

**LICENSING COMMITTEE**

21 March 2022  
10.35 - 11.00 am

**Present:** Councillors Bird (Chair), McPherson (Vice-Chair), Bennett, Collis, Moore and Page-Croft

**Officers:**

Environmental Health Manager: Yvonne O'Donnell

Legal Adviser: Paul Weller

Committee Manager: James Goddard

Producer: Sarah Steed

**Others present from Cambridge City Licenced Taxis:**

Ahmed Karaahmed (Chairman)

Afzal Aslam (Member)

Kamil Winek (Member)

<b>FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL</b>
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**22/9/Lic Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors Dryden, Flaubert and McQueen.

**22/10/Lic Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made.

**22/11/Lic Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 31 January 2022 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**22/12/Lic Public Questions**

Members of the public asked a number of questions, as set out below.

1. Kamil Winek raised the following issues:

- i. The Council required taxis to become electric vehicles before infrastructure was in place to facilitate these.

- ii. Issues drivers faced:
  - a. Licensing fees had increased in the last few years.
  - b. Increasing operating costs.
  - c. Unstable customer demand.
- iii. The Licensing Committee were responsible for regulating the taxi trade. Fit and proper regulations were needed so it could be a sustainable and accessible service.
- iv. Please be mindful of taxi business running costs. Requiring CCTV implementation could impact on these and lead to drivers' hourly rate dropping below minimum wage levels.

The Environmental Health Manager responded:

- i. She was speaking to the taxi trade about issues raised this week.
- ii. She was also liaising with Councillors.
- iii. Issues were being picked up.
- iv. As a business, it was the taxi trades' responsibility to manage running costs.

2. Afzal Aslam raised the following issues:

- i. Expressed concerns about privacy in taxi vehicles if CCTV was installed. CCTV would operate even if a vehicle were not being used as a taxi ie for social and domestic reasons. This conflicted with GDPR and Human Rights Acts.
- ii. Referred to Warrington Council system where taxi CCTV was turned on when the meter was running, but off when not.
- iii. Suggested Cambridge City Council subsidised the installation of CCTV in taxis and delayed its installation for two years.

The Environmental Health Manager responded:

- i. Once a vehicle is licensed as a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle, the licence applies 24/7. Even if a licensed vehicle is being used for social and domestic purposes, it is still a licensed vehicle.
- ii. CCTV should stay on for the safety of the driver and passengers.
- iii. Not all vehicles have meters to link a camera to.
- iv. Whatever measures are introduced, they will comply with GDPR and Human Rights Legislation.

Afzal Aslam reiterated: Please look at the Warrington Council model so taxis can be used for social and domestic purposes.

The Environmental Health Manager responded:

- i. Reiterated that once a vehicle is licensed as a taxi, it remains a taxi, ie a licensed vehicle/premises.
- ii. Undertook to review practice from other councils.

## **22/13/Lic CCTV in Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles**

The Committee received a report from the Environmental Health Manager.

Under the powers conferred to Cambridge City Council under the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 and the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, (as amended), Cambridge City Council has responsibility for licensing Hackney Carriage, Private Hire and Dual Licence Drivers as well as vehicle proprietors and Private Hire Operators within the City.

The mandatory installation of CCTV within Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles was agreed by Members in October 2017.

Members of the Licensing Committee in September 2020 agreed an implementation date of 1st April 2022 whereby all taxi and private hire vehicles will have had CCTV installed.

Due to delays in the identification of an approved supplier and the Covid 19 pandemic, the 1st April 2022 implementation will not be met, and further consideration is required following the statutory guidance for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Services.

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

- i. Could points raised by the public speakers at today's committee be looked at and officially addressed as part of the review? Noted they were responded to verbally today.

In response to public speaker and Members' questions the Environmental Health Manager said the following:

- i. Drivers would not be required to install CCTV until the review was complete.
- ii. South Cambs District Council had not deferred CCTV work until 2023. They were undertaking procurement now. The City Council and SCDC

would undertake joint work. There was no implementation date set in the report as the review needed to be completed first. Details on what is feasible/legal would be reviewed then a recommendation proposed for implementation.

Councillor Bennett proposed an amendment to the officer recommendation that Licensing officers return to Licensing Committee in October ~~June~~ 2022 to present outcome of review and proposed implementation dates.

This amendment was **unanimously accepted**.

The Committee:

**Resolved (unanimously) to:**

- i. Approve that Cambridge City Council conduct a review of the requirement of CCTV in licenced vehicles to demonstrate:
  - a. necessary to meet a pressing need;
  - b. and proportionate need.
- ii. Approve that Cambridge City Council continue to work with South Cambridgeshire District Council to identify appropriate supplier.
- iii. Approve that Licensing officers return to Licensing Committee in October 2022 to present outcome of review and proposed implementation dates, if pressing need and proportionate need is met.

The meeting ended at 11.00 am

**CHAIR**