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MEETING	GAMBLING, LICENSING & REGULATORY COMMITTEE
DATE	13 JULY 2011
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS BOYCE (CHAIR), DOUGHTY, GILLIES (VICE-CHAIR), HYMAN, JEFFRIES, KING, MERRETT, RICHES, SEMLYEN, RICHARDSON AND TAYLOR
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLORS CRISP, LOOKER, ORRELL AND WISEMAN

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## 1. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

At this point in the meeting, Members are asked to declare any personal or prejudicial interests they may have in the business on the agenda.

Councillor Hyman declared a personal interest as he is acquainted with Allan Davies, one of the registered speakers.

Councillor Taylor declared a personal interest as he had been involved as a witness at the court case mentioned in the agenda papers.

Councillor Gillies declared a personal interest as the former Chair of Licensing & Regulatory Committee that had previously discussed some of the issues contained within agenda item 4.

## 2. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: (i) That the minutes of the Gambling & Licensing Committee on 19 November 2010, be approved with the following amendment:

Under Minute Item 14, Section 6, the words 'with the view to the issue being considered at a future meeting' be added at the end of the paragraph.

(ii) That the minutes of the Licensing and Regulatory Committee held on 7 January 2011 be approved.

### **3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

It was reported that there had been 4 registrations to speak under the Council's Public Participation Scheme. 3 of the registered speakers were present at the start of the meeting.

Allan Davies, the Chairman of the Independent Taxi Association advised that he agreed with the findings of the Taxi Licensing Task Group in relation to the Duncombe Place Taxi Rank. He did not agree with all of the recommendations relating to Objective (iii), Emissions.

Mr. Brolly of the Independent Taxi Association queried if the unmet demand survey had been completed and whether the recommendation to introduce more licences for eco-friendly vehicles should be implemented until the survey had been carried out. In relation to emissions in the City he suggested that non licensed vehicles should be prevented from entering the city centre as much as possible.

Mr. Rowley of York Taxi Association raised concerns regarding the Council's current policy to issue 2 new hackney licences every 6 months. He advised that this was double the amount Halcrow suggested following the last unmet demand survey. He stated that in his opinion, the trade had reached saturation level and asked why the Council wished to continue with a policy to issue extra licences, which if legally challenged, would fail. He suggested that no more licences should be issued until a new policy is in place and that any new policy should not be rushed through.

### **4. REVIEW OF TAXI LICENSING POLICY - FINAL REPORT.**

Members considered the final report arising from the review of the Taxi Licensing Policy. As Chair of the Taxi Licensing Review Task Group, Councillor Watt, along with the Scrutiny Officer, attended to present the report.

In relation to recommendation 1, Members queried whether the issuing of 2 additional licences for hybrid vehicles would be over and above licences issued subject to future unmet demand

surveys. Councillor Watt confirmed this to be the case. Members suggested that the wording of the recommendation be amended to reflect this.

Members queried the legality of issuing licences for hybrid vehicles if the unmet demand survey indicates that there is no unmet demand.

In light of their concerns, they advised that while they were broadly supportive of the report's findings, they felt that a further report should be brought back to the Committee once the results of the unmet demand survey are known. This would enable Members to make specific amendments to Taxi Licensing Policy if required, in relation to the issuing of new licences.

Members noted that some of the recommendations would be signed off as delegated Officer decisions.

- RESOLVED:
- (i) That the Committee approved recommendations 5 to 15 of the Review.
  - (ii) That recommendation 1 be approved subject to the wording being amended as outlined in paragraph 2, above.
  - (iii) That the Taxi Licensing Policy be re-drafted to take into account the recommendations approved by this Committee, the results of the Halcrow Unmet Demand Survey and the Officer delegated decisions in relation recommendations 2,3,4 and 16.
  - (iv) That the draft revised Taxi Licensing Policy be presented to the Gambling, Licensing and Regulatory Committee at a future date.<sup>1</sup>

REASON: To fully inform the revision of the Council's Taxi Licensing Policy.

Action Required

1. Produce report as requested.

LC

**5. REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS, POLLING PLACES AND POLLING STATIONS.**

Members considered a report which informed them of the duty on all local authorities to carry out a review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations in their area within 4 years of the completion of the first review carried out in 2007, as laid down by the Electoral Administration Act 2006.

City of York Council completed the last review in November 2007 and the next review must be completed by November 2012.

The Electoral Services Manager outlined the report and Members made the following comments:

- In some polling districts, electors have to walk past a polling station to get to the one allocated to them. Members were happy to note that the geographical location of polling stations was to be reassessed.
- Certain Members queried what equalities issues would be covered by the review. The Officer confirmed that access to buildings would be considered but equalities matters relating to the actual voting process is covered by different legislation and would not be part of this review.

Members were invited to contact the Electoral Services Manager with any further feedback they may have.

RESOLVED: That Members noted the contents of the report.

REASON: In order to comply with statutory requirements.

**6. URGENT BUSINESS**

At the end of the meeting, Members briefly discussed the contents of a report by a Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence holder which had been circulated to them prior to the meeting.

The Chair agreed to take comments under Urgent Business as discussion of agenda items had been completed.

Members felt that it would be beneficial if a report was brought to the Committee on the issues surrounding plate ownership.

They also requested that in light of the recent election and a number of new Members being on the Committee, they would benefit from a training session specifically on Taxi Licensing Policy and asked that this be arranged.

RESOLVED: (i) That an Officer report on plate ownership be brought to the Committee for consideration at a future meeting.<sup>2</sup>

(ii) That Officers arrange a training session for Members on Taxi Licensing Policy.<sup>3</sup>

REASON: To keep Members of the Gambling, Licensing and Regulatory Committee fully informed on issues within their remit.

Action Required

2. Produce report as requested. LC
3. Liaise with Member Services to arrange training session. LC

Councillor Boyce, Chair

[The meeting started at 4.30 pm and finished at 5.55 pm].