

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

LICENSING COMMITTEE (Non Licensing Act 2003 Functions)

3.00pm – 23 November 2006

COUNCIL CHAMBER HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Lepper (Chair); Councillors Carden, Cobb, Hawkes, Hyde (Deputy Chair), Meegan, Older, Pennington (Deputy Chair), Pidgeon, Simson, Taylor, G Theobald, Watkins and Williams.

PART ONE

ACTION

9. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

9A Declarations of Substitutes

9.1 Councillor Taylor substituted for Councillor Paskins.

9B Declarations of Interest

9.2 There were none.

9C Exclusion of Press and Public

9.3 The Committee considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of any items contained in the agenda, having regard to the nature of the business to be transacted and the nature of the proceedings and the likelihood as to whether, if members of the press and public were present, there would be disclosure to them of confidential or exempt information as defined in Section 100A(3) or 100 1 of the Local Government Act 1972.

9.4 **RESOLVED** - That the press and public not be excluded from the meeting during consideration of any items.

10. MINUTES

10.1 **RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2006 be approved and signed by the Chair.

11. CALLOVER

- 11.1 **RESOLVED** – That all the items on the agenda be reserved for discussion.

12. CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

- 12.1 There were none.

13. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

- 13.1 There were no public questions.

14. DEPUTATION TO FULL COUNCIL - AVAILABILITY OF WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE TAXIS

- 14.1 The Committee had before them the deputation submitted to Council on 19 October 2006 by Ms Karen Coley concerning the availability of wheelchair accessible taxis, and a report of the Director of Environment that considered and responded to the deputation (for copy see minute book).
- 14.2 The Chair welcomed Ms Coley to the meeting along with other members of the Disabled Access Advisory Group.
- 14.3 Ms Coley addressed the Committee and made the following recommendations following the Deputation to the Council meeting.

Pre-booking of wheelchair accessible taxis

- Allow wheelchair users to pre-book taxis
- Ensure availability of wheelchair taxis at peak times – not all to be busy on school runs.

Incentives for wheelchair accessible taxi drivers and recognition of those who already provide the service

- Subsidised office fees
- Allowing drivers with converted vans (as opposed to the London cabs) to keep their vehicle licenses for 10 years instead of 7.
- Preferential Heathrow and Gatwick taxi runs to those drivers that regularly do ordinary wheelchair bookings.
- If drivers are logged onto a circuit and are wheelchair accessible, and refuse to do the small jobs without a valid reason, ensure they go to the bottom of the queue when larger jobs come up.

Implement a standard for ramps

- Vehicles come in all shapes and sizes, and the ramps can vary in safety
- In Brighton and Hove with so many steep hills, this can be a hazardous job for the drivers having to push people up the ramp. Combine wet wheels and this is a disaster waiting to happen.
- Ensure gradient is not too steep and that wheelchairs can be secured safely.

Concluding points to be thought about with regards to all the paperwork received

14.4 Ms Coley supported Mark Durrell of the Brighton & Hove Private Hire Association and Mike Doyle from the GMB who suggest increasing the number of hackney carriage vehicle licenses by 20, with the stipulation that these vehicles are wheelchair accessible and that these vehicles have to remain on a radio circuit. Ms Coley considers this is an excellent idea as long as the increase continues and success is monitored.

14.5 Ms Coley felt that further consideration could be given to expanding Easylink (Community Transport) who could provide pick ups at the peak periods when taxis are tied up on the Social Services and Local Authority work.

14.6 Tim Williamson, from the Disabled Access Advisory Group addressed the Committee. Mr Williamson agreed with Ms Coley's recommendations. He considered that there needed to be incentives for drivers who drove wheelchair accessible taxis, and stressed the considerable expense of buying and running a wheelchair accessible taxi compared to an ordinary taxi.

14.7 **RESOLVED** – (1) that wheelchair accessibility is to be a condition of all new hackney carriage licences as is current policy.

Tim Nichols

(2) That the annual increase of wheelchair accessible hackney carriage vehicles be maximised within managed growth policy.

(3) Notwithstanding 1 and 2 above, that 20 new hackney carriage wheelchair accessible vehicle licences be issued, to be conditional upon joining an operators' radio circuit in addition to any licences issued by virtue of a managed growth policy and that authority to draft the condition is delegated to the Director of Strategy and Governance.

(4) That current policy be amended to require existing drivers to

be subject to DSA testing if they receive 7 points or more over a 1 year period.

15. HACKNEY CARRIAGE/PRIVATE HIRE STATEMENT

15.1 The Committee considered a report of the Assistant Director, Public Safety that presented the revised Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Statement (for copy see minute book). The matter had been discussed at the Council's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Consultation Forum.

15.2 **RESOLVED** – That the Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Statement be approved.

**Martin
Seymour**

16. HACKNEY CARRIAGE/PRIVATE HIRE TRADE ETHNICITY MONITORING

16.1 The Committee considered a report of the Assistant Director, Public Safety that presented the results of the Ethnicity Monitoring of the Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Trade for 2005/06 (for copy see minute book). All applications received by the Hackney Carriage Office for the licensing of vehicles and drivers were monitored for ethnic background. The results of the monitoring were shown in appendix 1 to the report.

16.2 **RESOLVED** – That the results of ethnic monitoring be noted.

17. HACKNEY CARRIAGE UNMET DEMAND SURVEY

17.1 The Committee considered a report of the Assistant Director, Public Safety that presented the results of the Hackney Carriage Unmet Demand Survey and suggested various options for Members to consider for approval. The summary and conclusions section of the survey report was appended to the report (for copy see minute book).

17.2 The Chair reminded Members that they had already agreed to issue 20 new hackney carriage wheelchair accessible vehicle licenses under resolution (2) of item 14.

17.3 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the number of hackney carriage licences issued by the council continues to increase by 5 annually (or such greater number as the Committee sees fit), such licences to be issued in May each year commencing in May 2007.

**Martin
Seymour**

(2) That any additional licences issued under resolution 1 above should be issued in accordance with the conditions attached to the Brighton & Hove City Council Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence Waiting List and to vehicles which are constructed or adapted and configured to carry passengers seated in

wheelchairs, the type and design of the vehicle to be agreed by the Chief Executive.

18. APPLICATIONS FOR HIGHWAY PERMISSION (TABLES AND CHAIRS) WITHIN EAST STREET: AL FORNO, THE HOUSE, ENGLISH'S & SUSSEX TAVERN

18.1 The Committee considered a report of the Assistant Director of Sustainable Transport relating to the applications for Highway Permissions (tables and chairs) within East Street considered by the Licensing Committee (Non Licensing Act 2003 Functions) on 20 April 2006 (for copy see minute book).

18.2 **RESOLVED** – That the current position be noted.

19. ITEMS TO GO FORWARD TO COUNCIL

19.1 **RESOLVED** – That item 14 Deputation to full Council – Availability of Wheelchair Accessible Taxis, be submitted to Council for information.

The meeting concluded at 4.00pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

2006