

Present: Councillor Woodward (Chair);
Councillors Ennis, McDonald and Skeats.

Apologies: Councillor D Edwards.

1. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 9 May 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

2. ELECTRONIC PAYMENT FACILITIES IN HACKNEY CARRIAGES

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report which asked the Sub-Committee to agree that all Hackney Carriage vehicles had approved electronic payment device facilities installed by 1 December 2018 and to agree guidelines for the electronic payment devices to be used. The following appendices were attached to the report:

- Appendix I Guidelines for Electronic Payment Devices used in Licenced Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles;
- Appendix II Complaint from a Hackney Carriage driver regarding use of card facilities by other Hackney Carriage drivers;
- Appendix III Complaint from member of the public regarding lack of card facilities;
- Appendix IV Letter from the Reading Taxi Association detailing an alternative solution.

The report stated that at its meeting on 12 February 2013 (Minute 45 refers) the Sub-Committee had approved the use of electronic payment facilities (card facilities) in Hackney Carriage vehicles. Owners of Hackney Carriage vehicles could, if they wished, install an approved device and a number of hackney carriages had made available such devices. In the previous year there had been a number of complaints from Hackney Carriage vehicle drivers' stating that other drivers with card facilities had been refusing short journeys stating that their card facility was broken or they did not have card facilities. This was causing friction between drivers on the rank. A number of customers had also complained to the Council regarding the lack of card facilities; younger customers tended to use cashless payment systems in their day to day activities and saw cash as outdated. In a recent complaint a mother who had a disabled son had tried to use the taxi fleet to get home and had been unable to do so due to the lack of card facilities. The Reading Taxi Association did not want the introduction compulsory card facilities and had proposed an alternative to have a registration of all Hackney Carriages that had card facilities and that these vehicles were required to display signage advertising the card facilities on the front and back of the vehicle.

The report set out the following proposed recommendations:

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- That all Hackney Carriage Vehicles had approved electronic card facilities installed by 1 December 2018;
- That signage, that had been approved in writing by the Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services, was required to be prominently displayed in the vehicle;
- That the Sub-Committee delegated authority to the Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services to vary the conditions of Hackney Carriage vehicle licences to reflect the requirement for and content of the signage;
- That the Sub-Committee delegate authority to the Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services to vary the Hackney Carriage licence conditions to require only electronic payment devices that had been approved by the Council to be used.

The Sub-Committee discussed the report and agreed that the deadline for installation of the electronic card facilities should be 2 January 2019. All installed electronic payment device facilities should be available for use by customers.

Mr Asif Rashid, Chair of the Reading Taxi Association, was present at the meeting and addressed the Sub-Committee.

Resolved -

- (1) That the Guidelines for Electronic Payment Devices be approved and all Hackney Carriage Vehicles have approved electronic payments device facilities, as set out in Appendix I attached to the report, by 2 January 2019 and that the electronic payment device facilities installed be available for use by customers;
- (2) That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services be granted delegated authority to:
 - (a) Approve electronic payment device facilities for use in Hackney Carriage Vehicles in line with the Guidelines set out in Appendix I, attached to the report;
 - (b) Approve the signage to be used in Hackney Carriages in association with the electronic payment facilities;
 - (c) Vary the Hackney Carriage Licence Conditions to only permit the use of Council approved electronic payment device facilities.

3. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved -

That, pursuant to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), members of the press and public be excluded during consideration of the following item of business as it was likely that there would be disclosures of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3, specified in Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act.

4. APPLICATIONS FOR THE GRANT, RENEWAL, SUSPENSION OR REVOCATION OF A HACKNEY CARRIAGE DRIVER LICENCE AND AN APPEAL AGAINST THE ALLOCATION OF PENALTY POINTS TO A PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE DRIVER'S LICENCE

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report asking the Sub-Committee to consider the suspension/revocation of a licence to drive a Hackney Carriage vehicle and an appeal against penalty points allocated to a private hire vehicle driver's licence.

A summary of the circumstances of each case was appended to the report.

MS was present at the meeting and was accompanied by Mr Asif Rashid, Chair of the Reading Taxi Association, both of whom addressed the Sub-Committee. MK was also present at the meeting and was accompanied by his brother, both of whom addressed the Sub-Committee.

Resolved -

- (1) That the Hackney Carriage Vehicle Driver's Licence of MS be suspended for a period of six weeks, with effect from the end of 21 days' notice of the decision being given to the driver, for the reasonable causes pursuant to section 61 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous provisions) Act 1976 outlined below:
 - (a) the nature of the offences, as detailed in the report;
 - (b) insufficient time having elapsed since the warnings for some of his offences, as detailed in the report;
 - (c) breaches of licence conditions, traffic regulations and legislation, as detailed in the report;
- (2) That the appeal by MK against the allocation of twelve penalty points on his private hire vehicle driver's licence be dismissed in respect of the six penalty points for plying for hire and the three penalty points for dangerous driving and be upheld in respect of the three penalty points for using a hand-held mobile device.

(Exempt information as defined in paragraph 1, 2, 3 and 5)

(The meeting started at 6.30pm and closed at 8.11 pm)