

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

LICENSING COMMITTEE (NON-LICENSING ACT 2003 FUNCTIONS)

3.00PM 27 JUNE 2019

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillors O'Quinn (Chair), Henry (Deputy Chair), Simson (Group Spokesperson), Appich, Atkinson, Brown, Davis, Ebel, Hill, Janio, Osborne, Rainey, Wares and West

Apologies: Councillor Bagaeen, Fowler and Lewry.

PART ONE

1 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

1a Declarations of Substitutes

1.1 Councillor Brown was present in substitution for Councillor Bagaeen; Councillor Janio was present in substitution for Councillor Lewry; Councillor West was present in substitution for Councillor Deane and Councillor Fowler had submitted her apologies.

1b Declarations of Interest

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

1c 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 not be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the any item contained on part the agenda.

2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

2.1 **RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the Licensing Committee (Licensing Act 2003 Functions) Meeting held on 14 March 2019 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

3 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

3.1 The Chair provided the following updates:

Electric Vehicle Rapid Charging Hubs

- 3.2 The Trade were currently being consulted over possible sites for 4 rapid charging hubs. The consultation period would end on 8 July and it was anticipated that the results of the survey would go forward to the ETS Committee in October 2019 with installation being completed by March 2020. The Trade were being encouraged to participate in the survey and to date the level of take-up had been encouraging. In the meantime 200 street lamp post electric charging points were to be installed by the end of October 2019.

Child Exploitation Training for Taxi Drivers

- 3.3 Child Exploitation training had taken place at the Amex the previous day and that day as part of Exploitation Awareness Week. Over 300 drivers had attended the first session and a similar number were expected at the next training session. This training had been carried out in collaboration between the trade, taxi licensing, VVE coordinator and WISE and recognised the unique position taxi drivers had in terms of spotting the signs of exploitation.

Animal Licensing

- 3.4 The Licensing Authority had been issued 14 licences under the new regime:
- 7 – Home Boarding of dogs;
 - 5 - Selling Animals as pets;
 - 1 – Cat Boarding; and
 - 1 – Dog and Cat Boarding
- 3.5 These were given a star rating which dictated the length of their licence, for example a business that poorly performed but complied with minimum standards might be given 1 star which would be a 1-year licence requiring re-inspection and re-application after one year, whereas a business that complied to a high standard might be given 5 stars and be given a 3 year licence. There were around another 10 licence applications being processed. Once these licences had been issued the focus would be on investigating those who it was felt needed licensing but had not made applications, this applied mostly to on-line boarding hosts.
- 3.6 **RESOLVED** - That the content of the Chair's communications be noted and received.

4 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

- 4.1 There were no items.

5 MEMBER INVOLVEMENT

- 5.1 There were no items.

6 HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARE REVIEW

- 6.1 The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director, Neighbourhoods Communities and Housing seeking the Committee's approval and authority to advertise proposed fare increases following the hackney carriage trade's request for an increase in fares.
- 6.2 Councillor West stated that it appeared that the yardage rate appeared to have dropped, considering that represented a retrograde step, this had been "bottom loaded" in the past to seek to deter shorter journeys.
- 6.3 Councillor Hill sought clarification in respect of the equalities implications referred to considering that it was regrettable that an increase was being sought at this time but noting that there had not been an increase for some time and that this had been requested by the trade.
- 6.4 Councillor Wares noted that although some of the percentage increases appeared quite high, there had been no increase in fares for four years. He sought clarification that if objections were received they would be referred to back to Committee and it was confirmed that they would, if no objections were received they would be implemented as set out in the report. In terms of continuing to monitor un-met demand he considered that this should be on-going with periodic reports back to Committee but should not delay implementation of the new fares structure.
- 6.5 Councillor Janio agreed stating that the trade operated in a market place which was open to competition and that as the trade was requesting these increases they should be supported as operators clearly considered that the market could bear these increases.
- 6.6 **RESOLVED:**
- (1) That Committee approves the proposed fare increases and authorises the Head of Safer Communities to advertise the proposed variation in fares, and invite any objections in accordance with the legal requirements.
 - (2) The Committee agree that if no objections are made, or if any objections which are made are withdrawn, the varied table of fares will come into force in accordance with the statutory scheme; and
 - (3) The Committee reconsider the matter at the next meeting of this Committee if valid objections are made but not withdrawn. As there are strict legal timescales relating to fare reviews a special meeting of this Committee may be required.

7 HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER ENFORCEMENT AND MONITORING

- 7.1 The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director, Neighbourhoods and Housing which provided an update for Members on enforcement action taken against Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Drivers and Applicants between March and May 2019.

- 7.2 Councillors Atkinson and Hill noted that there appeared to be have been a number of instances where “flipping” had occurred which indicated that this was an issue which needed to be addressed.
- 7.3 Councillor West noted that there appeared to have been three serious cases which had been brought before the Magistrates Court the outcomes did not appear consistent and he sought details of the context of each case in order to better understand the process.
- 7.4 **RESOLVED:** That the contents of this report be noted and that officers should continue to take action as appropriate.

8 ITEMS REFERRED FOR COUNCIL

- 8.1 There were none.

The meeting concluded at 4.00pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of