

Appendix C

PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 3RD JULY 2000

Councillors Present: J.C.G. Brooks (Chairman), Peter Argyle, Trevor Banning, Phil Barnett, Jeff Beck, Roger Brown, Tony Ferguson, Owen Jeffery (Vice-Chairman), Graham Jones, David Liddiard, James Mole, Steve Pascall,

Apologies for Absence: Bob Judge, Keith Woodhams

PART I

Declarations of Interest:

(i) Councillors Peter Argyle, Trevor Banning, Jeff Beck, Roger Brown, Tony Ferguson, Graham Jones and David Liddiard declared an interest in Minutes 19 and 21.

(ii) Councillor Graham Jones declared an interest in Minute 18(a)

16. MINUTES.

The Minutes of the meeting held on 6th June 2000 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

17. TAXI LICENSING.

The Committee considered a report (Agenda Item 2) concerning the outcome of consultation with the trade associations and parish/town councils on proposed changes to taxi licensing arrangements, adopted in principle by the Committee on 6th June 2000.

Members were presented with a number of options for the way forward. In addition, in accordance with Standing Order 18.3, the Committee invited representatives of both the Town and District Hackney Carriage Owners Associations to make oral representations. Mr C Paddick from the Town Trade Association declined to do so. Mrs J Beales from the District Trade Association confirmed that it supported the phased approach outlined in Option Five of the report.

Members were provided with copies of correspondence received from Solicitors representing the Town Trade Association, and with copies of a letter from MCL Transport Consultants which responded to the Solicitor's letter and the proposals under consideration.

RESOLVED that the Committee:

(1) re-affirm its commitment to the removal of limits to the number of licences issued in the town and distinct zones;

(2) approve Option Five as the way forward - to phase out the limits in both zones over a three and a half year period by allowing dual plating, a period of derogation for existing licence holders and transferees to switch to vehicles "suitably adapted or designed for ease of use by disabled passengers" (SAVs), and impose a requirement for persons who were not West Berkshire Council taxi licence holders as at 6th June 2000 to provide an SAV within a specified period.

18. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION.

The following reports (Agenda Items 4 - 7) were considered for information.

(a) Licensing Reform - (Note: Councillor Graham Jones declared an interest in this item as a licensee and left the meeting during consideration thereof)

(b) Food Enforcement

(c) Contaminated Land - The New Regime

(d) Publication of the New U.K. Waste Strategy 2000

19. TELECOM TRANSMITTERS.

The Committee considered a report (Agenda Item 3) concerning the report of the Independent Expert Group on Mobile Phones (I.E.G.M.P) - the Stewart Enquiry.

Members noted that the report included issues outside the interest or remit of the Council and therefore received an extract and commentary in respect of the most relevant points so far as they related to the Council or its concerns.

The balance of evidence indicated that non-ionising (RF) radiation from transmitters did not adversely affect the general population but may cause biological changes to occur even at levels below current safety guidelines.

RESOLVED that the Committee:

(1) note the Stewart Enquiry's findings and recommendations but regrets that it has raised more questions than it has answered through its failure to provide meaningful guidance in respect of the siting of telecom transmitters;

(2) call upon the Government to expedite and set a time frame for the research necessary to ascertain whether the biological changes identified so far constitute any hazard to public health;

(3) call upon the Government to empower the NRPB to identify all sensitive sites within West Berkshire and to audit the emissions and publish its findings without delay;

(4) continue to monitor the scientific evidence made available, and provide appropriate guidance