

**BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL**  
**LICENSING COMMITTEE (NON LICENSING ACT 2003 FUNCTIONS)**

**4.00PM 25 JUNE 2020**

**VIRTUAL, VIA SKYPE**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Councillors O'Quinn (Chair), Atkinson (Deputy Chair), Deane (Opposition Spokesperson), Simson (Group Spokesperson), Appich, Bagaeen, Davis, Ebel, Fowler, Osborne, Rainey, Wares and Williams

**Apologies:** Councillors Henry and Lewry

**PART ONE**

**1 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS**

**(a) Declarations of Substitutes**

1.1 There were none.

**(b) Declarations of Interest**

1.2 There were no declarations of interests in any matter listed on the agenda.

**(c) Exclusion of Press and Public**

1.3 The Committee considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of any of the items listed on the agenda.

1.4 **RESOLVED:** That the press and public be not excluded from the meeting during consideration of any items on the agenda

**2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the Licensing Committee (Licensing Act 2003 Functions) Meeting held on 12 March 2020 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

**3 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS**

3.1 The Chair, Councillor O'Quinn, provided updates in respect of the following:

**Impact of Covid Emergency on the Taxi Trade**

- 3.1 The Covid Emergency and Lockdown had a devastating impact on taxi services in the city as well as on the hospitality sector. The Chair had spoken frequently to representatives of the trade who had told her how badly this sector had been hit and that only 27% of the Brighton and Hove taxi trade were operating until just recently. Some taxi drivers had taken their taxis off the road entirely, so they didn't have to pay insurance and tax on a taxi that is not doing any business. Jim Whitelegg, Martin Seymour and Alex Evans had all been brilliant in working to help the taxi trade by being as flexible as possible regarding medicals, Perspex screen installation, the extension of taxi licences and a whole host of other matters. The Chair had been totally behind all of these moves, which had been designed to either assist the trade or to take unnecessary pressure off them. It was hoped that as more people went shopping and visited the city's restaurants, bars and cafes that there would increasingly be more work for the taxi trade so that they could get back on their feet. The issue of safety was very important for taxis so it was hoped that as many taxi drivers as possible would wear masks and ask their customers too, especially if they did not have Perspex screens.

### **Street Traders**

- 3.2 Street traders had been back in operation for a while now and the Chair had visited Upper Gardiner Street to see how things were going on the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday they were open. It was very quiet because the weather was not conducive to street trading but all seemed to be in order. Jim Whitelegg and Alex Evans would give a full up-date on taxis and street trading and would also provide an interim report at the November Committee.

### **Electric Vehicle Taxi Rapid Charging Hubs**

- 3.3 The electric vehicle charger installation programme had been delayed due to the Covid 19 situation. Over 100 lamp post chargers were installed before March and we hope to resume work on installing the remaining 100 chargers in late June with all 200 installed by the end of July. Quotes had been received back from UK Power Networks for the 4 areas identified by the taxi driver consultation as most suitable for charging hubs. Letters had been sent to residents nearby to advise them of the proposed locations and requesting feedback by 19<sup>th</sup> June. This would be reported back to ETS Committee in September. Subject to approval, it was hoped work would begin in November on the installation of the proposed taxi rapid hubs.

### **Animal Licensing**

- 3.4 Since the start of the current Covid-19 lockdown period all animal activity licensing inspections had ceased. Where complaints had been received these were evaluated. If it is deemed that there is an imminent serious risk to the health or welfare of any animal or member of the public, a site visit was required and appropriate Covid19 control measures would be adhered to when undertaking visits. No such situation had arisen to date. In line with guidance from Defra all current animal activity licences due for renewal had been extended by three months. Where applications for new licences

were received the service would endeavour to try and reach a decision with all available information. This could include gathering of information by remote means. There were currently 10 licences issued for dog boarding, eight for pet vending, two for cat boarding, one for dog and cat boarding, one for dog breeding, one for doggy day care and one for keeping or training animals for exhibition. Under the grading system (maximum being 5), there are 3 licensees graded 2, 8 with graded 3, 4 graded 4 and 7 graded 5. Due to the rules on calculating scores it was difficult for a new applicant to get a score above 3.

3.5 **RESOLVED** – That the content of the Chair’s Communications be received and noted.

#### 4 **CALLOVER**

4.1 All items appearing on the agenda were called for discussion.

#### 5 **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

##### 5a **Petitions**

5.1 There were none.

##### 5b **Written Questions**

5.2 There were none.

##### 5c **Deputations**

5.3 There were none.

#### 6 **MEMBER INVOLVEMENT**

##### 6a **Petitions**

6.1 There were none.

##### 6b **Written Questions**

6.2 The following written question set out at Item 6b on the agenda had been received from Councillor Simson:

“Will the Chair please give an explanation as to why the taxi trade has not been consulted on changes to street layouts resulting in the loss of taxi ranks in response to Covid 19 emergency measures and will she give assurance that consultation will take place on any future changes?”

6.3 The Chair, Councillor O’Quinn gave the following response:

“The council, via Traffic Management, has the power under section 14 of the Road Traffic Act to temporarily remove a bay due to public safety. In this case it relates to social distancing and the need to provide separation as much as possible for people

moving through the area in these unprecedented times. The council had to act very quickly as St James Street was identified as a high risk for people queuing in the area and the need to have it ready for the opening of retail. The decision was not taken lightly, but there was little choice as this location was a particular challenge. Traffic Management have emphasised that the change is temporary and they are keen to find an alternative location with the Trade.

6.4 **RESOLVED** – That the response given be received and noted.

**6c Letters**

6.5 There were none.

**6d Notices of Motion**

6.6 There were none.

**7 HACKNEY CARRIAGE & PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER ENFORCEMENT AND MONITORING**

7.1 The Committee considered a report of the Interim Executive Director of Housing, Neighbourhoods and Communities updating Members This report is to update Members on enforcement action taken against Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Drivers and Applicants between March and June 2019.

7.2 **RESOLVED** – That the contents of the report be noted and that officers continue to take action as appropriate.

**8 ITEMS REFERRED FOR COUNCIL**

8.1 There were none.

The meeting concluded at 6.25pm

Signed

Chairman

Dated this

day of