



Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the
LICENSING AND PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

Held: TUESDAY, 15 DECEMBER 2020 at 5:30 pm

P R E S E N T:

Councillor Singh-Johal (Co-Vice-Chair in the Chair)
Councillor Pickering (Co-Vice Chair)

Councillor Fonseca
Councillor Dr Moore

Councillor Dr Sangster
Councillor Westley

In Attendance

Mr Ian Millership – Licensed Vehicle Surveys & Assessment (LVSA)

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49. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Cank and Shelton.

50. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

51. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

that the minutes of the meeting held on 15th September 2020 be approved as a correct record.

52. PETITIONS

The Monitoring Officer reported that no petitions had been submitted in accordance with the Council's procedures.

53. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATIONS, STATEMENTS OF CASE

The Monitoring Officer reported that no questions, representations and statements of case had been submitted in accordance with the Council's

procedures.

54. SURVEY OF UNMET DEMAND FOR HACKNEY CARRIAGES

The Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services submitted a report to inform the Licensing and Public Safety Committee of the outcome of the survey of unmet demand for hackney carriage vehicles and to seek the Committee's views on a change to the existing limit on licences that Leicester City Council would issue. The report also sought the Committee's views on restricting any licences released up to the new limit being restricted to ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs).

The Licensing and Public Safety Committee were recommended to comment to the Deputy City Mayor for Culture, Leisure, Sport and Regulatory Services on the four options contained in the report in relation to the limit on hackney carriage vehicle licences and the possible requirement for new released licences to be restricted to ULEVs.

The Chief Licensing Officer presented the report. Members discussed the pros and cons of the various options. The following observations and comments were made:

- Since 23rd March 2020, 21 licences had expired and not been renewed, which may or may not be connected to the pandemic. Members asked that the 21 people be contacted to ask them why they had not renewed their licences, for example, they may have retired.
- A comparison had not been made with neighbouring cities such as Nottingham and Derby, as Leicester had its own unmet demand survey.
- With Covid-19 and a downturn in business, leisure and tourism, it was an opportunity to lower the number of new licences to reduce emissions, and to encourage the use of cleaner vehicles.
- The existing limit of licences issued was 338. When the unmet demand survey was undertaken there were only 306 licensed hackney carriages with no unmet demand. There had been a steady decline in plates, with a steeper drop in numbers since March 2020. One option was to set a lower limit to support the air quality aims of the council, which could be met through natural wastage.
- Members were mindful that during the Covid-19 pandemic, there had been less activity for hackney carriages, and that any reduction in the maximum number of licences the council would issue needed to be minimal for when business, leisure and tourism activity increased in future months.
- Any decision to make all future vehicles ULEVs was a separate matter.
- The options at 5.4 in the report were possible alternatives discussed between the government's Joint Air Quality Unit (JAQU) and the City Council, which included restricting the numbers of Hackney licences.
- Members suggested the Executive start to plan for the electrification of vehicles for the future. They also stated drivers would require financial help towards the purchase of ULEVs.
- Available licences up to the new limit should be restricted to ULEVs as should subsequent replacement vehicles on those plates.

- It was put that ULEVs would be prohibitively expensive for people coming out of Covid-19 restrictions. In contrast it was suggested that second-hand ULEVs would gradually become available more cheaply than new ULEVs.

The Chair in summing up points raised confirmed the Committee's view that the existing limit be reduced from 338 to 306 hackney licences, and that available licences up to the new limit be released on condition that the vehicles be ULEVs.

RESOLVED:

That:

1. Comments on options shown in relation to the limit on hackney carriage vehicle licences and the possible requirement for newly released licences be restricted to ULEV's be noted.
2. It be recommended the reduced overall limit be changed from 338 to 306 hackney licences, and available licences up to the new limit be released on condition that the vehicles be ULEVs.
3. The Committee's comments be referred to the Deputy City Mayor for Culture, Leisure, Sport and Regulatory Services for his consideration regarding any decision relating to the limit of Hackney Carriage Licences in Leicester.

55. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 6.22 pm