

Report to Full Council from the Public Protection Committee.

Meeting held 31st February 2014

Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005. Fixed Penalty Notices - Littering Offences

Consideration was given to a report advising of actions taken in respect of littering offences within the Borough and seeking authorisation to institute legal proceedings against Fixed Penalty Notice Holders referred to in the agenda. The committee resolved that legal proceedings be instituted in relation to those persons referred to in the agenda.

Standards for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles

Consideration was given to a report outlining the standards of maintenance of Private Hire and Hackney Carriage vehicles licensed by this authority.

The Council's Fleet Manager circulated a report outlining the number of taxi-test failures and highlighted the fact that there was only a 35% pass rate of the vehicles undertaking the taxi test.

Members discussed the issues and a request was made for the provision of a breakdown of the serious and minor failings; separation of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles to assess which had the poorer pass rate, details of any persistent offenders and also, ages of the vehicles. The committee resolved that, in view of the additional information presented at the meeting and the request for additional information, the item be deferred to the next meeting of 23 June, 2014.

Age profile Hackney Carriage Fleet

Consideration was given to a report concerning the age profile of the Hackney Carriage Fleet prior to consideration of the proposal to amend the Council's policy in connection with the age of saloon-type Hackney Carriage Vehicles.

The Committee had previously requested further information relating to the number of vehicles that would be affected in the first year.

A number of Hackney Carriage Drivers were in attendance and raised concerns that, the differences in ages of Hackney and Private Hire could cause a migration of Private Hire to Hackney at a time where there had been a significant loss of trade. The trade also proposed that two tests per year be considered and agreed that vehicle standards would be subject to further report.

After consideration from the committee, they decided that there should be parity between the Private Hire and Hackney Carriage fleet. The committee felt that this age restriction would continue its work to improve the safety of the vehicles – linked to the council's corporate priorities ie. Creating a cleaner, safe and sustainable Borough. The reason for the resolution is to improve the standards for Hackney Carriage saloon vehicles and to achieve parity with the same vehicles licensed as Private Hire.

Fly tipping offence

Consideration was given to a report advising Members of action taken in respect of a fly-tipping offence within the borough and to seek the Committees authorisation to institute legal proceedings. The committee resolved that legal proceedings be instituted in relation to the fly tipping offence.

Cateries Report 2014

Members considered a report regarding the reviewing of licensing standards for catteries.

The Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963 requires anyone wishing to keep a boarding establishment to be licensed by the local authority. Ten catteries are currently licensed by the borough.

Resolved:-

- (i) That the Committee confirms its support, in principal, to updating the licensing standards and approves further research by officers and consultation with businesses to determine its impact.
- (ii) That a further report be submitted to the next meeting detailing officer's findings and a final decision made as to whether the benefits of adopting new standards outweigh any adverse impact it may have on businesses.

Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005, Fixed Penalty Notices.

Consideration was given to a report advising Members of actions taken in respect of littering offences within the borough.

Members raised concerns regarding the litter left behind by the recycling teams when collecting recycling as some items were being left behind. The Council's Head of Environmental Health Services was requested to raise this issue at their next contract meeting. The committee resolved that the information be received.

Draft Enforced Sale Delegated Authority

Members considered a report relating to the use of Enforced Sale powers to achieve the aims of the Empty Homes Strategy 2012-2017. Enforced Sale would help to change the ownership of an empty home. The committee resolved that it be recommended to Full Council that the power to commence the Enforced Sale procedure set out under the Law of Property Act 1925 be delegated to the Public Protection Committee.