
DACORUM BOROUGH COUNCIL

LICENSING AND HEALTH AND SAFETY ENFORCEMENT COMMITTEE

18 SEPTEMBER 2012

Present –

MEMBERS:

Councillor Lawson (Chairman), Conway, Mrs Green, R Hollinghurst, Peter, Ryan, G Sutton, Taylor and Whitman.

Councillor R Sutton also attended to observe the meeting.

OFFICERS:

B Lisgarten Legal Governance Team Leader
R Hill Licensing Team Leader
D Wills Assistant Licensing Officer
T Coston Member Support Officer, Democratic Services (Minutes)

The meeting began at 7:30 pm

1. INTRODUCTIONS

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 July 2012 were confirmed by the members present and then signed by the Chairman.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Bhinder, G Chapman, Fantham, Link and Rance.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

6. GAMBLING ACT 2005 – REVIEW OF STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

R Hill advised that the consultation on this matter had now concluded and the responses received were set out in the report. He referred to paragraph 2.4, and highlighted that some minor amendments had been made to the draft Statement during the consultation period. He said that two of the responses were essentially in agreement with the proposed statement. The third appeared to be part of a campaign to all licensing authorities, which in the opinion of the officers, should not require further changes to be made beyond the proposed Division of Premises and Primary Usage section of the Statement.

He explained that the Gambling Commission were expected to publish the 4th version of their Guidance to Licensing Authorities during the summer, and any changes would have been reflected in the revised Statement. Unfortunately, publication of the Guidance has been delayed until October 2012. He advised that, from the draft Guidance, no significant changes to the Statement would be required, beyond possible revisions to paragraph numbers in references.

He advised the Committee that there had been an amendment to the recommendation at paragraph 5.1, in that the Committee are now asked to refer the matter directly to the Council meeting in November for consideration and adoption. The Assistant Director for Legal, Democratic and Regulatory Services has advised that this matter will not need to be considered by the Cabinet.

Voting:

Unanimously agreed;

whereupon it was:

Resolved:

That the Committee endorse the draft Statement of Principles for the period of 31 January 2013 to 30 January 2016, and refer it to Full Council in November 2012 for approval and adoption, as set out in the report.

7. REVIEW OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

R Hill explained that the proposal put before the Committee was to make a number of amendments to existing taxi policies in a number of areas. The report continued the project, which started last year, to review all aspects of the taxi licensing function. He advised that the Committee were not being asked to adopt any measures at this stage, however authorisation is sought to commence consultation with the licensed trade and other partners. He said that if approved, consultation would start next week and would be ongoing for a 12 week period. The results would be reported back to the January meeting of the Committee for further consideration.

The proposals were set out in section 2 of the report. In respect of the proposal to require further door signage on vehicles, he circulated a specimen of what such signs may look like, although they were for illustrative purposes only and will not form part of the consultation.

Councillor Taylor asked if the proposed signage would be magnetic. R Hill replied it was intended that they would be vinyl stickers.

Councillor Whitman asked the taxi drivers' thoughts on the signage. R Hill advised it would form part of the consultation.

Councillor Lawson asked if it would be a cost to the driver. R Hill replied that it was intended to include the cost within the licence fee. He said officers would obtain quotes for the cost, and believe it would cost approximately £10-15. He said it would form part of the renewal licence conditions.

Councillor Ryan questioned the variation between signage for a Hackney Carriage and a private hire licensed vehicle. R Hill advised that each sign would have a different font colour and background.

Councillor G Sutton asked the approximate size of the proposed signage. R Hill suggested 16 x 12 inches would be adequate.

Councillor Peter asked how durable the vinyl stickers would be. R Hill replied it would be dependent on the supplier and the material. He said they would like the signage to endure approximately 2-3 years as a minimum.

Voting:

Unanimously agreed;

whereupon it was:

Resolved:

That the Committee instruct officers to commence consultation on the following policy amendments, as set out in the report:

4.1.1. To revoke the current policy requiring applicants for hackney carriage and private hire driver licences be at least 21 years of age;

4.1.2. To adopt a new policy requiring applicants for hackney carriage and private hire driver licences to have held a full motor car driving licence for a minimum of three years prior to the date of application;

4.1.3. To introduce a new 'dual licence' application system, permitting application for both hackney carriage and private hire driver licences to be made simultaneously; for all such licences to have a common expiry date; and for a transitional phase to allow existing dual licence holders to bring both badges to a common expiry date for a pro rata fee;

4.1.4. To adopt amendments to the standard licence conditions for both hackney carriage and private hire vehicle licences requiring the display of Council-supplied signage on the rear doors of the vehicle, bearing the Council's logo and an approved message.

4.1.5. To revoke the current 'Guidelines to be used by the Licensing and Health & Safety Enforcement Sub-Committee when considering the relevance of convictions'.

4.1.6. To adopt the new 'Guidelines on Fitness of Applicants for Hackney Carriage / Private Hire Drivers Licences'.

8. TO APPOINT THE LICENSING AND HEALTH & SAFETY ENFORCEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE

The Chairman asked the Committee to consider appointing Councillor R Sutton and Councillor Mrs Bassadone as substitutes on the Licensing and Health & Safety Enforcement Sub-Committee.

Voting:

Unanimously agreed;

whereupon it was:

Resolved:

That the Committee agreed the appointment of Councillor R Sutton and Councillor Mrs Bassadone as substitutes on the Licensing of Health & Safety Enforcement Sub-Committee.

The meeting ended at 7:43 pm