



Minutes of a meeting of the **General Licensing Committee**

held on Thursday, 28 January 2021 at 2.00 pm
Held as a virtual meeting.

Open to the public, including the press

Present:

Councillors Alison Jenner (Chair), Ron Batstone (Vice-Chair), Paul Barrow, Eric Batts, Debby Hallett, Diana Lugova, and Val Shaw

Officers:

Sarah Commins, Laura Driscoll, Michael Flowers, Diane Foster, and Jeremy Lloyd

GL.6 Apologies for absence

None.

GL.7 Minutes

RESOLVED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on the 15th May 2019 as a correct record and agree that the Chair sign these as such.

GL.8 Declarations of interest

None.

GL.9 Urgent business and chair's announcements

None.

GL.10 Public participation

None.

GL.11 Review of Joint Taxi Policy

The Licensing Team Leader introduced the report. Members were informed that the existing policy had been published in 2013 and had only received minor amendments since that date. The proposed new Joint Taxi Policy subsequently was the first full review in eight years and included changes to reflect new legislation, although it was noted that the licensing authority was already complying with the legislative requirements as their working practises had already been amended. The officer also clarified that the Department for Transport expected local authorities to implement its new standards which were published in July 2020 unless there was a compelling reason to depart from the standards.

The officer explained that the proposed consultation would run for six weeks, with a commencement on 10 February 2021. The policy would be sent to all licensed drivers and operators as well as neighbouring local authorities and the taxi licensing coordinator at Thames Valley Police. District councillors, town and parish councils, as well as disability groups would also be included in the consultation. The comments from this consultation would be considered and a further report would be sent back to the General Licensing Committee with a summary as well as a final version of the policy, with the aim of adopting the new policy in June 2021. The officer did note that two errors had been identified in advance of the meeting, but these would be amended before the policy would go to consultation.

A question was raised on whether Appendix A and B of the policy would both be sent out in the consultation. The officer confirmed that these would be included. An additional question was raised on how the new policy could impact drivers financially. The officer explained that they did not expect any serious detrimental effects, and that in some circumstances, some required actions were cheaper such as the DBS checking requirements. The officer also reminded the committee that the recommendation was for a consultation and so any final approval would need to go back to the committee.

A motion moved and seconded to support the officer's recommendations was declared carried on being put to the vote.

RESOLVED: to

- a. approve a consultation exercise to seek the views of the trade and relevant stakeholders on the revised policy, and
- b. to authorise the Head of Housing and Environment to make minor editorial changes before the document is sent out to consultation.

The meeting closed at 2.14 pm