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MEETING	LICENSING & REGULATORY COMMITTEE
DATE	21 MAY 2008
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS GILLIES (CHAIR), HORTON, HYMAN, MOORE (VICE-CHAIR) AND KING (SUBSTITUTE)
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLOR B WATSON

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## **25. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

At this point Members were asked to declare any personal or prejudicial interests they had in the business on the agenda.

Councillor Gillies declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest in agenda item 4 (Implementation of Controlled Growth Policy for Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licences) as he was a former owner of a hackney carriage plate.

Councillor Hyman declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest in agenda item 4 (Implementation of Controlled Growth Policy for Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licences) as he knew one of the speakers to be a resident in his Ward.

## **26. MINUTES**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2008 be approved and signed as a correct record.

## **27. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

It was reported that there had been 4 registrations to speak under the Council's Public Participation Scheme in relation to Agenda Item 4 (Implementation of Controlled Growth Policy for Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licences).

The Vice-Chair of York Taxi Association addressed the Committee and stated that the Halcrow Survey and the collected data were inaccurate. He cited the Clifford Street taxi rank figures as an example and challenged these on the grounds that the rank was only operational for a few hours at a time. He also claimed that the methodology behind the survey was incorrect.

The Secretary of York Taxi Association addressed the Committee and stated that the Unmet Demand Survey ought to be reasonable and realistic. The survey claims that 15 additional licences needed to be issued in order to suppress unmet demand. He requested that the Committee refuse any licences over and above this fifteen until another Unmet

Demand Survey was undertaken in a few years time. He also asked where the additional taxis would be ranked as at present there was no extra space at the railway station.

A representative of Station taxis spoke. He claimed that Halcrow's survey contained inaccuracies in relation to the station taxi rank. He said that this rank was unique and varying factors such as the traffic management system, safety barriers and train arrivals caused peaks and troughs in passenger waiting times.

A Hackney Carriage Driver stated that no more than 15 extra licences should be given and saw no reason to contradict the Unmet Demand Survey. He said that another survey should be undertaken in a few years time.

## **28. IMPLEMENTATION OF CONTROLLED GROWTH POLICY FOR HACKNEY CARRIAGE VEHICLE LICENCES**

Members considered a report that asked them to consider the implementation of a Controlled Growth Policy for Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licences. At a meeting on 2 November 2007 the Licensing and Regulatory Committee had resolved to remove the numeric restriction on the number of hackney carriage vehicle licences issued by the Council and to issue a number of new licences each year until market demand limits the number of licences issued.

The report before the Committee today sought approval for the methodology which will produce managed growth from the present position to a market regulated situation, It relates only to motorised hackney carriages.

The Head of Licensing updated that the recommendations laid out in the report had now been clarified with some additional wording. This was set out in the resolution below.

Written representations had also been received from the Vice Chair of York Taxi Association and these were circulated at the meeting. In summary the following points were raised within this documentation:

- In ranks such as the station, passenger waiting time will never reduce, due to the loading restrictions imposed locally and is independent of the number of vehicles available.
- York has a higher than average provision of Hackney Carriages per population than other Licensing Authorities.
- The proportion of passengers travelling in hours where the delay exceeds one minute is only 9.3% compared to 21% in other Local Authorities.
- The proportion of passengers travelling in hours where some delay occurs is 31% which is lower than the average 37% for districts analysed.

- The survey is flawed in a number of areas including information in relation to the Clifford Street rank, the railway station rank and the St Saviourgate rank.

Members received a short presentation from a representative of Halcrow regarding the methodology of the Unmet Demand Survey. The representative said that the figures relating to Clifford Street taxi rank had been over factored and these would be adjusted in the final report. These adjustments would not effect the overall outcome of the report. They also confirmed that factors such as the traffic management system at the railway station had been taken into account.

Members asked for clarification in relation to the number of taxis at the railway station and a representative of Station Taxis responded that at the moment the limit had been reached but they would be open to discussions. He also clarified that wheelchair accessible vehicles could be booked through Station Taxis.

Members asked questions in relation to the number of wheelchair accessible vehicles in the City at the moment and were told that there were twenty, six of which were from Station Taxis. Questions were also asked in relation to the number of private hire vehicles and driver shifts in the City and it was noted that private hire vehicles were the most dominant.

Members were presented with the following options in relation to the policy for release of new licences:

- Option 1** Apply the policy as set out in paragraph 14 of the report.
- Option 2** Apply some other policy for the release of new vehicle licences.
- Option 3** Take no further action and grant no new vehicle licences.
- Option 4** Delimit completely.

In relation to the methodology to determine recipients of new vehicle licences Members were presented with the following options:

- Option 5** Utilise the waiting list in the manner set out in paragraphs 16 to 25 of the report.
- Option 6** Utilise the waiting list but apply alternative criteria.
- Option 7** Do not use the waiting list as a means to release new vehicle licences but apply some other selection method such as a random selection (lucky dip).

RESOLVED:<sup>1</sup>

- That option 1 be approved with regard to the release of new hackney carriage licences and a limit be set on the number of hackney carriage vehicle licences issued at 173 from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2008

(excluding 4 horse drawn vehicle licences) and increase this number by 2 licences on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2009 and thereafter by a further 2 licences at 6 monthly intervals and undertake further surveys every three years.

- That Option 5 be approved with regard to the allocation of new hackney carriage vehicle licences and apply the waiting list for the issue of the first tranche of licences as at 21<sup>st</sup> May 2008.

**REASON:**

The proposed policy achieves a managed approach to meeting Members' stated objectives which is deemed to be fair and reasonable. As the waiting list has been in existence for 11 years and has general approval by the trade the additional operational criteria are also considered to be reasonable in meeting Members' stated objectives.

Action Required

1. To issue 15 new hackney carriage licences with immediate effect and further additional licences as per the recommendations.

KS

Councillor Ian Gillies, Chair

[The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 11.10 am].