

Licensing and Appeals Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2016

Present

Councillor Longsdon (in the Chair)
Councillors Barrett, Evans, Grimshaw, Hassan, Hughes, S. Judge, Loughman, Ludford, Madeleine Monaghan and Stone.

Apologies

Councillors Connolly and Paul.

LAP/16/10 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 22 February 2016 were submitted for consideration as a correct record.

Decision

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 22 February 2016.

LAP/16/11 Unmet Demand Survey September 2015

The Committee considered a report of the Head of Planning, Building Control and Licensing. This report provided the reasons and background to the Unmet Demand Survey (The Survey) and provided the key findings and outcomes of the report, which can be used for the review and development of current or future Policy. A presentation was given to the Committee by a representative of CH2M Hill which summarised the contents of the report.

The Committee expressed concern that the number of physical and verbal assaults on drivers appeared to be high, and asked if it was possible to corroborate this through records of reports made to Greater Manchester Police. The Principal Licensing Officer explained that the incidents of physical and verbal abuse detailed in the report were as a result of responses from drivers in the Trade and not corroborated by GMP.

The Committee asked if the survey indicated whether a rise in on-line booking of private hire journeys was having an impact on demand, and was told that this issue as well as the issue of out of town hackney carriage drivers working the private hire trade was being investigated by several local authorities.

The Committee also requested a report on the location and number of ranks in the City Centre, and an analysis of whether the Ranks are in the correct location. The Head of Planning, Building Control and Licensing confirmed that a full review of ranks was being undertaken as part of a wider transport strategy review, and that a report would be available in due course. The Committee commented that there must be a full public consultation on this issue.

The Committee also queried how officers assessed the spoken English language proficiency of applicants for Private Hire and Hackney Carriage driver licences, and were assured that this was part of the overall knowledge test that all applicants must undertake before consideration was given to a licence being issued to any individual.

The Committee also recommended that a review be undertaken of the disability awareness training that is offered to all applicants and current drivers, and requested a report as to the effectiveness of this training. The Committee also requested as part of this review and report, that officers investigate the accessibility and availability of Private Hire and Hackney Carriage vehicles fitted with specialist hoists and lifts, as well as the cost repercussion for drivers and proprietors who have or wish to install such specialist equipment.

Decision

1. To note the report and agree that there is no scope for further growth in the provision of hackney carriage vehicles in Manchester at the present time.
2. To request a report about the effectiveness of assessment of spoken English language proficiency for applicants for Private Hire and Hackney Carriage driver licences.
3. To request a review and report on disability awareness and provision of specialist equipment in Private Hire and Hackney Carriage vehicles and the cost implications of the provision of such equipment.

LAP/16/12 Review of Hackney Carriage Advertisement and Livery Policy

The Committee considered a report of the Head of Planning, Building Control and Licensing. This report is a follow up to that presented to the Licensing and Appeals Committee of 30 November 2015.

At the previous meeting Members agreed that the policy should be updated in relation to:

- the advertisement criterion
- hackney carriage vehicle proprietor conditions
- livery allowed on licensed hackney carriage vehicles (that are not bespoke taxis)

The report provided the outcomes requested from the meeting of 30 November 2015. This includes the positive outcome of the discussions with the trade in relation to the wording of the conditions which had been recommended and agreed in principle at that meeting.

Attached to the report was an updated version of the Statement of Policy (conditions of Fitness, application process and guidelines relating to hackney carriage vehicles), (known as the hackney carriage vehicle policy). The revised hackney carriage advertisement/livery policy was incorporated into the overarching policy (Appendix 2).

Decision

1. To accept the amended Statement of Policy (conditions of Fitness, application process and guidelines relating to hackney carriage vehicles.
2. To agree that the Policy will come into effect on 1 July 2016.

LAP/16/13 Exclusion of the public

The Committee considered a report of the Head of Planning, Building Control and Licensing.

The Committee considered that the following items of business contained confidential information as provided for in the Local Government Access to Information Act and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Decision

To exclude the public.

LAP/16/14 Application for the Renewal of a Hackney Carriage Proprietors Licence (MAS)

The Committee considered a report of the Head of Planning, Building Control and Licensing.

The Committee considered the mitigation offered by the applicant and his legal representative and the reasons for the late return of the renewal application and concluded that given the circumstances it would be appropriate to grant the application in this instance.

Decision

To grant the application.

LAP/16/15 Hackney Carriage/Private Hire driver licences issued under delegated authority between October and December 2015.

A report was submitted which informed the Committee of the decisions made under delegated authority in relation to Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Driver licenses.

Decision

To note the report.

LAP/16/16 Hackney Carriage/Private Hire driver licences issued under delegated authority between January and March 2016.

A report was submitted which informed the Committee of the decisions made under delegated authority in relation to Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Driver licenses.

Decision

To note the report.