

Meeting	Gambling, Licensing & Regulatory Committee
Date	20 October 2014
Present	Councillors Boyce (Chair), Crisp, Funnell, Horton, King, Looker, McIlveen, Richardson, Taylor, Watt (Vice-Chair) and Watson
Apologies	Councillors Alexander, Cuthbertson, Hyman and Orrell

12. **Declarations of Interest**

Members were asked to declare any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, any prejudicial interests or any disclosable pecuniary interests which they may have in respect of business on the agenda. Councillor Watt declared a personal interest in agenda item 4 – minute 15 refers (Policy for Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licences and Unmet Demand Survey) as Chair of Skelton Parish Council, which had responded to the consultation.

13. **Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2014 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

14. **Public Participation**

It was reported that there were three registrations to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

Mr Jim Kerr, UNITE representative, stated that there was no evidence of unmet demand and therefore he hoped that no additional hackney carriage vehicle licences would be issued. He drew attention to the situation nationally and stated that taxi drivers now spent more time waiting in their vehicles than actually driving. Mr Kerr informed Members that it would be unrealistic to have sufficient provision to meet short term peak demand such as during the Christmas period.

Mr Alan Davies, Chairman of the Local Independent Taxi Association, stated that there was a higher number of hackney carriage vehicles per resident in York than the national average. He stated that he would like to see CCTV installed at ranks and in cabs. Mr Davies informed Members that waiting times were lower than average and that there was no evidence of significant unmet demand.

Mr Pickering gave details of his experiences as a driver. He stated that rising costs and a decline in demand meant that his income was less than the minimum wage and he was having to work increasingly long hours. He thanked Members for their response to previous Halcrow Unmet Demand Surveys and stated that he believed that a satisfactory service was being provided to the public.

15. Policy for Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licences & Unmet Demand Survey

Members considered a report which asked them to consider the findings of a recent unmet demand study carried out within the authority area, relating to the provision of the hackney carriage service, and implementation of a new policy in relation to hackney carriage vehicle licence numbers. The report related to motorised hackney carriages only.

A representative from Halcrow gave a presentation on the survey, including details of the methodology used, responses to the consultation that had taken place and the main findings of the survey.

Members considered the following options:

- Option 1 Apply the policy set out in paragraph 10 of the report
- Option 2 Apply an alternative policy for the release of new hackney carriage vehicle licenses and either:
 - a) Utilise the waiting list by offering the person at the top of the list the opportunity to obtain a licence, in line with the current policy as detailed in paragraph 13 of the report
 - b) Utilise the waiting list but with an alternative criteria
 - c) Do not use the waiting list as a means to release new vehicle licenses, apply an alternative selection method.

Option 3 Deregulate completely

Members noted that the survey had not found any evidence of significant unmet demand, although some Members expressed concern that drivers on the waiting list were unlikely to obtain a hackney carriage vehicle license unless the current policy was changed.

Officers confirmed that they were working with the Police regarding training for drivers on vulnerability/acceptable behaviour. Information was also being sought from other Authorities as to the effectiveness of CCTV cameras in taxis.

Resolved: That option 1 (ie apply the policy set out in paragraph 10 of the report) be approved.

Reason: The unmet demand study has identified that there is no evidence of significant unmet demand.

Chair

[The meeting started at 4.00 pm and finished at 4.45 pm].