

LICENSING COMMITTEE

11 March 2019

Present: Councillor A Dychton (Vice-Chair)
Councillors S Bolton, A Grimston, K Hastrick, M Parker, G Saffery,
D Scudder, R Smith and D Walford

Officers: Environmental Health and Licensing Section Head
Senior Licensing Officer (AY)

13 Apologies for absence/ committee membership

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Connal, Fahmy, Jeffree, Mauthoor and Mills.

It was noted that there was a vacancy on the committee following the resignation of Antony Barton. A new committee membership would be agreed at Annual Council.

As Councillor Fahmy had given apologies, Councillor Dychton chaired the meeting.

14 Disclosure of interests (if any)

There were no disclosures of interest.

15 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on the 16 January 2019 were submitted and signed.

16 Amendment to the Guidelines for the grant of hackney carriage driver, private hire driver and operator licences

The Senior Licensing Officer introduced the report and explained that the committee was asked to consider an amendment to the council's taxi policy to enable the use of the national register of revocations and refusals (also referred

to as NR3) for hackney carriage and private hire drivers as set up by the National Anti-Fraud Network and the Local Government Association.

The Senior Licensing Officer explained that the register had been launched in July 2018 in response to concerns that taxi and private hire drivers who had their licences revoked or refused by one authority were successfully obtaining licences from other licensing authorities. The register would be a useful tool in addition to existing checks which were not proposed to change.

A consultation had been carried out and no formal responses had been received. Verbal responses received had been included in the report. Also contained in the report were the proposed policy wording based upon guidance from the LGA and proposed letters to be sent to existing and former licence holders in accordance with data protection legislation.

The register would not be public, just shared between local authorities, and the council would need to enter a data sharing agreement with the National Anti-Fraud Network.

Following a question from the committee, the Senior Licensing Officer explained that the police were already consulted and the council had a data sharing agreement in place. The police could provide information to the council on non-conviction notices e.g. an abduction notice which could be in place to disrupt an adult's contact with a child in order to stop a particular association.

The Environmental Health and Licensing Section Head commented that Watford was taking a pro-active approach in using the register. It was also confirmed that by being on the register it would not mean that a person could not get a licence but that each case would be considered individually. All drivers were aware of the change.

RESOLVED –

That the Guidelines to the Grant of Hackney Carriage, Private Hire Driver and Operator Licences be amended to include that the Council will be using the NR3 database to both log drivers who have either had their applications to be a Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Driver refused or revoked on the grounds that they are not a fit and proper person and to check all new applicants for a Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Drivers Licence, and should the check reveal a disclosure from another Licensing Authority that the Council will make all necessary enquiries to that Licensing Authority to enable it to make a decision on whether to grant the applicant a licence.

Chair

The Meeting started at 7.00 pm
and finished at 7.10 pm