

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **REGULATORY COMMITTEE** held on 1 December 2023 at 11.30 am

Present

Councillors

J Cairney (Chairman)
A Cuddy (Vice Chairman), C Adcock,
D Broom, F J Colthorpe, L J Cruwys,
J M Downes, M Farrell and L G J Kennedy

Apologies

Councillor(s)

J Frost

Also Present

Officer(s):

Simon Newcombe (Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation and Housing), Deborah Sharpley (Legal Services Solicitor), Harriet Said (Team Leader (Commercial), Public Health), Alan Drake (Specialist Lead (Licensing)) and Angie Howell (Democratic Services Officer)

Councillors

Online

S Chenore, A Glover and G Westcott

9 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (03:38)

Apologies were received from Cllr J Frost and Cllr S Chenore attended as his substitute online.

10 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (03:54)

There were no members of the public present and no questions were asked.

11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT (04:03)

There were no declarations of interest received.

12 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (04:17)

The minutes of the 30th June 2023 were **APPROVED** and signed by the Chairman.

13 **REGULATORY UPDATE REPORT (04:49)**

The Committee had before it, and **NOTED**, the Service Update.

The contents of the report were outlined by the Team Leader, Commercial, Public Health and highlighted the following:

- The report provided an overview of the activity carried out by the Licensing Team during the first half of 2023/2024.
- Mid Devon District Council currently had 125 licensed vehicles within the District and 134 licensed drivers.
- The Licensing Team were currently working with a new operator who would bring more than 40 drivers and over 70 vehicles across from Exeter. This would include 9 wheelchair accessible vehicles.
- A total of 45 taxi inspections were carried out in the first half of the year.
- There were currently 41 animal related licences within the District.
- Animal welfare inspections for the granting of licences were carried out by a contractor. However, a Licensing Officer was currently undertaking the qualification and the taught component of this course would be completed by December 2023 followed by a period of experiential learning. This would enable the Licensing Team to deliver inspections in the future.
- There were 45 Mobile Home Sites across Mid Devon, 30 of which were touring sites.
- New legislation in 2021 required a fit and proper person to manage sites where there were permanent residential pitches. The Licensing Team were currently re-engaging with site owners to ensure that all site owners had identified a fit and proper person to manage the site.
- There were currently no timetable for the new non-surgical cosmetic licensing provisions to come into force.
- The new Health and Care Act received royal assent on 28th April 2022. Practitioners would now need to be licensed to perform specific procedures and the premises from which they operate would also need to be licensed. This was likely to impact on the service when the new licensing framework was rolled out.
- The Regulatory Sub-Committee held 2 Hearings in the first half of 2023/24.

Note: * Report previously circulated.

14 **HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE (TAXI) POLICY UPDATE (21:48)**

The Committee had before it and **NOTED**, a report for the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire (Taxi) Policy Update.

The contents of the report were outlined by the Team Leader, Commercial, Public Health and highlighted the following:

- That Members of the Regulatory Committee consider the draft proposed policy document.

- That Members of the Regulatory Committee authorise for a formal consultation of that draft proposed policy for a period of 3 months from January 2024.
- There had been, since drafting the proposed policy, significant changes in terms of guidance to local authorities that had not taken into account the proposed policy. These changes would be addressed in the consultation documents.
- It was proposed that a three month consultation be carried out with individuals and organisations starting in January 2024.
- As part of the consultation there would be separate engagement sessions with Members and the trade.
- Following the consultations the changes would be reported back to the Regulatory Committee for further consideration in Spring 2024.

Consideration was given to:-

- The fact that the Council had an aging taxi fleet the majority of which were registered prior to new standards on emissions.
- Alternative ways to power vehicles without using fossil fuels and to reduce emissions.
- The impact of increased training and additional requirements on the taxi trade from a costs perspective and the need to consider public safety.
- The aspiration of having taxis available 24 hours a day.

The Committee **APPROVED** a formal consultation of the draft proposed policy for a period of 3 months from January 2024.

(Proposed by Cllr F J Colthorpe and seconded by Cllr J Cairney)

Notes: (i) * Report previously circulated.
(ii) Cllr G Westcott left the meeting at 12.00.

(The meeting ended at 12.08 pm)

CHAIRMAN