

GL.2

**MINUTES OF A MEETING
OF THE GENERAL LICENSING COMMITTEE**

**HELD AT THE GUILDHALL,
ABINGDON ON FRIDAY, 10TH JULY,
2009 AT 2.00PM**

Open to the Public, including the Press

PRESENT:

MEMBERS: Councillors Richard Farrell (Chair), Terry Fraser (Vice-Chair), Bob Johnston, Julie Mayhew-Archer, Janet Morgan, John Morgan, Zoe Patrick, Alison Rooke, Peter Saunders, Elaine Ware, and Richard Webber.

OFFICERS: Steve Culliford, Kate Fisher, Melanie Hemmings, Margaret Reed and Tim Williams.

NUMBER OF MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: Nil

GL.5 Notification of Substitutes and Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Gareth Jennings and Robert Sharp.

GL.6 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 20 May 2009 were adopted and signed as a correct record.

GL.7 Declarations of Interest

None.

GL.8 Urgent Business and Chair's Announcements

None.

GL.9 Statements and Petitions from the Public under Standing Order 32

None.

GL.10 Questions from the Public under Standing Order 32

None.

GL.11 Draft Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Driver, Vehicle and Operator Policy

The Committee received and considered report 23/09 of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, which set out a draft policy for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire drivers, vehicles and operators. The Committee was asked to review the draft policy and suggest any changes.

The Committee considered the draft policy in detail, concentrating on the proposed changes. Members agreed with the majority of the changes proposed but made amendments as follows:

- engines must not be left idling while a driver waits at a rank or waits for a passenger. Engines must be switched off in such cases. This should be in the policy document, not just in the code of good conduct;
- in paragraph 6.3.6 clarification that there would be a limit of four attempts to pass the driver's theory test of which there could be written or verbal test responses. The policy should make it clear that it was not possible to take four written and four verbal tests, but only four tests in total; and
- disability awareness training should be undertaken by drivers within six months of the grant of a new licence or a renewal.

With regard to the point about engines left idling, councillors were adamant that as the Council had power to stop drivers leaving their engines running and had the power to issue fixed penalty notices, the Council should set this as policy and enforce it. This was in line with the Council's strategic objective to ensure the Vale remained a clean place to live.

Members noted that the draft policy would be the subject of a six week consultation with the taxi and private hire trade. Once this period had expired the comments received would be reviewed by the Committee to determine whether any further changes were required to the policy before it was recommended to Council for adoption.

RESOLVED

that subject to the amendments set out below, the draft revised Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Driver, Vehicle and Operator Policy be approved for consultation with the hackney carriage and private hire trade:

- *engines must not be left idling while a driver waits at a rank or waits for a passenger. Engines must be switched off in such cases. This shall be included in the policy document, not just in the code of good conduct;*
- *in paragraph 6.3.6 clarification that there will be a limit of four attempts to pass the driver's theory test of which there can be written or verbal test responses. The policy shall make it clear that it is not possible to take four written and four verbal tests, but only four tests in total; and*
- *disability awareness training shall be undertaken by drivers within six months of the grant of a new licence or a renewal.*

Exempt Information Under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972

None.

The meeting rose at 3.35 pm.