. MINUTES

RESOLVED to agree the accuracy of the minutes of the Regulatory Committee held on 20 October 2009 subject to Councillor George recorded as being present.

2. HACKNEY CARRIAGE VEHICLE SPECIFICATION

(Donald Pow and Bill Parris of Allied Vehicles Limited, Garry Facenna, Counsel representing Allied Vehicles Limited, Patrick Keenaghan, the Applicant, Richard Daniels and Paul Kelsey of LTI and members of the public attended the meeting for this item.

Yvonne Blake, Solicitor of the Council presented the report and the Chair outlined the order of proceedings.

Mr Pow, explained the reasons why he considered the Peugeot E7 Series II would be of benefit to Norwich with a modern low carbon vehicle, giving improved safety and security for disabled passengers. Mr Facenna said following the judicial review the Council had agreed to consider a fresh application for this vehicle to reflect the court order. He said if the E7 was approved passengers and drivers would be given a greater choice. He said many local authorities through out the country had licensed the E7, many of whom had been contacted by the Council's Senior Licensing Officer and no safety issues had been raised. He spoke regarding the duties of the Council under equal opportunity and European Communities (E.C.) matters.

Mr Keenaghan said he considered the E7 to be the best vehicle for the job. The turning circle was the main objection to this vehicle, although this was useful on occasions, was not essential. This vehicle would enable wheelchair users to face forwards rather than backwards as at present. He urged members to extend the vehicle specification to allow the E7, which he thought would work well along side the current vehicles.

Richard Daniels explained the reasons why the existing vehicle specification should be retained. He said the current vehicles were easily recognised as a hackney

carriage and discussed the benefits of the current turning circle, and suggested Mr Facenna's E.C. law point was not binding on committee.

Mr Williment a hackney carriage driver since 1978 opposed the application and raised the issue of the turning point especially at the taxi rank at Norwich train station as one of the main reasons for maintaining the existing specification.

Some of the hackney carriage drivers endorsed the use of the E7, and could not see the turning circle being a problem and thought over time the new taxis would be recognised. Both Mr Jackson and Mr Mayes said with vehicles getting older taxi drivers would like the choice of an E7 when purchasing a new taxi.

Member discussed the emissions compared with the current vehicle and the specifications which would enable members of the public to recognise hackney carriages.

Mr Daniels and then Mr Facenna spoke in closing to the Committee, Mr Facenna giving to committee a summary of the applicant's case.

(Donald Pow, Bill Parris, Gerry Facenna, Counsel, Patrick Keenaghan, applicant, Richard Daniels and Paul Kelsey of LTI and members of the public withdrew from the meeting at this point.)

Following discussion it was –

RESOLVED unanimously to –

- (1) agree to revise the existing hackney carriage vehicle specification to extend the maximum acceptable dimensions as necessary to enable the licensing of the applicant's vehicle as a hackney carriage.
- (2) The Head of Legal, Regulatory and Democratic Services be instructed to review the remainder of the existing hackney carriage vehicle specification including recognisability and to bring a report to a further meeting of your committee.

(Donald Pow, Bill Parris of Allied Vehicles Limited, Gerry Facenna, Counsel, Patrick Keenaghan applicant, Richard Daniel and Paul Kelsey of LTI and members of the public were readmitted to the meeting and were informed of the Committee's decision).

The Chair thanked all those who had attended the meeting.

CHAIR