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Licensing Committee

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Monday, 20 July 2015

LICENSING COMMITTEE

20 July 2015
10.00 - 10.20 am

Present: Councillors Benstead (Chair), Bird (Vice-Chair), Austin, Gawthrope, McPherson, Meftah and Pippas

Officers Present:

Licensing & Enforcement Manager: Robert Osbourn

Legal Advisor: Carol Patton

Committee Manager: Sarah Steed

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

15/15/LIC Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Bick, O'Connell, O'Reilly and Owers.

Councillor Sinnott attended as the alternate.

15/16/LIC Declarations of Interest

No interests were declared.

15/17/LIC Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the 23 March 2015 and 28 May 2015 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

15/18/LIC Public Questions

There were no public questions.

15/19/LIC Revisions to Taxi Licensing Practices Following Deregulation Act 2015

The Committee received a report from the Licensing and Enforcement Manager regarding the revisions to the taxi licensing practices following the Deregulation Act 2015.

The Committee asked the following questions in response to the report:

- i. Did the deregulation provisions affect the cap which had been put on the vehicle licences.
- ii. Would there be any impact on income due to the changes to the licensing fees.
- iii. What is the audit process for taxi's and operators.
- iv. How often is an Operator audited if no complaints have been received.
- v. Are there different rules for limousine drivers who make trips to the airport.

In response to the Committee's questions, the Licensing and Enforcement Manager confirmed the following:

- i. The Deregulation Act had no effect on the decision made by members to introduce a cap on the number of hackney carriage vehicle licences.
- ii. The deregulation changes had no impact on licence fee income, the licence fee was charged on a cost recovery basis only.
- iii. The Licensing Department aimed to visit licensed operators at least once a year, during the visit the record of journeys supplied to the public would be checked.
- iv. If a complaint was made by a member of the public in relation to a private hire driver, the operator's record could be used to identify who the driver was for the journey.
- v. It was usual to have contact with larger private hire operators several times a week, smaller private hire operators would also be visited and an annual audit of the records would be undertaken.
- vi. Some limousines vehicles were exempt and did not display the pre-booked badges on their vehicles. The drivers of limousines still had to comply with the private hire regulations and be pre-booked before undertaking a journey. There were a large number of limousines which were licensed by South Cambridgeshire District Council.

The Committee:

i. Resolved unanimously to:

- a. adopt a policy to issue licences for hackney carriage drivers, private hire drivers and dual driver licences for an initial period of one year and thereafter to offer drivers wishing to renew their licences to do so for a period of three years or one year

- b. issue private hire operator licences for an initial period of one year and, thereafter, to renew licences for five years
- c. Note the changes in the law related to sub-contracting of private hire bookings across the district council boundaries as set out in Section 3 of the report.

The meeting ended at 10.20 am

CHAIR

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