

Minutes of Licensing Committee

16 August 2022 at 10am
In the Council Chamber, Council House, Oldbury

Present: Councillor Allen (Chair);
Councillors Akpoteni, Dunn, Gavan, J Giles, A Hussain, Z
Hussain, Jalil, Singh and Wilkes

Also present: Alice Davey (Director – Borough Economy), Nicola Plant
(Assistant Director – Public Protection and Community
Safety), Tracy Hubball (Operations Manager – Licensing),
David Elliot (Legal Advisor), Stephnie Hancock (Senior
Democratic Services Officer), Connor Robinson (Democratic
Services Officer), Mateusz Sliwinski (Democratic Services
Officer) and John Swann (Democratic Services Officer).

17/22 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Fenton, M
Gill, W Gill and Kausar.

18/22 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no interests declared at this meeting.

19/22 **Minutes**

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 14 June
2022 are confirmed as a correct record.



Appointments to Licensing Sub Committees

Further to Minute No. 15/22 (14 June 2022), at its meeting on 26 July 2022 the Council had approved a change to the appointment of members to the Licensing Committee (Minute No. 108/22 refers). It was therefore necessary to revise the appointments to the Licensing Sub Committees.

Under the provisions of the Licensing Act 2003, the Licensing Committee may establish one or more Licensing Sub Committees. Further such functions of the Gambling Act, 2005 may also be discharged by those Sub Committees. The Licensing Act 2003 specified that each Sub Committee shall consist of three members of the Licensing Committee.

The Terms of Reference had been revised to reflect recent changes in legislation.

The Director - Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chair of the Licensing Committee, was authorised to select members from the Licensing Committee to serve on sub-committees as necessary to ensure a quorum, should a named member not be available for a meeting or unable to consider a particular case due to a conflict of interest.

Resolved:-

- (1) that the revised appointments to the Licensing Sub Committee be approved;
- (2) that the revised Terms of Reference for Licensing Sub Committees are approved.



Sandwell's Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Policy

The Committee received an update on progress with the taxi and private hire licensing improvement plan and considered the final requests from Sandwell Private Hire Drivers Association (SHPDA) which, if approved, would require minor administrative amendments to be made to the Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Policy (April 2022).

The Committee was asked to consider the requests made and determine whether any recommendations should be made to the Director of Borough Economy and the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Tourism to amend the policy.

Areas highlighted by members were:-

- the Licensing Office would be monitoring the GPs used for taxi driver medicals so would be aware if a disproportionate number of drivers were visiting the same GP;
- it was the taxi driver's responsibility to inform the Licensing Office of any changes to their health, or health conditions;
- the clinician carrying out the medical examination could determine whether a driver needed to have more frequent examinations and it would be the clinician's decision to determine whether a driver was fit or not;
- garages wishing to join the Council's approved list of MOT providers would be subject to a procurement exercise, with specific criteria to be met incorporating a value for money element;
- it was not anticipated that a large number of drivers would exercise the choice to go elsewhere for MOTs, but it was important to provide that choice;
- the fees set for the issuing of licences were based on the amount of work required, dual licences required more work.
- a new system (VERSO) was under development, which would deliver automated reminders to drivers when their licences were due to expire and provide departmental savings;



- those vehicles insured under Category N could still be licensed, subject to having previously being licensed by the Council (i.e. the Council having the full history of the vehicle), and subject to all of the other necessary checks. There were no policy changes proposed in relation to this at present, but this would be discussed at a future meeting.

Meeting ended at 11.49am

Contact: democratic_services@sandwell.gov.uk

