

Note: Minutes indicated as **DRAFT** will remain so until approved at the next meeting of the Committee

LICENSING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17th March 2008

Present councillors: Tony Linden (*Chairman*), Jeff Beck, Billy Drummond, Andrew Rowles, Adrian Edwards, Geoff Findlay, Manohar Gopal, Gwen Mason, Owen Jeffrey, Quentin Webb, Keith Woodhams (Vice Chairman)

PART I

1. APOLOGIES.

Apologies for the inability to attend the meeting was received on behalf of Councillors Peter Argyle, Millie Lock and Paul Bryant.

2. MINUTES.

Noted that unless otherwise stated, votes should be anonymous and therefore record of who voted in favour of or against the 08/09 tariffs should be removed.

The amended minutes of the meeting held on 21st January 2008 were approved as true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

None.

4 PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING

John Priest said that not much to add to the circulated report. Slight amendments had been made from the examples shown in annex D:

- the background colouring of the plates had been altered to the council's corporate blue.
- the wording 'Private Hire' had been increased slightly.

A revised mock up of the plate was circulated.

Clarification was sought on:

- *The hologram.* Confirmed the purpose was to make it more difficult to counterfeit the plate.
- *Exemptions for weddings / funerals* (para 2.1). Confirmed this was a statutory exemption.
- *Exemptions for trips to Buckingham Palace.* Confirmed that as long as the vehicle was used as a contract vehicle then a badge would be required.
- *How it would be fixed to windows.* Confirmed that by a adhesive – easily removable – plastic pocket.
- *Where the larger plate would be fixed.* Confirmed under the main registration plate.

Cllr Tony Lindon proposed recommendation 1 to agree the proposed changes to the plates / windscreen badges and vehicle advertising signage - seconded by Keith Woodhams. Voting was unanimous.

Questions invited from industry members.

Graham Cox (Excel Executive Chauffeurs) generally agree with the proposals making the point that small, discrete plates were more beneficial. Mr Cox raised a number of queries:

1. *What are the arrangements for counter-signatories for exemptions in the absence of the Senior Licensing Officer?* Confirmed that John Priest could sign exemptions on Brian Leahy's behalf.
2. *Was it permissible to leave the main plate in the boot of the car when exempted?* Confirmed this was so.
3. *2.3 of minutes should read corporate not contract.* Trina McFarlane (the council solicitor present) confirmed that 'contract' was the correct term.
4. *The report notes the financial implications of the proposals of £1,150 – who would bear the cost of this?* Confirmed that West Berkshire Council would support the changes in fixings and would bear the cost for the first year. Thereafter any costs associated with the plates would be borne by the trade.

Graham Cox raised a question around suspension of private hire firms not displaying appropriate signage in their vehicles. John Priest responded that there is a due legal process for this occurrence and asked that any information regarding operators not showing appropriate signage should be passed onto the council.

Cllr Tony Lindon proposed recommendation 2 to life the moratorium on the issue of windscreen licence badges in accordance with the option being submitted from 1st May 08 - seconded by Keith Woodhams. Voting was unanimous.

Next meeting of the Licensing Committee will be the AGM and will take place on 21st April at 6.30pm in the Council Chamber.

(The meeting commenced at 6.00 p.m. and closed at 6.25 p.m.)

CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature: