

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

LICENSING COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 19 NOVEMBER
2020**

Present: Councillors Brindle, Fissenden, Fort, Garten,
Mrs Grigg, Hinder, Joy(Chairman), Naghi, Newton,
Mrs Robertson, M Rose, J Sams and Springett

Also Present: Councillor Kimmance

52. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies.

53. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

There were no Substitute Members.

54. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

55. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members and Officers.

56. VISITING MEMBERS

Councillor Kimmance was present as a Visiting Member for Item 14 – Draft Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy 2021-2026.

57. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

Councillors Garten, Mrs Grigg, Hinder, Joy, Naghi, Newton, Mrs Robertson, J Sams and Springett had been lobbied on Item 14 – Draft Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy 2021-2026.

58. EXEMPT ITEMS

RESOLVED: That all items be taken in public as proposed.

59. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 SEPTEMBER 2020

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held of 17 September 2020 be approved as a correct record and will be signed at a later date.

60. MINUTES OF THE LICENSING ACT 2003 SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 10 SEPTEMBER 2020

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Licensing Act 2003 Sub-Committee meeting held on 10 September 2020 be approved as a correct record and signed at a later date.

61. MINUTES OF THE LICENSING ACT 2003 SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 2 OCTOBER 2020

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Licensing Act 2003 Sub-Committee meeting held on 2 October 2020 be approved as a correct record and signed at a later date.

62. MINUTES OF THE LICENSING ACT 2003 SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 6 NOVEMBER 2020

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Licensing Act 2003 Sub-Committee meeting held on 6 November 2020 be approved as a correct record and signed at a later date.

63. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There was one question from a Member of the public.

Question from Mr Neil Cox to the Chairman of the Licensing Committee

'Would the Committee consider delaying the introduction of the electric powered vehicle proposal in the updated taxi policy until such time as the country exits from the pandemic whenever that is or whenever the economy is fully back up and running as this year has been the worst in living memory for us. Shops have been shut for much of the year, the night time economy has disappeared and local authority work was stopped between March and September and some of it has still not resumed and all of these things have impacted on our ability to make a living. We are happy to continue with the consultation in respect of other aspects of the taxi policy.'

The Chairman responded to the question.

The full response was recorded on the webcast and made available to view on the Maidstone Borough Council Website.

To access the webcast recording, please use the link below:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r-n1Y3wpI_0

64. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO THE CHAIRMAN

There were no questions from Members to the Chairman.

65. DRAFT HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY 2021-2026

The Senior Licensing Officer introduced the report, with the policy having been reviewed in accordance with the Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicles Standards that had been published in July 2020. The proposed changes were shown in Appendix 1 to the report. Prior to the adoption of the NR3 database, a consultation with trade members would occur.

The Committee were reminded of the Low Emissions Policy discussed in 2018, which had been paused due to the creation of the Council's Biodiversity and Climate Change Working Group. The resulting action plan included that a carbon neutral policy be introduced within Licensing. The government ban on petrol and diesel vehicles from 2030 was noted, with the suggestion that the taxi vehicles be replaced with a carbon neutral vehicle once it reached the licensable time period end.

In response to questions, it was confirmed that the public consultation responses would be brought back to the Committee for review before the policy's implementation. The licensable life of electric vehicles had not yet been decided, but multiple companies had been approached for further information on the vehicles' lifespans. The location of the electric vehicle chargers had not yet been agreed.

RESOLVED: That

1. The Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Standards introduced by Government in July 2020 be noted;
2. The amendments proposed to the Taxi Licensing Policy 2019-2024, arising from the statutory standards including any minor amendments arising from typographical errors, clarification or feedback, be noted;
3. A consultation period appropriate for the proposed amendments to allow for feedback from interested parties, be agreed;
4. Consultation with the trade for the adoption and for the use of the NR3 register, be agreed;
5. The carbon neutral vehicle policy be agreed, subject to the policy's implementation date being considered within the public consultation on the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Taxi Licensing Policy 2021-2026;
6. A further report to the Committee detailing any feedback, to request approval of the 2021-2026 Taxi Licensing Policy and agree a date for implementation, be agreed; and
7. The Head of Housing and Community Services be given delegated powers, in conjunction with the Chair and vice-Chair, to undertake a review on the temporary extension of the 6-year and 15-year

limit on private hire and hackney carriage vehicles, in light of the reduction in vehicle usage from the Covid-19 pandemic.

66. STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY 2021-2026

The Senior Licensing Officer introduced the report and noted that the draft statement of licensing policy would come into effect from 7 January 2021. The statement had undergone a public consultation and no comments were received.

RESOLVED: That full Council be recommended to approve the Statement of Licensing Policy, shown at appendix 1 to the report.

67. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 7.40 p.m.