

## **LICENSING COMMITTEE**

24 July 2017  
10.00 - 11.35 am

**Present:** Councillors Bird (Chair), Benstead, Abbott, Gawthrope, McPherson, T. Moore, Pippas and Smart

### **Officers:**

Environmental Health Manager: Yvonne O'Donnell

Team Manager (Commercial & Licensing): Karen O'Connor

Committee Manager: Toni Birkin

<b>FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL</b>
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### **17/64/Lic Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Councillor Gehring and Radcliffe.

### **17/65/Lic Declarations of Interest**

No interests were declared.

### **17/66/Lic Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting of the 20<sup>th</sup> March 2017 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

### **17/67/Lic Public Questions**

Public questions were received from Mr Mohammed and Mr Wratten. Full details of their comments can be found with minute items 17/68/Lic, 17/69/Lic and 17/70/Lic.

### **17/68/Lic Enhanced DBS Checks for Non-Driver Operators and Proprietors**

Questions from members of the public.

Mr Wratten and Mr Mohammed responded to the report and made the following comments:

- i. Enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks were unnecessary for non-drivers who would never have any direct contact with the public.
- ii. Accepted that standard checks were necessary and non-drivers would have access to information such as child movements and service user's holidays.

The Committee received a report from Team Manager (Commercial & Licensing) regarding an amendment the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy (the 'policy').

In October 2016 Cambridge City Council's the policy was reviewed and updated following consultation with the trade and members of the public. One of the changes relates to the requirement for 'non-driver proprietors' of vehicle and operator licences to undertake a criminal record check at 'enhanced disclosure' level at three-yearly intervals. This check is now known as an Enhanced DBS check.

The DBS, however, advised the Council in May 2017 that non-driver proprietors of vehicle and operator licences were not eligible for an Enhanced DBS check and therefore the policy needed to be changed.

The Committee made the following comments in response to the report:

- i. Sought clarification regarding how useful the enhanced checks had been.
- ii. Agreed that standards checks were a good idea due to the confidential information that non-drivers had access to.
- iii. Suggested that safeguarding training was important, even for non-drivers, as those answering the phone might be the first point of contact with a vulnerable individual.
- iv. Stated that taxi drivers were viewed a safe person by those in distress.
- v. Taxi call centre staff could have vital information and need to be aware of how to report any concerns.

The Committee:

**Resolved (unanimously)**

- i. To amend the policy to require non-driver proprietors and operators to undertake a Basic DBS check at 3-yearly intervals.

- ii. Confirmed the continuation of the requirement for all non-driver proprietors to attend, and successfully pass, the Customer Awareness, Safeguarding, Equality and Protection training course.
- iii. Directed the refund of £19 to each non-driver proprietor who had already undertaken an Enhanced DBS check.

## **17/69/Lic    Review of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy**

Questions from members of the public.

Mr Wratten read out an email from Michael Peacock responding to the report that made the following comments:

- i. In over 20 years as a taxi driver, he had never used either the first Aid kit or the Fire Extinguisher.
- ii. Vehicles licenced outside Cambridge did not need to carry this equipment.
- iii. Incorrect use of equipment could make an emergency situation worse.
- iv. Supported the proposal for taxis to have card readers.
- v. Questioned the age restrictions on replacement vehicles. If a four year old taxi was written off replacing it with a vehicle of the same age this would not add to air pollution.

The Committee received a report from Team Manager (Commercial & Licensing) regarding a review of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy.

The Committee made the following comments in response to the report:

- i. Deaths related to poor air quality were on the increase. Any improvement in emissions was to be encouraged.
- ii. Newer cars resulted in less harmful emissions and age restrictions on taxi should not be relaxed.
- iii. Requiring Taxi drivers carrying First Aid Kits and Fire Extinguishers was a public health asset.
- iv. The Committee might want to consider first aid training for all drivers as a later date.
- v. Card readers were a business decision and should be left to the individual business to decide.

- vi. Standard livery for Cambridge Hackney Carriages was to be encouraged as long as it could be phased in so that the financial burden on drivers was not onerous.
- vii. Members could see both benefits and drawback of rear access, wheelchair accessible, vehicles.

The Committee:

### **Resolved (unanimously)**

- i. To approve that officers go out to consult on of the proposed changes to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy, using the form within Appendix B of the Officer's report. The results of the consultation would then be presented at the next full meeting of the Licensing Committee in October 2017.

### **17/70/Lic Hackney Carriage Table of Fares**

#### **Questions from members of the public**

Mr Wratten and Mr Mohammed responded to the report and made the following comments:

- i. The trade needed an increase in fares and costs had risen.
- ii. Raising the starting price was the fairest way in increase charges.

The Committee received a report from Team Manager (Commercial & Licensing) regarding the hackney Carriage Table of Fares.

The Committee noted that recommendation 2.1.2 bullet point one should read '*An increase in all Tarriffs (drop) of 10p*'.

The Committee made the following comments in response to the report:

- i. Questioned the proposed additional surcharge to carry bicycles was excessive and that a charge in line with the £1 charged in Oxford would be more appropriate.
- ii. Suggested that such a policy would be problematic as bicycles came in many shapes and sizes.
- iii. Questioned the charge for prams from a diversity and equality point of view.
- iv. Members raised concerns that the 20 MPH speed limit could slow journeys to the point where a waiting charge was generated.

- v. Stated that converting meters to yards in the Table of Fares would result in strange numbers and this would be confusing for the public.
- vi. Suggested that the Table of Fares needed to be open and transparent for the public.

In response to Members' questions the Team Manager (Commercial & Licensing) and the Environmental Health Manager said the following:

- i. The change from meters to yards would result in strange looking numbers in the table but would allow a simple change that would not require car equipment to be re-calibrated. Showing the distance in the Table of Rates as both metric and imperial would be an option.
- ii. With regard to prams, drivers needed to ensure that all passengers were carried in a way that complied with passenger seatbelt law. A driver would be within his rights to refuse a fare if a passenger wanted to carry a pram on board with the infant still inside it.

In consultation with the Committee the Environmental Health Manager proposed the following amendment to the recommendations:

2.1.1 Amend the fare chart to provide the statutorily required distances in yards. Members are recommended to consider whether the distances should be provided in:

- i. Yards only
- ii. Both yards and metres

2.1.2 Consider the fare change proposals submitted by the trade and determine if it is appropriate to authorise an increase in fares, in relation to:

- An increase in ~~the all~~ Tariffs (drop) ~~price from £2.80 to £2.90~~ by 10 pence.
- An increase in the distance tariff by reducing the distances travelled for 20p; from 90 metres in the first instance and subsequent 179 metres thereafter.
- An additional extra charge of ~~£3.00~~ **£1.00** for 'specialist vehicles' such as bicycles ~~and prams~~ **not able to be put in the luggage compartment of the vehicle.**

The amendments were agreed *nem con*.

The Chair decided that the amended recommendations should be voted on and recorded separately as follows:

- i. To amend the fare chart to provide the statutorily required distances in yards. Members are recommended to consider whether the distances should be provided in both yards and metres.
  - Yards only **(Refused unanimously)**
  - Both yards and Metres **(Agreed Unanimously)**
- ii. Consider the fare change proposals submitted by the trade and determine if it is appropriate to authorise an increase in fares, in relation to:
  - An increase in all Tariff 1 (drop) by 10 pence. **(Agreed by 7 votes to 1)**
  - An increase in the distance tariff by reducing the distances travelled for 20p; from 90 metres in the first instance and subsequent 179 metres thereafter. **(Refused unanimously)**
  - An additional extra charge of £1.00 for bicycles not able to be put in the luggage compartment of the vehicle. **(Agreed Unanimously)**

The Committee:

**Resolved**

- i. To amend the fare chart to provide the statutorily required distances in yards and metres.
- ii. An increase in all Tariffs (drop) by 10 pence.
- iii. Add an additional extra charge of £1.00 for bicycles not able to be carried in the luggage compartment of the vehicle.

The meeting ended at 11.35 am

**CHAIR**