

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MINUTES

Date: Tuesday, 13th September, 2005

Time: 6.00pm

Place: Shimkent Room, Daneshill House

Present: Members: Councillors, H.C.L. Tessier (Chair), C. Latif (Vice-Chair), D.W. Cullen, CC, B. Jackson, D. Cullen, T.G.M. Kent, CC, J. Lloyd, M. Notley, M.P. Patston, J.A. Pickersgill, Mrs L.G. Strange and P. Stuart

In Attendance:

Start/End Time: Start Time: 6.00pm
End Time: 7.25pm

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors P.D. Kissane and L. Knight, JP.

There were no declarations of interest.

2 **Taxi licensing conditions**

Report attached

The Head of Environmental Health submitted a report amending the local standard conditions applied in respect of the licensing of taxis.

Work is ongoing to the review of the local standard conditions but there are some areas that require urgent attention on the basis of their impact upon public safety and the prevention of crime and disorder. These three areas relate to drivers' experience, the knowledge test and the meters contained within Hackney Carriages.

In relation to driver experience it was proposed that a minimum period of two years be introduced as standard. It was also proposed to include reference to competence, in order to enable the insurance companies of applicants to be approached or other enquiries to be made.

Regarding the knowledge test, Members were advised that the current test was fundamentally flawed in that the marking scheme was not accurately defined. As a consequence, drivers had been able to pass the test without answering questions on routes. It was therefore proposed to amend the test to require a pass rate of 80% in each of the individual elements of the test namely, highway code, knowledge of routes, locations of streets and

local landmarks.

Members requested information relating to the cost of the new calendar meters.

Officers also circulated copies of the proposed vehicle tariffs which came into effect on 1st September, 2005. Members expressed concern regarding the clarity of the information on the card, particularly relating to tariff codes T2 and T3. Officers agreed to look into the wording.

It was RESOLVED:-

That the local standard conditions applicable to Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles are amended as follows:-

HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE DRIVERS

The applicant must be able to demonstrate their competence to drive. This may include a requirement for the applicant to give consent for information to be supplied by their insurance company in respect of details of any road traffic incidents. In addition the applicant must have held a full driving licence, to drive a car, for a period of at least two years prior to the date of application. (Sections 4.4 & 4.6).

DRIVER KNOWLEDGE TESTS

In order to pass the Knowledge Test, drivers must attain a score of at least 80% in relation to each of the individual elements of the test. (Section 4.3.3).

TAXIMETERS

All Hackney Carriages shall be fitted with a 'Calendar compliant meter', which shall be sealed to prevent tampering. (In relation to existing vehicles, this requirement shall apply to all vehicle licence renewals issued after 30th June 2007).

3 MINUTES - Thursday, 4th August, 2005
Minutes attached

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 4th August 2005, having been circulated, be taken as read, confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

4 URGENT PART I BUSINESS

None.

5 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

None.

6 URGENT PART II BUSINESS

None.

CHAIR

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