

Cherwell District Council

Licensing Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Licensing Committee held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 18 January 2023 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Douglas Webb (Chairman)
Councillor George Reynolds (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Andrew Beere
Councillor Chris Pruden
Councillor Barry Wood

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Hannah Banfield
Councillor Mike Bishop
Councillor Eddie Reeves
Councillor Jason Slaymaker
Councillor Fraser Webster
Councillor Sean Woodcock

Officers:

Richard Webb, Assistant Director Regulatory Services & Community Safety
Christine Pegler, Lead Licensing Enforcement Officer
Aaron Hetherington, Democratic and Elections Team Leader
Matt Swinford, Democratic and Elections Officer

3 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

4 **Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting**

There were no requests to address the meeting.

5 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

6 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meetings held on 7 September 2016, 16 May 2017, 15 May 2018, 14 May 2019, 19 May 2021 and 18 May 2022 were agreed as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

7 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's Announcements.

8 **Consultation on Revisions to the Council's Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policy**

The Assistant Director of Regulatory Services and Community Safety submitted a report which set out the proposed changes to the Council's Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policy. This was an opportunity for the Licensing Committee to consider the revised policy and provide comments for consideration in the preparation of the final policy that would be submitted to Full Council for adoption.

In introducing the report, the Assistant Director of Regulatory Services and Community Safety advised the Committee that the existing policy was last reviewed in 2015. The introduction of Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards by the Department for Transport, the introduction of a new National Register of Revocations and Refusals and the councils declaration of a climate emergency and introduction of a climate action framework provided the background to the requirement for this review and update of the council's Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing Policy.

The Lead Licensing Enforcement Officer advised the Committee that the consultation period would close on 31 January 2023. To date no formal consultation representations had been received, however taxi and private vehicle licence holders had provided comments at the forums arranged for licensees to meet with the Licensing team.

In response to questions from the Committee regarding the possibility of a taxi driver obtaining their licence at a different authority and then coming to work in the Cherwell area, the Lead Licensing Enforcement Officer advised that someone could obtain a hackney carriage taxi licence at another authority and then could legally work in another local authority area as a private hire taxi working through a private hire operator.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman thanked the Licensing Team for their hard work on the revised draft Policy.

Resolved

- (1) That, having given due consideration, the following comments from the Licensing Committee be made for consideration in the preparation of the final Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policy which would be submitted to Full Council for adoption:

- Endorse the changes proposed by officers and the further revisions intended as a result of consultation feedback.
- Request officers to consider how vintage vehicles used for private hire can be included in the policy.
- Request officers to look into how wheelchair accessibility vehicles will meet the ultra-low emissions policy to ensure the emissions policy does not reduce availability of wheelchair accessible vehicles.
- Thanks to the officers for the hard work they have put into creating the draft policy.

The meeting ended at 7.29 pm

Chairman:

Date: