

# **REGULATORY SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING**

## **Draft MINUTES**

of a meeting held in the Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Rickmansworth, on Wednesday 20 March 2019 from 7.30pm to 8.10pm.

Councillors present: Councillors Steve Drury (Chairman), Martin Trevett (Vice-Chairman), Valerie Coltman, Heather Kenison, Stephen King, Joy Mann, Keith Martin, Roger Seabourne, Alex Turner, Alison Wall.

Officers: Lorna Fryer – Lead Licensing Officer  
Matthew Roberts – Team Leader Projects and Compliance  
Sherrie Ralton, Committee Manager

### **RG16/18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None received.

### **RG17/18 NOTICE OF OTHER BUSINESS**

None received.

### **RG18/18 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

There was none.

### **RG19/18 REVIEW OF TRDC'S EXISTING HACKNEY CARRIAGE, PRIVATE HIRE AND OPERATOR POLICIES**

This report advised Members of the Regulatory Services Committee of recommended changes to the Council's Hackney Carriage Driver, Vehicle and Private Hire Driver, Vehicle and Operator policies.

The Lead Licensing Officer introduced the report. The Committee were advised that an addition at Appendix 8 section 4 would be included to read: 'All vehicles will be required to display door stickers provided by TRDC which will display the licence number of the vehicle'. These will be self-adhesive stickers also displaying the Three Rivers Logo and the words 'Private Hire – Advanced Bookings Only'. There will be no tolerance for door signs to be fixed to the vehicle using magnets.

Members raised the following points:

- The penalty point system of enforcement referred to on page 34 of the Policy gave a rating of 6 points for use of handheld phone or radio whilst driving. Members felt this was too low and should be raised to the maximum of 12 points incurring an instant ban. The Policy should also include breaches of Protection Spaces Order (PSO). The Lead Licensing Officer will amend the Policy to take into account of the higher rating for using mobiles whilst driving and to include points for breaching a PSO.
- Officers would need to bear in mind any future Brexit implications on drivers with European Driving Licences.
- Safeguarding, paragraph 2.15.1, Members asked what 'appropriate action' would be for drivers whose mandatory Safeguarding Training was outstanding. There was a suggestion that examples of 'appropriate action' should be included in the policy. The Lead Licensing Officer explained that there could be numerous reasons for the training to be outstanding, and may not be the fault of the driver, e.g. training course being cancelled. Therefore 'appropriate action' would need to be flexible.
- Where would the Safeguarding Training take place? The Lead Licensing Officer said the training could either be organised through Watford Borough Council, or at TRDC. It could be outsourced, or drivers were also able to arrange their own training. The frequency of training varies. All drivers would have to attend training when they first applied for their licence. The intention was for all current drivers to undertake training over the next three years.
- Paragraph 2.26, wheelchair accessibility. What could be done to encourage drivers to have wheelchair accessible vehicles? All Hackney Carriage Vehicles were wheelchair accessible and the policy wording would encourage Private Hire Vehicles to be wheelchair accessible, however it was very expensive.
- Hackney Carriage, Private Hire and Operator Sub Committee Training was included in the annual Licensing and Regulatory Training provided for Members.
- The Lead Licensing Officer advised that seat belts were recommended but not mandatory for Taxi Drivers for safety reasons.
- Licences clearly state the maximum number of passengers that can be carried in each vehicle.
- Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles both have different coloured plates so would be easily identified. Hackney Carriages were governed by the bye laws and Private Hire vehicles were governed by policy and legislation.
- According to legislation children over three years of age would be legally able to sit in the front seat of a vehicle.
- Conversations were taking place with neighbouring Local Authorities. Officers were looking at producing a Driver's Handbook to include basic expectations. They were also looking at a monthly newsletter with neighbouring local authorities. The Lead Licensing Officer would put the suggestion forward at the forthcoming Operator's meeting a for a

laminated safety checklist to be provided to drivers to be used daily or weekly.

The Committee agreed that once the Lead Licensing Officer had met with the Operators and advised them of the consultation period, 28 days would be sufficient. The consultation period to begin after the Operator's Meeting.

The Committee agreed that going ahead with the consultation would not have any implications on the Purdah period.

Councillor Martin Trevett moved the recommendations, seconded by Councillor Alison Wall.

RESOLVED:

That the Members of the committee:

(1) Noted the report and authorised the Lead Licensing Officer to consult on the Policy (including appendices) attached to the report and

(2) Following completion of the 28 days consultation period the Policy be returned to this Committee with details of the outcome of the consultation.

CHAIRMAN