

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL FROM CABINET ON 1 DECEMBER 2015

CAB93: HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING PROCEDURES AND CONDITIONS

Councillor Lawrence presented a report which explained that the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk had adopted the provisions of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 that related to the licensing of hackney carriages and private hire vehicles, hackney carriage and private hire drivers and private hire operators. The Act permitted Local Authorities to attach conditions to the licenses issued to vehicles, drivers and operators. The purpose of the licensing regime was to ensure the safety of the travelling public, other road users, pedestrians, and the drivers of licensed vehicles. Commercial concerns of the trade could be taken into account but were secondary to the safety aspects of licensing. The last full review of licensing conditions was approved by Full Council on 30th June 2011. A number of procedures and conditions had also been reviewed with the aim of streamlining procedures and providing more protection for the public, particularly in line with the recent cases of child exploitation across the country.

Councillor Long drew attention to the changes in acceptable mileage levels of vehicles, and commented that the Council had been trying to keep a new fleet of cabs, and up to now had appeared better than neighbouring authorities fleets. He asked what the exceptional circumstances would involve, as generally he would prefer not to accept cars over 10 years old. The Licensing Manager explained that the criteria was at entry point, if a vehicle was older it would have to be of excellent quality, which was a discretionary judgement taken by officers. This discretion had to be included for appeal purposes. It was noted that the exceptions vehicles were often special event cars.

Councillor Mrs Nockolds asked about the ages of Novelty Vehicles, to which it was explained that this often included vintage vehicles and had in fact included a fire engine in the past.

The Chairman drew attention to the fact that often legislative changes came into force which the Council had no choice but to implement and change policies and procedures accordingly. He proposed that a further recommendation be included that when legislative changes were made, policies and procedures be updated accordingly in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member. This was supported.

RECOMMENDED: 1) That revised procedures and conditions be adopted.

2) That delegated authority be given to the appropriate officer in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member to amend policies and procedures in order to incorporate any future legislative or regulatory changes.