
MEETING	LICENSING & REGULATORY COMMITTEE
DATE	7 JANUARY 2011
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS GILLIES (CHAIR), HORTON, LOOKER, MOORE (VICE-CHAIR) AND ORRELL (SUBSTITUTE)
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLORS FIRTH

25. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

At this point in the meeting, Members were asked to declare any personal or prejudicial interests they may have in the business on the agenda. None were declared

26. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Licensing and Regulatory Committee held on 5th November 2010 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

27. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

There was one registered speaker in respect of Agenda item 4, details of which are included under the relevant minute item.

28. CONSULTATION WITH THE TAXI TRADE.

Members considered a report which presented a petition from members of the taxi trade seeking a review of the Council's policy for consultation with the trade. The report set out the existing policy and asked members if they wish to review their policy for consultation with the hackney carriage and private hire trades.

Officers outlined the report and advised that levels of consultation had increased over the years by way of bi-monthly meetings and bespoke consultations on specific issues. In addition minutes of those meetings are now available via the Council website. Newsletters are sent to all drivers at the point of licence renewal and the Licensing & Regulatory Committee agendas and minutes are all public via City of York Council website. Officers advised that they are unsure exactly what the trade would like them to do but would be happy to adopt any consultation mechanism, cost

and time constraints permitting. Officers had consulted with taxi trade associations and identified that if a new representative body were to be created, it should represent 10% of the trade as a minimum.

Mr. Gibb Kirk, lead petitioner, advised the Committee that the majority of drivers do not feel they are sufficiently consulted on important decisions which affect them such as fare increases. He advised that a group of drivers wished to be recognised as the 'Association of York Taxi Drivers' and that already there are enough members for at least 10% representation and a properly constituted committee was in the process of being formed. He hoped this would establish a better line of communication between the drivers and council officers.

Officers circulated written responses on the matter from the York Private Hire Association and the York Hackney Carriage Driver's Association. They both had similar views in that the Council is correct to recognise and consult groups that represent at least 10% of the trade and urged those driver's that do not feel they are being consulted sufficiently to join an association or form a new one.

Members made the following comments:

- The report recommendation had already happened as a new association had already been formed. The next step for Mr. Gibb-Kirk would be to liaise with Officers to sort out the finer details and for the association to become formally constituted.
- Members recognised that a significant proportion of drivers require a way to voice their concerns and although officers can not be expected to liaise with every single driver, the 10% representation is a fair figure for the new association.
- The Chair advised the speaker not to look at what the local newspaper publishes and reminded him that the best way to find out what is happening is to look at the Council's website at the Licensing and Regulatory Committee's agendas and minutes. He urged the speaker to make use of his speaking rights at meetings.

RESOLVED: That Members approved Option 1 as a means of consulting with the taxi trade and acknowledged that a new organisation had been formed which will better represent their needs.

RAESON: To enable the Council to effectively communicate with the taxi trade in matters relating to taxi licensing matters.

Councillor Gillies, Chair

[The meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 2.20 pm].