

**MINUTES of the meeting of Licensing Committee held on 10 January 2013 at 7.00pm**

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**Present:** Councillors Mike Stone (Chair), Lynn Carr, Sue Gray, Tom Kelly (Substituting for Ben Maney), Steve Liddiard, Sue Little, John Purkiss, Robert Ray and Andrew Roast

**Apologies:** Councillors Ben Maney, Charles Curtis, Wendy Curtis and Rob Gledhill

**In attendance:** Paul Adams – Principal Licensing Officer  
Laura Byran – Licensing Officer  
Gavin Dennett – Acting head of Public Protection  
David Lawson – Legal Services  
Kenna-Victoria Martin – Democratic Services

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The Chair informed the Committee that the meeting was to be audio recorded and published on the Councils website.

**1. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The Minutes of the Licensing Committee, held on 11 October 2012, were approved as a correct record.

**2. Additional Items**

The Chair informed the Committee that there were no additional Items.

**3. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**4. Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Delegation of Authority**

The Principal Licensing Officer introduced the report to Members and informed them that currently Thurrock Council's scheme of delegation requires any refusal of a grant of a Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drives licence to be put before a Sub-Committee.

It was explained to Members that where an applicant does not hold a current DVLA driving licence, a Sub-Committee would have to be convened and would have no choice but to refuse the application. It was therefore recommended to the Committee that for this circumstance the delegated authority be transferred to the Principal Licensing Officer.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Licensing Committee agreed for the transfer of delegated authority to the Principal Licensing Officer to refuse an application for a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Driver's Licence when the applicant does not hold a current valid DVLA driving licence.**

**5. Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Licence Plates**

The Principal Licensing Officer introduced the report to the Committee and explained to Members that Thurrock Council's standards conditions require that a licence plate and door stickers be displayed at all times. Officers continued to explain that they were seeking approval from the Committee to change the design of licence plates, door stickers and window cards.

The Committee were informed that revising the style of the plates and stickers would not require any amendments to the conditions of licences. It was further explained that the amendments to the plates and door stickers included the following changes or additions,

- The licence number is now displayed on the door stickers, to assist the reporting of drivers and or vehicles to the licensing department.
- The Thurrock Council logo has been replaced with the most current version.
- The wheelchair accessible logo has been incorporated on both the door stickers and the licence plate, to make it readably visible that the vehicle is wheelchair accessible

During questioning Members queried whether drivers would have to return their licence plates once, their licence had ran out and should they wish not to renew it. Officers explained that drivers should return their licence plates and the Licensing Department did ask drivers to return their licence plates.

Members enquired as to the timeframe for introducing the new licence plates, door stickers and window cards. Officers told the Committee that they were going to phase in the new licence plates, door stickers and window cards, as drivers came to renew their licence.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Licensing Committee approved the proposed design of Licence Plates, Door Stickers and Window Cards.**

**6. Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Specification and Licence Conditions**

The Principal Licensing Officer introduced a report to the Committee which requested Members consider recommendations for changes to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire specifications and licence conditions.

Officers explained to Members that the proposed changes included the following and would go out for consultation.

- The age limit for vehicles be extended, Saloon Vehicles to increase from a maximum age of 7 years to 10 years, and Wheelchair accessible vehicles to increase from a maximum age of 10 years to 15 years,
- The frequency of Vehicle inspections to be increased, annually for vehicles aged less than 5 years, 6 monthly for vehicles aged between 5 and 8 years and 3 monthly for vehicles aged over 8 years,
- For there to be a set minimum space for leg room in the rear of the vehicle
- No tinted windows will be permitted including factory fitted tints;
- Any alloy wheels fitted must be matching and where alloy wheels are not fitted matching hub caps must be fitted to all wheels.

Officers also notified the Committee that consideration was being given to the introduction of incentives, for Green Vehicles and that work was being progressed via the Cleaner, Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Members were informed that any changes would have to be included in the specification and would have to go back to Committee.

During Members questions, Officers informed the Committee that spot checks on vehicles included that all tyres and alloys were checked, that it was difficult for drivers to assist with child seats, as depending on the age of the child the seat would be different.

#### **RESOLVED:**

**That the Licensing Committee considered the proposed recommendations for changes to the vehicle specification and licence conditions for Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Vehicles, and approved them without any additional amendments for public consultation.**

**The meeting finished at 7.40.**

Approved as a true and correct record

**CHAIRMAN**

**DATE**

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact  
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or alternatively e-mail [kmartin@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:kmartin@thurrock.gov.uk)**