

Contact Officer: Jenny Bryce-Chan

KIRKLEES COUNCIL

LICENSING AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Thursday 11th October 2018

Present: Councillor Carole Pattison (Chair)
Councillor Mahmood Akhtar
Councillor Karen Allison
Councillor Christine Iredale
Councillor Michelle Grainger-Mead
Councillor Terry Lyons
Councillor Amanda Pinnock
Councillor Mohan Sokhal
Councillor Kath Taylor

In attendance: Samantha Lawton

Apologies: Councillor James Homewood
Councillor Manisha Roma Kaushik
Councillor Cathy Scott
Councillor Michael Watson

1 Membership of the Committee

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Watson, Kaushik, Scott and Homewood.

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

That the Minutes of the meeting of the committee held on 10 September 2018 be approved as a correct record.

3 Interests

No interests were declared.

4 Admission of the Public

That all items be held in public session.

5 Deputations/Petitions

No deputations or petitions were received.

6 Public Question Time

No questions were asked.

7 Kirklees Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy

The Committee considered a report which sought approval to consult on a new Kirklees Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy. Two of the policies relating to convictions and driver training had been developed in partnership with the West Yorkshire authorities and York.

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The Committee was advised that over the last two years, officers have been working on a project for approval with the Chairs of the West Yorkshire Licensing Committees (or equivalent), the respective lead member or portfolio holder and with the support of West Yorkshire Combined Authority. The project aims to establish some minimum standards in certain areas of licensing, while not necessarily creating identical policies.

In conjunction with the project, Kirklees has developed an overarching policy encompassing all the different aspects of taxi and private hire licensing, in which it is proposed to include the Convictions and Driver Training Policies which are part of the West Yorkshire wide project. The Committee was informed that while there are some excellent drivers, the policy has been developed to give assurance to the travelling public that the service being provided meets safeguarding duties and passenger safety. The key message being promoted is safeguarding, protecting the public and not compromising on passenger safety.

The Committee was informed that the Kirklees policy includes adopting a revised standard for testing hackney carriage and private hire vehicles. In addition, the council has adopted the West Yorkshire Low Emissions Strategy 2016-2021. Leeds will be bringing in a Clean Air Zone and if drivers meet the emissions they will meet the Clean Air Zone guidance standards. There will also be more emphasis on three year licences instead of one year licences.

The Committees' attention was drawn to the two additional conditions that have been attached to the standard conditions attached to the issue of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Driver Licence namely:-

- Drivers must cooperate with any authorised officer and/or police constable from any other licensing authority
- Drivers must comply with the Council's Code of conduct on working with vulnerable people

The West Yorkshire Combined authority Hackney Carriage and private hire drive training policy is to give confidence to the travelling public that drivers licensed with each authority have been trained to the highest standard, a standard that is consistent across the region. Kirklees is looking to make the test, pre-application and there will be aspects of dementia training included however, the full details regarding the test to be taken by drivers has yet to be confirmed.

The Committee sought clarity on aspects of the policy and raised questions in respect of non-English speaking drivers and in response was advised that it was important for drivers to be able to communicate with the fare paying passenger. The Committee also raised questions in respect of domestic dogs travelling in taxis being at the discretion of individual drivers and in response was advised that the inaccuracies in the policy would be amended. Officers would also give consideration regarding this issue and what could be included in the policy to address this concern.

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Officers advised that authority was being sought from the Committee for permission to consult on the draft Kirklees policy, which includes the conviction policy, driver training policy and revised standards for testing hackney carriage and private hire vehicles.

RESOLVED:

That approval be given to consult on

- a) A new Kirklees Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy which includes the following policies developed in partnership with the West Yorkshire Combined.
- b) The draft policy on the Relevance of Criminal Conduct in Taxi and Private Hire Licensing (Conviction Policy)
- c) The draft West Yorkshire Driving Training Policy
- d) That the Head of Public Protection is authorised to agree the final approach to consultation alongside the other West Yorkshire and York authorities.