

PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE

Monday, 3rd February, 2014

Present:- Councillor Mark Olszewski – in the Chair

Councillors Allport, Bailey, Kearon, Matthews, Miss Olszewski, Williams, Mrs Williams and Mrs Winfield

1. ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

(Item 10 only)

Mrs T Jones – Hackney Carriage Drivers Association
Mr T Mahmood – Hackney Carriage Drivers Association

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Mrs Hailstones, Hailstones and Welsh.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest stated.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting of this Committee held on 2 December, 2013 be agreed as a correct record.

5. DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION

Resolved:- That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following matters because it is likely that there will be disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2 and 7 in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972.

6. CONFIDENTIAL REPORT(S)

7. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) ACT - 1976 - MR NY

Resolved:- That, in the circumstances that the applicant, Mr NY was unable to be present, consideration of this application be deferred to the next meeting.

8. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) ACT - 1976 - MR VU

The Committee considered an application from Mr VU for the grant of a Private Hire Driver's Licence.

Mr VU was given the opportunity to address the Committee. His solicitor, who had accompanied him to the meeting and spoke on his behalf provided a number of written character references that were read out and passed to the Chairman.

- Resolved:-**
- (a) That a Private Hire Driver's Licence be granted to Mr VU for a probationary period of six months during which time he be advised that his conduct would be closely monitored.
 - (b) That upon completion of the six months probationary period a report be submitted to the first available meeting of this Committee when a decision, based on the applicants conduct during that time, would be made as to whether a full Private Hire Driver's Licence should be granted.

9. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) ACT - 1976 - MR AH

Consideration was given to a report asking the Committee what action it wished to take in respect of the Hackney Carriage Driver's Licence currently held by Mr AH.

Mr AH was given the opportunity to address the Committee.

- Resolved:-** That, for the reasons stated at the meeting, Mr AH be allowed to retain his Hackney Carriage Driver's Licence but that he be warned that any future misconduct or breaches of Council Policy would result in further consideration being given to the licence being revoked by the Committee.

10. 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.

- Resolved:-** That legal proceedings be instituted in relation to those persons referred to in the agenda.

11. OPEN REPORTS FROM OFFICERS

12. CONSULTATION ON HACKNEY CARRIAGE AGE POLICY

Reference was made to the Council's earlier resolution to consult the Hackney Carriage Trade on a proposal to amend the Council's current Age Policy for Hackney Carriage Vehicles.

The proposal, consulted upon with all Hackney Carriage proprietors was as follows:-

'Saloon type vehicles will be less than 5 years of age when tested but will cease to be re-licensed when they are 8 years of age.'

As for those vehicles, purpose built for Hackney Carriage purposes, those type of vehicle must be less than 5 years of age when first tested but can remain licensed for as long as they continue to pass consecutive annual tests.'

The Chairman welcomed Mrs Jones and Mr Mahmood (Hackney Carriage Driver's Association) and allowed them to address the meeting on behalf of their members who strongly objected to the adoption of the proposals.

- Resolved:-**
- (a) That, from 1 April, 2014, in relation to applications to licence Hackney Carriage vehicles, that are purpose built and wheelchair accessible, the vehicles shall be less than 5 years of age when first tested. These vehicles will continue to be relicensed on passing consecutive annual tests.
 - (b) That, consideration of the proposal that with effect from 1 January, 2015 all Hackney Carriage vehicles that are saloon cars will cease to be re-licensed when they are 8 years of age be deferred to a subsequent meeting to enable the officers to provide details of the age profile of the Council's Hackney Carriage fleet.

13. CLEAN NEIGHBOURHOODS AND ENVIRONMENT ACT 2005 - FIXED PENALTY NOTICES - DOG CONTROL ORDERS

The Committee considered a report advising of actions taken in respect of Dog Control Orders' within the Borough.

Resolved:- That the report be received.

14. PIGEON CONTROL - NEWCASTLE TOWN CENTRE

Consideration was given to a report providing an update to Members on actions taken to reduce feral pigeon numbers in the town centre.

Resolved:- That the report be received.

15. PRIVATE HIRE AND HACKNEY CARRIAGE DRIVER TRAINING

Having previously discussed this matter at its meeting on 5 September, 2013, the Committee considered a further report providing details of the outcome of the consultation undertaken with the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers' fraternity.

The content of responses received was summarised in the officers report on the agenda.

Resolved:- That, with effect from 1 October, 2015 anyone holding either a Private Hire or Hackney Carriage driver's licence shall have obtained a relevant qualification, the minimum qualification being either a Btec for private hire and hackney carriage drivers or alternatively the Driving Standards Agency taxi test which incorporates wheelchair training. Any licences renewed to those without such a qualification will expire on 1 October, 2015. These licenses will then be extended to the full 3 years on the production of a relevant qualification.

16. CLEAN NEIGHBOURHOODS AND ENVIRONMENT ACT 2005 - FIXED PENALTY NOTICES - LITTERING OFFENCES

Consideration was given to a report detailing the outcome of prosecution proceedings in respect of littering offences within the Borough.

Resolved:- That the report be received.

COUNCILLOR MARK OLSZEWSKI
Chair