

TORRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL

LICENSING MEETING

Town Hall - Bridge Street, Bideford, EX39 2HS

Wednesday, 11 March 2020 - 10.00 am

PRESENT                    Councillor K James (Chair)  
                                  Councillor J McKenzie (Vice-Chair)

                                  Councillors C Bright, D Bushby, M Clarke, P Hames, T Inch and  
                                  D McGeough

ALSO PRESENT        C Norman                    - Solicitor  
                                  C Parkhouse                - Lead Licensing Officer  
                                  K Brown                     - Democratic Services Officer

55.     APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence received from Councillor Hackett and Wiseman. Councillor Ford substituted for Councillor Hackett.

56.     MINUTES

It was proposed by Councillor Hames, seconded by Councillor Clarke and –

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting on 12 February 2020 be agreed and signed as a correct record but no vote was taken.

57.     DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Members were reminded that declarations of interest should be made as and when the specific agenda item to which they related was under discussion.

58.     AGREEMENT OF AGENDA ITEMS PART I AND II

There were no Part II items.

59.     URGENT MATTERS OF INFORMATION TO BE BROUGHT FORWARD WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE CHAIR AND THE COMMITTEE

There were no urgent matters.

60.     TAXI POLICY REVIEW

The Lead Licensing Officer presented the report the purpose of which was for members to approve the consultation process for the Taxi Licensing Policy review.

Following a query from Councillor Bushby on proposal 3, the Lead Licensing Officer confirmed that the Taxi Licence application forms do ask if the applicant has any criminal convictions and if they have been refused or had a licence revoked with another Council. It is currently only voluntary for Council's to use the database however Central Government may make it a mandatory requirement in the future.

Following a query from Councillor James on proposal 4, the Lead Licensing Officer confirmed that nationally it is only voluntary however some authorities do make it a mandatory requirement.

A discussion on proposals 5 and 6 took place with regards to the age of the Taxi vehicles and currently not having an age limit restriction. There is a section in the current policy which refers to the authority's strategic goal to safeguarding the environment and actively encouraging the use of vehicles powered by 'green' fuels. During the consultation process and through the Climate Change Working Group this will be discussed further and developed.

It was proposed by Councillor Clarke and seconded by Councillor Hames and –

Resolved:

That the consultation process for the Taxi Licensing Policy be approved.

(Vote: For – Unanimous)

#### 61. LICENSING SERVICE - BUSINESS REPORT

The Lead Licensing Officer presented the report, the purpose of which was to provide information to Members on the performance of the Licensing Service.

There is a slight increase in Taxi applications due to a number of three year licences being due for renewal this financial year. However, balanced over a three year period the figures do not fluctuate considerably.

Following a query from Councillor Bushby with regards to the 77 premises that have been visited, the Lead Licensing Officer confirmed that a few premises have been re-visited due to improvements needed however no visits have seen major issues that have required the need to be escalated further. The Lead Licensing Officer also confirmed that the taxi/private hire vehicle inspections are carried out by the Council's Neighbourhood Officer.

The content of the report was noted.

#### 62. CLIMATE CHANGE

This is a standing item on the Agenda.

On 23.03.20 there is a Member Working Group which may produce more information.

Following a suggestion from Councillor Hames with regards to electric charging points in the Council's Car Parks and any surplus goes to the grid, Councillor James confirmed charging points would be something that The Future High Street project would look at and that the responsibility would come under Devon County Council's remit.

63. CONSIDERATION OF THE FORWARD PLAN

It was agreed that the next meeting would too early for the Taxi Policy Review.

Following a query from Councillor McGeough Councillor James confirmed that Food Hygiene is the responsibility of the Environmental Department not Licensing, however he will speak to the Environmental Health and Community Safety Manager for an update.

It was agreed that the Taxis Rank should be an item on the Agenda for the next meeting and to invite the Taxi Liaison Committee to discuss further. The Lead Licensing Officer advised that he would follow up the situation.

Following a query from Councillor McGeough it was agreed that the Events Policy be discussed at the next meeting.

Councillor Hames raised a query with regard to Licensing Circuses. The Lead Licensing Officer advised this did not fall under the remit of the Licensing Team but he would provide further information at the next meeting.

64. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

There were no Part II items

65. PART II (CLOSED SESSION)

There were no Part II items.

The meeting commenced at 10am and closed at 10:38am

Chair:

Date: