

## **LICENSING COMMITTEE**

11<sup>th</sup> June 2019

**Present** – Councillors Myers (Chairman), Handley, Heseltine, Ireton, Madeley, Metcalfe, Moorby, Pighills, Solloway and Whitaker.

**Officers** – Solicitor to the Council, Licensing Manager and Senior Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jaquin and Mulligan.

Start: 6.30pm

Finish: 7:35pm

The minutes of the Committee's meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2019 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

**Matters Arising** – The Licensing Manager updated Members on the progress with the implementation of CCTV in vehicles and the daily check sheet. The specification for CCTV cameras was available to view on-line and the daily check sheet was almost ready to be issued to drivers. A programme of communication with the trade would be launched nearer the implementation date for CCTV in vehicles.

### **Minutes for Report**

LIC.222

#### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

On behalf of Peter Cunningham, from the Community Cohesion Team at North Yorkshire County Council, the Solicitor to the Council informed Members that the County had been working with the Craven Taxi Association to produce a questionnaire for the District's drivers. The questionnaire could be completed anonymously and it sought to gather information about potential abuse and prejudiced based incidents that taxi drivers had been subjected to. An update on the findings would be provided in due course.

LIC.223

#### **LICENSING COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

The Licensing Manager submitted a report presenting a suggested work programme for the Licensing Committee from June 2019 to April 2020.

During the debate Members discussed the monopoly that one garage had in the District being responsible for all the testing of licensed vehicles and asked that a review of the current arrangements was carried out as soon as practicable. The taxi trade had been asking for some time that the domination of one garage ended as it was causing them problems in getting their vehicles tested in a timely manner. In the interim, the Solicitor to the Council indicated that a Service Level Agreement was being developed to ensure a commitment by the current service provider to meet certain standards set by the Council.

**Resolved** – (1) That, the work programme is endorsed subject to the following additions for January 2020:

- (a) review of taxi fees; and
- (b) options to increase the number of licensed accessible vehicles in Craven.

LIC.224

**LICENSING ENFORCEMENT AND COMPLIANCE MONITORING**

The Licensing Manager submitted a report providing Members with an overview of enforcement and compliance monitoring that had been carried out from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019. The report also presented an enforcement / compliance timetable for 2019/2020.

Currently there were 176 Hackney Carriages, 18 Private Hire Vehicles and 13 Private Hire Operators in Craven. To ensure compliance with the Council's licensing conditions, the Licensing Team had carried out 4 joint operations with North Yorkshire Road Traffic Police and 2 alongside the North Yorkshire School Integrated Passenger Team. This resulted in 83 inspections of vehicles as well as 10 out of town vehicles being stopped and inspected.

April 2019 saw the introduction of the Penalty Points Scheme and this would provide invaluable data whilst providing a stepped enforcement process for minor misdemeanours.

During 2018/19 there had been a total of 19 complaints received from members of the public: 8 regarding driving standards; 4 about fares; 2 about alleged mobile phone use whilst driving; and 5 concerning driver conduct.

As a result of compliance enforcement, there had been 20 cases brought before the Licensing and Appeals Sub-Committee for determination.

In relation to premises licenced under the Licensing Act 2003, there were currently 530 licensed premises and routine checks were undertaken to ensure compliance with licence conditions. Only a small number of complaints were received and these are generally related to noise nuisance.

The District had 3 gambling establishments (betting shops) and they were checked for compliance in 2017, the next scheduled enforcement check would be in 2020.

**Resolved** – (1) That, the report is noted.

(2) That, the draft licensing compliance monitoring and enforcement plan for 2019/20 is endorsed.

LIC.225

**PRIVATE HIRE OPERATORS' LICENCES**

The Licensing Manager submitted a report asking for Members' views on enforcing new Private Hire Operators' licence conditions which were approved last year. Licenses were issued for 1 or 5 years and some of those licenses were not due for renewal until September 2023. This had inadvertently resulted in some Private Hire Operators operating under the new conditions being disadvantaged against those still operating under the old conditions.

Under the new conditions Private Hire Operators were prevented from using Hackney Carriages and drivers licensed in areas other than Craven. This appeared to mainly affect school contracts where sometimes Private Hire Operators needed to use additional Hackney Carriages and/or drivers to fulfil their contract obligations. This created an unintentional but nevertheless un-level playing field until all Private Hire Operators were operating under the new conditions.

Members considered all the options open to them and it was

**Resolved** – (1) That, the condition for Private Hire Operators relating to not using non Craven licensed vehicles/drivers is not enforced until 1<sup>st</sup> October 2023.

LIC.226

**NATIONAL LICENSING MATTERS - UPDATE**

The Legal Services Manager submitted a report providing Members with a general update on national licensing matters.

**Resolved – (1)** That, the report is noted.

LIC.227

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- a) The Chairman raised the issue that the Licensing Committee had previously given an undertaking to the taxi trade that the informal Taxi Liaison Group would be reinstated to discuss specific issues and concerns. Members agreed that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman should represent the Licensing Committee at these meetings which would be held on an ad-hoc basis.
- b) The Solicitor to the Council reminded Members about the need for new Members to undertake licensing training before they could sit on the Licensing and Appeals Sub-Committee. A training session with James Button had been arranged for 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019 to which all Licensing Committee Members were invited.

Chairman.