

## LICENSING COMMITTEE

16 JULY 2012

Present: Councillor J Brown (Chair)  
Councillor P Jeffree (Vice-Chair)  
Councillors I Brandon, I Brown, K Crout, G Derbyshire,  
J Dhindsa (For minute numbers 1 and 2.), K Hastrick,  
M Hofman, D Scudder, L Scudder, D Walford, N Bell and  
M Turmaine

Officers: Environmental Health and Licensing Section Head  
Licensing Manager  
Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer (JK)

### 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/ COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Meerabux.

There were two changes of membership for this meeting: Councillor Bell replaced Councillor Connal and Councillor Turmaine replaced Councillor Mills.

### 2 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS (IF ANY)

Councillor Dhindsa declared an interest and withdrew from the meeting.

### 3 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2012 were submitted and signed.

### 4 AMENDMENT TO THE HACKNEY CARRIAGE VEHICLE LICENSING POLICY

The Committee received a report of the Head of Environmental Services asking the Committee to consider an amendment to the Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licensing Policy.

The Licensing Manager introduced the report. At the meeting in March 2012 the Committee had agreed to limit the number of Hackney Carriages to 304. Members had felt that there was a need for this to be a reducing limit as licences were surrendered or revoked. The legal advice was that this specific issue needed to be consulted upon. He reported that a letter had been sent to all taxi drivers, information posted on the Council's website and an article had been in the Watford Observer. Thirteen responses were received of which ten were positive about a reducing limit.

The Licensing Manager explained that in practice it was quite rare to revoke a licence and the report took account of the different reasons why a licence might be revoked. Licences were also rarely surrendered and now there was a limit licences were more likely to attract a premium and be sold rather than surrendered. If the licence was revoked because the driver had not complied with the regulations the Council could revoke the licence and not return it to the pool. If there were other circumstances such as the vehicle had been written off or replaced it would be wrong to refuse to renew the licence.

The Licensing Manager noted that the number of respondents was very low but more were in favour of a reducing limit. He referred to paragraph 3.1.6 of the report about the waiting/notification list and reported that ten people had asked to go on the list since the limit was introduced. This gave false expectations that a licence would be available for them and it was better to advise people of other options available.

Councillor Bell advised that he supported this recommendation.

The Chair asked if the Committee was happy not to maintain a waiting list and it was agreed that it gave false hope.

RESOLVED –

That the Council shall not re-issue any hackney carriage vehicle licence that is:

- (1) surrendered or
- (2) revoked by virtue that the licence-holder has been convicted of an offence or failed to comply with the provisions of the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 or the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 or
- (3) revoked under the provisions of section 68 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 where officers are not satisfied after a period of two months from the date of a written notice as to the fitness of a hackney carriage or the accuracy of its taximeter.

“Re-issue” means issuing a new licence for a different vehicle in lieu of a vehicle that is no longer to be licensed.

Chair

The Meeting started at 7.45 pm  
and finished at 7.55 pm