

LICENSING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE - 4 NOVEMBER 2015

Present: Councillor Woodward (Chair);
Councillors Chrisp, Dennis, Livingston, Page, Skeats and
Vickers.

Apologies: Councillors D Edwards, Grashoff and Singh.

2. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings held on 8 October 2014 and 27 May 2015 were confirmed as correct records and signed by the Chair.

3. HACKNEY CARRIAGE CRITERIA

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report asking the Committee to consider and approve suitable criteria for the allocation of Hackney Carriage Licence Plates as and when they may become available. A copy of the proposed criteria was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The report explained that on 28 March 2007 officers had submitted a report to the Licensing Applications Committee (Minute 8 refers) that had recommended the delimitation of Hackney carriage vehicle numbers and had proposed criteria for issuing new licences that potential proprietors would have to meet in order to be granted a licence. A further report had been submitted to Licensing Applications Sub-Committee 3 on 3 September 2007 requesting discretion in applying the approved criteria agreed at the meeting in March 2007 for issuing new Hackney carriage vehicle licences (Minute 13 refers). The discretion was approved to be in conjunction with the Chair of Licensing Applications Sub-Committee 3 and where the Head of Environment and Consumer Services deemed appropriate the Reading Taxi Association (RTA); officers currently met with RTA representatives. Sections of the old criteria were challenged at the time and other areas of the criteria were currently considered inappropriate, as a result officers had drafted a new set of criteria.

The report stated that after a lengthy legal battle a Hackney Carriage Licence plate had become available to be issued to a suitable applicant and it was believed that demand for such a licence would be high. The proposed criteria had been drafted to allow the Council to consider the most suitable group of applicants who could be awarded the licence. It was also proposed that this criteria was used should any unmet demand survey find unmet demand and the Committee approved the issuing of additional Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licences Plates.

Asif Rashid, Chairman Reading Taxi Association, Syed Abbas, Chairman Reading Taxi Drivers Association, and Tahir Abdullah were present at the meeting and addressed the Committee.

The Committee discussed the report and agreed that new Hackney carriage proprietors' licences should be granted to licenced Reading Borough Council Hackney Carriage Drivers who had held a Reading Borough Council Hackney

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Carriage Drivers licence for eight consecutive years and who had rented a Hackney Carriage Vehicle for the same eight year period. The Committee also agreed that proof of renting for the same relevant eight year period would be via tax records, rental receipts and audit accounts.

Resolved -

- (1) That new Hackney Carriage Proprietors' licences be granted to licensed Reading Borough Council Hackney Carriage Drivers who have held a Reading Borough Council licenced Hackney Carriage Drivers licence for eight consecutive years and have rented a Hackney carriage vehicle for the eight year period and whose intention it is to personally drive the Hackney Carriage vehicle for which any licence is issued full time (37 hours per week) (proof of renting for the same relevant eight year period will be via tax records, rental receipts and audit accounts);
- (2) That licences would not be granted to any person who has previously been issued a Proprietors' licence in the past by the Council, or to any person who currently owns a Reading Borough Council licensed Hackney Carriage Vehicle licence;
- (3) That applicants who successfully meet the criteria and are eligible for a Proprietors' licence must provide a brand new vehicle for licensing within three months of being permitted to apply for a Hackney Carriage Vehicle licence;
- (4) That should one or more applicants meet the required criteria, the Licensing Applications Committee will review the applications and take into consideration the following when awarding the vehicle licence:
 - (a) DVLA driving record;
 - (b) Number of years renting a Hackney Carriage Vehicle;
 - (c) Driving and complaints record;
- (5) That if one or more drivers meet the criteria and the number of licences issued is limited the allocation of licences be via a draw;
- (6) That conditions requiring the following be attached to new Hackney Carriage Proprietors' licences:
 - (a) The proprietor may transfer the licence to another appropriate vehicle, upon application to the Council;
 - (b) The vehicle to which the licence is proposed to be transferred to may not be older than the currently licensed vehicle.

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(The meeting started at 6.30pm and closed at 7.16pm)