

## LICENSING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF A MEETING of the Licensing Committee held on Friday, 25 October 2019 at 10.00 am at the Guildhall, Portsmouth

### Present

Councillors Claire Udy (Chair)  
Scott Payter-Harris (Vice-Chair)  
Dave Ashmore  
Tom Coles  
Jason Fazackarley  
John Ferrett  
George Fielding  
Leo Madden  
Lee Mason  
Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE

#### 13. Apologies for Absence (AI 1)

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Steve Pitt, Benedict Swann and Linda Symes.

#### 14. Declarations of Members' Interests (AI 2)

None.

#### 15. Minutes of the Previous Meeting - 12 April 2019 (AI 3)

It was reported that Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson had attended as a standing deputy at the meeting of 12 April 2019.

The legal adviser suggested some minor amendments to wording on page 2 of the previous minutes, 5<sup>th</sup> paragraph delete words "to" and "minimum" to read "New cars are of better quality now so there is no need to extend the age limit to 10 or 12 years"

And page 3, 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph, 2<sup>nd</sup> bullet point change "that" to "than" to read "Vehicle emissions are more important than its condition".

**RESOLVED that subject to these amendments the minutes of the Licensing Committee held on 12 April 2019 were agreed as a correct record.**

#### 16. Air Quality Local Plan and Implications for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles (AI 4)

The Chair had announced that this meeting was being webcast. A recording is available to view here:

<https://livestream.com/accounts/14063785/Licensing-25Oct2019>

Nickii Humphreys, Licensing Manager, presented the report, accompanied by Hayley Trower, Air Quality Lead for Transport, setting out the background to this, with the Licensing Committee having revised its policy on vehicle age limits at the previous meeting and the need to respond to the ministerial directive. Paragraph 3.9 of the report showed that out of 1054 PCC licensed vehicles, 489 diesel vehicles did not currently meet the required Euro 6 Standard.

The Licensing Manager had arranged a meeting of the Hackney Carriage/ Private Hire Consultative Group on 3 October and there had since been a working group with the taxi trade to discuss government funding for incentives to change vehicles, including the Clean Air Fund.

Hayley Trower reported on the timescales involved and that the Council's Outline Business Case for Air Quality was being considered by Cabinet on 29<sup>th</sup> October to meet the government deadline for submission to DEFRA by 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019. The Cabinet had previously approved the Class B Clean Air Zone (CAZ) to meet compliance by the end of 2022. Licensed vehicles not meeting Euro 6 Emission Standard (for diesel) or Euro 4 (for petrol) would be subject to a daily charge for driving in the CAZ. The government would have an Implementation Fund available and the Clean Air Fund to help fund mitigation measures, so bids would be made to these and a range of incentives were being further considered (including loans and grants) to help those most affected in making the adaptations.

Councillor Vernon-Jackson felt it important to look at all the funding sources available to help ensure licensed vehicle compliance, so suggested an additional recommendation, which was later supported. In response to a question from Councillor Fazackarley, Ms Humphreys reported on the formation of a working group, following on from the consultative group meeting, with officers from licensing and transport meeting with drivers and companies with leased cars. Ms Trower further reported that regular meetings were also held with the bus companies and retrofitting of buses in the city was taking place. Councillor Madden asked about the involvement of the Director of Public Health and thought it would be helpful if the later report look at what other local authorities are doing and the measures they are taking.

In response to questions raised, the Licensing Manager reported that the working group had been established swiftly to meet the deadline for submissions to government by the end of October and she would be happy to invite members to future meetings. She confirmed that her report back would cover the experiences of other local authorities as well as the lead in times for measures (and possible extensions where there are extra costs such as adaptation/replacement of wheelchair accessible vehicles).

Officers explained how the CAZ would be enforced. The Licensing Office would send a list of registered vehicles to DEFRA on a weekly basis for their central database and automatic recognition of number plates would mean that those not paying the access charge, where appropriate, would be fined. The income from these fines would be used firstly towards the ongoing maintenance of the CAZ and then towards other sustainable transport projects. It was reported that the Director of Public Health is the Chair of the Air Quality Board and he would be presenting the submission paper to Cabinet on 29 October.

In response to questions from Councillor Ashmore it was reported that there were already 52 hybrid vehicles in the licensed trade fleet and there had been assurances that leased cars were changing towards hybrids. There would be further information available on numbers relating to the Clean Air Fund at the end of October that could be made available to members. Members were aware that the government funding of £220m was available nationally for local authorities to bid for (over 60 councils would be competing). Councillor Ferrett asked that the mitigation measures for the private hire trade by other councils introducing Clean Air Zones be investigated; Hayley Trower confirmed that consultants were looking at this information which would also be reported back to members.

The committee supported adding a fourth recommendation to investigate funding streams further.

**RESOLVED that the Licensing Committee:**

- i) noted the update on the development of the Air Quality Local Plan and its effect on licensed hackney carriage and private hire vehicles;**
- ii) authorised the Licensing Manager to prepare a further report for consideration by the Licensing Committee which sets out options for the review of its existing hackney carriage and private hire statement of licensing policy having regard to the effect of the Air Quality Local Plan;**
- iii) required the Licensing Manager to include proposals within the report in line with required Euro Standards for a Clean Air Zone and progressive tightening of the vehicle specification policy.**
- iv) asked that a bid is worked up to investigate possible external or council funding to help fund the transition to compliant vehicles.**

At the conclusion of the meeting it was asked when a report would be brought Forward on new taxi ranks; the Licensing Manager reported that potential sites were being investigated and work was taking place with colleagues in Transport then a report would be brought back to the next Licensing Committee, with the aim for this to be by the end of the year. The issue of livery changes would be taken to the next consultative group.

The meeting concluded at 10.42 am.

---

Signed by the chair, Councillor Claire Udy