

LICENSING COMMITTEE

28 September 2020

10.30 - 11.00 am

Present: Councillors Bird (Chair), Gehring, Johnson, Massey, McQueen, Moore and Page-Croft

Officers

Environmental Health Manager: Yvonne O' Donnell

Environmental Health and Licensing Business Support Team Leader: Wangri Njiiri

Senior Litigation Lawyer: Paul Weller

Committee Manager: James Goddard

Producer: Sarah Steed

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

20/7/Lic Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors McPherson, Summerbell and Thittala. Councillor Johnson attended as the Alternate.

20/8/Lic Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

20/9/Lic Minutes

The minutes of the meetings held on 27 January and 28 May 2020 were approved as a correct record.

20/10/Lic Public Questions

A Director of Cambridge City Taxis Ltd asked a question as set out below.

- i. Queried if the Mill Road Bridge closure was temporary or permanent.
- ii. Acknowledged this was the responsibility of the County Council but expressed concern that taxis were unable to use the bridge.

Councillor Massey responded:

- i. The Mill Road Bridge closure was the responsibility of the County Council. This should be a temporary measure of eighteen months, and a review was expected after six.
- ii. A consultation was in progress, but this was not well publicised.
- iii. Councillors Bird and Massey had concerns about the bridge closure, which they were following up with the County Council.

20/11/Lic Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Taxi Vehicle CCTV implementation

The Committee received a report from the Environmental Health Manager.

The report advised that 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.

A Director of Cambridge City Taxis Ltd asked if the installation of CCTV could be delayed due to COVID-19. Queried if the cost would be subsidised by the council.

The Environmental Health Manager responded:

- i. The report recommendation was a starting point.
- ii. If the recommendation was agreed, taxi drivers would have twelve months to install CCTV to protect themselves and passengers.
- iii. It was a mandatory scheme that had already been approved by committee.
- iv. The cost of CCTV would not be subsidised but the City Council and South Cambs District Council would seek the best deal for drivers from CCTV providers.
- v. The footage would be accessed/viewed by the Police and City Council Officers.

The Committee received a written representation from the Chairman of Cambridge Hackney Carriage Association.

The representation covered the following issues:

- i. Wished to oppose to the recommended implementation date of 1st April 2022 to install CCTV systems in taxis.
- ii. We were in unprecedented times and currently about a third of the fleet are working. Drivers' takings were about 20% at the moment. To cover their overheads, takings must be near to the 50 - 60% mark.
- iii. Many drivers were unlikely to return to work until there was a vaccine. Which could be sometime 2020 or later. Furthermore, drivers expected to face economic uncertainty into next year, possibly longer. Believed the CCTV system could cost drivers around £700-800. Most of drivers would be unable to cover that cost. Therefore, they felt it was too soon to implement CCTV as drivers could not afford it.
- iv. Drivers wished to suggest April 2024. This would give them plenty of time to save for CCTV systems.

The Environmental Health Manager said the expected cost was circa £300.

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

- i. The installation of CCTV within Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles was agreed in October 2017.
- ii. Many insurance companies required CCTV facilities showing internal and/or external views.
- iii. The City Council and South Cambs District Council should implement the CCTV scheme at the same time.
- iv. Empathised with drivers' cost concerns. The City Council would do what it could to support drivers.

The Committee:

Resolved (unanimously) to approve the implementation date of 1 April 2022, by which date all licenced vehicles must have an installed CCTV system, from awarded supplier. System must comply with Cambridge City Council Technical specification.

20/12/Lic Officer Urgent Decision: Pavement Licences

The decision was noted.

The meeting ended at 11.00 am

CHAIR