

DRAFT

Note: These Minutes will remain DRAFT until approved at the next meeting of the Committee

LICENSING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 15 DECEMBER 2025

Councillors Present: Jeremy Cottam (Chairman), Phil Barnett, Billy Drummond, Nigel Foot, Paul Kander, Tom McCann, David Marsh, Stephanie Steevenson, Clive Taylor and Martha Vickers

Also Present: Julia O'Brien (Principal Licensing Officer), Sean Murphy (Service Lead - Public Protection) Riley Timney (Lead Licensing Applications Officer), Benjamin Ryan and Sam Chiverton (Democratic Services Officer)

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting: Councillor Paul Dick and Councillor Jane Langford

PART I

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

2. Draft Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy

The Committee considered a report (Agenda Item 3) concerning the Council's draft Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy. Mr Sean Murphy introduced the report by first thanking the taxi trade for their significant contribution to the redrafting of the policy and apologising for the delay in getting the policy to the Committee. Mr Murphy further explained the process that the policy had gone through, the changes made to the draft version of the policy and the controversial parts of the policy for the trade.

The Chairman proposed to suspend standing orders to allow the taxi trade to speak and this was seconded by Councillor Billy Drummond.

The proposal was put to a vote and passed.

Standing Orders Suspended

The taxi trade was given ten minutes to provide their representation. A recording of their representation can be found here - [Special Licensing Committee - Monday 15th December 2025 - 12:50](#)

After the taxi trade had spoken the Chairman proposed to reinstate standing orders, which was seconded by Councillor Drummond.

The proposal was put to a vote and passed.

Standing Orders Reinstated

Councillor David Marsh queried when the policy would be implemented. He expressed the need to find a balance between those who used protected plates and those who did not. He had reservations about passing a policy that was not fully completed.

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Mr Murphy explained that the policy would allow for some transitional implementation dates so as not to adversely affect the taxi trade. He agreed that the protected plates issue was complicated; however, the report allowed for that section of the policy to be assessed and implemented by summer 2026. It was noted that it was up to the Committee to decide whether to agree the policy in advance of the receipt of the legal advice on this matter.

Ms Julia O'Brien stated that the licensing team was awaiting legal advice on the protected plate issues raised by the trade.

Mr Murphy further explained that the policy would come into effect once agreed, but there would be an annual review, and the team would discuss transitional arrangements with the trade.

The Chairman expressed the importance of having a policy, not only to protect the public but also to support the trade. He outlined the recommendations set out in the report.

Mr Murphy added that the typographical error relating to Certificates of Insurance would be amended in the final policy.

Councillor Tom McCann stressed that the policy was not the final product but a step forward, highlighting the built-in flexibility.

Councillor Phil Barnett questioned whether the policy could be tweaked, and the Chairman confirmed that it would include an implementation timetable for Committee review.

Councillor Clive Taylor stated that he was uncomfortable adopting a policy that was not completely finalised.

Councillor Martha Vickers asked about timeframes for consulting with the trade on the protected plates issue. The Chairman explained that a meeting was scheduled for 6 January 2026 to discuss the matter.

Councillor Stephanie Steevenson believed that the policy needed to be adopted, as delaying could result in it never being adopted, and she pointed to the future flexibility of the policy as a positive.

Councillor Paul Kander queried when the legal team was expected to provide feedback on the protected plates policy. Councillor McCann stated that he would speak to the Head of Legal to try to find a solution.

Councillor Kander argued that having a policy was better than having none and asked when the review would start. Mr Murphy explained that the review would begin in the new year.

The Chairman proposed adopting the recommendations set out in the report, with the inclusion of the amendment of the text around insurance certificates. This was seconded by Councillor Drummond.

The proposal was put to a vote and duly passed.

RESOLVED: That the Committee:

1. **APPROVED** the draft Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy set out at Annex A to the report.
2. **DELEGATED** authority to the Service Lead – Public Protection, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Licensing Committee, to agree any transitional arrangements to bring about effective implementation.

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3. **DELEGATED** authority to the Service Lead – Public Protection, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Licensing Committee, to make any minor revisions to the policy arising from future changes to the Department for Transport Guidance and any relevant changes to legislation.
4. **WOULD RECEIVE** an update on implementation as part of the Annual Report along with any proposed updates or changes to the policy.
5. **AGREED** to undertake a review of the application of the policy with respect to 'protected plates' (Section 20 of Appendix C) within the next six months with a view to implementing any changes proposed at the time of the first annual review.

(The meeting commenced at 4.30 pm and closed at 5.18 pm)

CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature