

REGULATORY PANEL

WEDNESDAY 28 APRIL 2021 AT 4.00pm

PRESENT: Councillor Ms Ellis-Williams (Chair); Councillors Ellis, Meller, Morton, Nedved, Patrick, Shepherd, Miss Sherriff, Tinnion and Miss Whalen

OFFICERS: Assistant Solicitor
Licensing Manager

RP.14/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Bainbridge and Tickner.

RP.15/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest submitted.

RP.16/21 PUBLIC AND PRESS

It was agreed that the items of business in Part A be dealt with in public and the items of business in Part B be dealt with when the public and press were excluded.

RP.17/21 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED – It was noted that Council had, at its meetings on 2 March and 27 April 2021, received and adopted the minutes of the meetings held on 16 December 2020, 20 January 2021 and 24 February 2021. The Chair will sign the minutes at the first practicable opportunity.

RP.18/21 DRAFT HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY 2021-2026

The Licensing Manager reported (GD.32/21) that the Department of Transport had issued Statutory Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Standards in July 2020. Under the Policing and Crime Act 2017, the Secretary of State for Transport was enabled to issue statutory guidance on the exercising of taxi and private hire vehicle licensing functions to protect children and vulnerable individuals who were over eighteen from harm when using those services.

In terms of the proposal before Members today, the Licensing Manager explained that this authority had previously implemented a number of recommendations on its own volition, but that the guidance provided an opportunity to further tighten the current licensing scheme. The Licensing Manager set out the statutory standards and provided comments on the next steps s detailed in Appendix 1.

The standards stated that Authorities should produce a cohesive policy document that brought all procedures together (including a convictions policy). When formulating policies, the overriding objective must be to protect the public and the policy should be reviewed every five years.

The Licensing Manager added that the draft Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Licensing Policy 2021-2026 was attached at Appendix 2 for consideration and approval for consultation. Suggested changes to existing policy or procedure were highlighted throughout the document.

In considering the report the Panel supported the proposals for the review of CCTV in vehicles, the increase in DBS checks and suggested that consideration should be given to illuminated taxi plates which would glow in the dark and be visible in poorly lit areas.

The Panel discussed safeguarding issues and requested further information on the number of reports being submitted to the Police.

The Panel acknowledged the detailed work which the Licensing Manager had undertaken and thanked her for the excellent comprehensive document.

RESOLVED – That the Regulatory Panel approved for consultation the draft Policy for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing 2021-2026.

[The meeting ended at 4.51pm]