

TORRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCILLICENSING MEETINGTown Hall - Bridge Street, Bideford, EX39 2HSWednesday, 18 October 2023 - 10.00 am

PRESENT Councillor C Bright (Chair)
 Councillor S Inch (Vice-Chair)
 Councillors S Harding, A Dart, S Gibson, W Lo-Vel and
 P Pennington

ALSO PRESENT	S Dorey	- Head of Legal & Governance (Monitoring Officer)
	C Parkhouse	- Lead Licensing Officer
	P Gilbert	- Public Health & Community Safety Manager
	T Vanstone	- Senior Electoral & Democratic Services Officer
	K Brown	- Democratic Services Officer

One member of the Taxi Liaison Committee

128. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs P Hackett and H Thomas

129. MINUTES

It was proposed by Councillor C Bright, seconded by Councillor P Pennington and –

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 21st June 2023 be agreed as a correct record.

(Vote: For – 5, Against – 0, Abstentions - 1)

Councillor A Dart joined the meeting at 10.03am therefore took on part in the vote.

130. ACTION LIST

The action list was discussed and updated.

131. 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.

132. AGREEMENT OF AGENDA ITEMS PART I AND II

There were no scheduled Part II items, however the Lead Licensing Officer advised when receiving an update from the Police Licensing Officer there may be a requirement to move into Part II.

It was proposed by Councillor C Bright, seconded by Councillor S Inch and –

Resolved:

To enter Part II if required.

(Vote: For – unanimous)

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

There were no urgent matters.

134. TAXI POLICY AMENDMENT - VEHICLE EMISSIONS

The Lead Licensing Officer presented the report, the purpose of which was to present to the Committee a request from the taxi liaison committee to amend the Taxi Policy.

Mr Sean Moyse, a member of the taxi liaison committee was present and addressed the committee advising of his recommendation and the reasons why.

The committee were invited to ask questions.

In response to a queries, Mr Sean Moyse advised the life expectancy on a vehicle is between 10 – 15 years and hybrid models are still expensive to purchase whether new or second hand.

It was confirmed that this amendment also applies to private hire vehicles and there are approximately 130 across the district and 45 of those are already Euro 6 compliant.

Councillor P Pennington requested a comment be received from the Lead Member for Economy & Estates and the Lead Member for Climate Change before the amendments are agreed.

Councillor W Lo-Vel expressed her concerns regarding the lack of infrastructure for electric vehicles.

It was proposed by Councillor P Pennington that this item be deferred to gain a comment from the Lead Member of Climate Change and Lead Member of Economy & Estates.

There was no seconder for Councillor P Pennington's proposal.

It was proposed by Councillor A Dart, seconded by Councillor S Harding and –

Resolved:

That the latter deadline in the report be approved.

(Vote: For – 2, Against – 5, Abstentions – 0)

The Lead Licensing Officer advised that a full policy review would be carried out in 2025 therefore any decisions made today could change when the Policy is reviewed in 2025.

It was proposed by Councillor S Gibson, seconded by Councillor Lo-Vel and –

Resolved-

That the following recommendations be approved:

- *From April 2026 or when a vehicle reaches the end of its life, all vehicles licenced by TDC will be required to meet or exceed Euro 6 Emissions standards (or recognised UK equivalent).*
- *From April 2030 or when a vehicle reaches the end of its life, all vehicles being licensed for the first time must have CO2 emissions of less than 50 g/km*
- *All Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles will have a 2-year allowance on the emissions standards dates given in this policy.*
- *To promote the move to electric vehicles, the Authority will provide a discount on the standard vehicle licence fee of 20% for a period of 5 years (subject to the necessary funding provision).*

(Vote: For – 4, Against – 3, Abstentions – 0)

135. OTHER ITEMS FROM TAXI MEETING

The Lead Licensing Officer provided the following update.

The Taxi Rank bus shelter in Bideford was being pursued through Bideford Town Council. It was confirmed that funding had been approved and they were waiting for approval from Devon County Council as the shelter would be on their land.

The replacement signage on the Taxi Rank was on hold until the bus shelter had been erected.

An issue raised at the meeting was the fact that the toilets on Bideford Quay are locked at 6pm. This decision was made due to the anti-social behaviour they attracted.

Another item discussed was the possibility of a Taxi Rank in Westward Ho! and Appledore. The Lead Licensing Officer advised of the difficulties for this due to the potential loss of revenue for both Devon County Council and Torridge District Council, permission would be required from the relevant authority. However, he would pursue the idea and report back to the committee in the future.

The committee were invited to ask questions.

In response to a query from the Chair to whether disabled keys could be provided to Taxi Drivers for the toilets, the Lead Licensing Officer advised he would investigate this possibility; however, permission would be required from the relevant authority.

Following concern from Councillor W Lo-Vel regarding the toilets being locked at 6pm, the Head of Legal & Governance (Monitoring Officer) explained in detail the reasons for this.

The discussion progressed to anti-social behaviour and difficulties in contacting the Police. The Public Health & Community Safety Manager advised the committee of the Community Safety Partnership meeting scheduled for 9th November where issues like these can be discussed with the Police. Once this meeting has taken place TDC's External Overview & Scrutiny joint meeting can be arranged.

136. POLICE LICENSING OFFICER ROLE

It was agreed by the Chair that the Police Licensing Officer Role update could be brought forward by one item.

Paul Butler, one of the forces Alcohol Licensing Officers introduced himself and detailed his role within the authority and the remit of his team's work.

He continued to provide an overview of what a licensed premise could include and confirmed TDC issue all licenses. He explained the licence application procedure and the vast variety of licensable activities this could cover. Applicants have to demonstrate what they would do to promote the four licensing objectives which are as follows:

- the prevention of crime and disorder
- the prevention of public nuisance
- public safety
- the protection of children from harm

Their role is to be both proactive and reactive with the objectives being the main proactive preventative aspects.

The Police Licensing Officer explained to the committee the principle of an Event Management Plan and Temporary Event Notice.

Details of how existing premises are monitored was explained and the escalation process for uncooperative premises or if a situation becomes too serious. Licences can be reviewed by TDC's licensing committee and any of the following can be requested to address issues:

- the licensee be removed
- further conditions on the licence
- a reduction in hours of operation
- ultimately, the revocation of the licence

During the update, TDC's Lead Licensing Officer reminded the Police Licensing Officer, when giving examples of incidents that had occurred in the area not to mention names of people or names of premises.

Partnerships with outside agencies include Trading Standards on test purchase operations, the security industry authority by checking and monitoring SIA registered door supervisors and local authority's Environmental Health Officers on nuisance and anti-social behaviour complaints.

The Police Licensing Officer informed the committee of work with premises regarding Violence Against Women & Girls (VAWG), the drink spiking initiative, project Nighteye and Ask Angela.

The committee were invited to ask questions.

In response to a query, the Police Licensing Officer confirmed he does try to attend larger events to ensure the four licensing objectives are adhered to.

The Police Licensing Officer confirmed his role is funded by the Police.

It was confirmed that in the reports the highlighted yellow parts are information being added not subtracted unless there is a line through the information.

137. LICENSING ACT POLICY REVIEW

The Lead Licensing Officer presented the report, the purpose of which was to review and update the Authority's current Statement of Licensing Policy under s.5 of the Licensing Act 2003.

If approved the report would be presented to Full Council for adoption.

A brief discussion followed.

It was confirmed that TENs stand for Temporary Event Notices.

Following statistics provided on VAWG, Councillor P Pennington wished for it to be noted that men are targeted as well.

It was noted that the Licensing Act Policy is reviewed every five years and suggestion was made for this to change to every four years so that each new Council views the policy. The Lead Licensing Officer confirmed why it is reviewed every five years and agreed it could be reviewed every four years. The Head of Legal & Governance (Monitoring Officer) also had no objections.

It was proposed by Councillor C Bright, seconded by Councillor S Harding and –

Resolved:

That the revised Statement of Licensing Policy be approved and presented to Full Council for formal adoption.

(Vote: For – unanimous)

138. CONSIDERATION OF THE FORWARD PLAN

The forward plan was discussed and updated.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and closed at 11.28 am

Chair:

Date: