

**Minutes of a Meeting of the
WBC Licensing and Control Committee 'A' of
Worthing Borough Council**

Tuesday 26 July 2022

Councillor Sally Smith (Chair)
Councillor Rosey Whorlow (Vice-Chairman)

*Councillor Roy Barraclough	Councillor Richard Nowak
Councillor Mike Barrett	Councillor Jon Roser
*Councillor Russ Cochran	Councillor Dawn Smith
Councillor Cathy Glynn-Davies	Councillor Samuel Theodoridi
Councillor Lionel Harman	Councillor Hazel Thorpe
Councillor Richard Mulholland	Councillor Andy Whight
Councillor Kevin Jenkins	

*Absent

LCCA/5/22-23 Declarations of Interest / Substitute Members

There were no substitute members and no declarations of interest.

LCCA/6/22-23 Confirmation of Minutes

Resolved: that the minutes of the Licensing and Control Committee A meeting held on the 27 June 2022 be approved as the correct record.

LCCA/7/22-23 Public Question Time

Mr Richard Carrington asked the following question:

I would like to ask the committee, why the late-night security marshals have been removed from the Chapel road taxi rank in Worthing town centre, this was initially funded from the police funding and in part from the town council, there is also a separate fund from the Government, "get home safely at night", that the police have or can be given to help with funding, the security was there to prevent and help incidents from happening before they happened, maintain order and keep the public safe at night, especially lone women, when waiting for a taxi at night, when the security marshals were removed last time around during the lock downs, there were assaults on taxi drivers, the public and vehicle damage, due violent outbreaks, again the security have been removed from the town centre and members of the public have been assaulted on the taxi ranks, waiting for taxis, it is imperative that the security are put back in place, not only to prevent incidents happening, before they happen but to keep order and to protect the public and maintain a safe environment in the town centre, so the public can continue to feel safe coming to the town on Friday and Saturday nights.

The Licensing Officer answered on behalf of the chair:

The scheme was instigated by Sussex Police in 2005. In 2006, as the scheme was in danger of ending, Adur and Worthing Councils' Safer Communities Team and Licensing officers stepped in to temporarily oversee the scheme whilst a sustainable approach could be identified. During this time it was funded through contributions from late night venues and taxi drivers. This temporary arrangement actually continued until early 2020 until Covid 19 and subsequent lock downs.

The scheme was paused during lockdown and as the town opened up and Covid funding became available, it was agreed that in recognition of the financial burden the late night businesses had faced, the Council would temporarily fund the scheme from June 2021 until the end of June 2022, using the existing provider.

The Council is aware that the scheme is valued by all stakeholders, particularly the police and taxi drivers. Initial discussions with PubWatch and the Town Centre Initiative have been unable to secure funding and administration for the scheme's continuation.

As it stands, funding has now ceased but we are aware that the taxi marshal scheme benefits those operating in the late night economy, the licensed venues and clubs that attract thousands of visitors every weekend. Ensuring a presence in the town and safe dispersal all contributes to people feeling safe and happy to spend their time enjoying the opportunities in the town centre.

The Taxi Marshal scheme is not paid for by the Police or through taxi licence fees but as a council we value the scheme is recognised and continue to work with partners to identify future funding which is something that continues to be explored for a future provision.

At this stage if incidents occur a report to the police who is responsible for the prevention and detection of crime and the maintenance of public order. Non-emergency calls can be made on 101 or website <https://www.police.uk/pu/contact-the-police/report-a-crime-incident/> or anything heated, violent or immediate danger call 999

LCCA/8/22-23 Tariff proposal 2nd consultation survey

Before the Committee was a report by the interim Director for Communities, copies of which had been circulated to all members. A copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these minutes as item 4. Members were requested to consider an application received from a member of the Worthing Hackney Carriage trade for an increase in the Hackney Carriage Tariff. The Licensing Officer introduced the report to the Committee and answered questions to clarify what changes of tariff would mean and verified that significant Members of the trade had supported the proposed increase.

Members posed questions surrounding the amount of the tariff increase and whether it was enough. Discussions led to the conclusion that a bigger increase in tariff now may lead to the public avoiding using taxi services. It was suggested that if necessary the trade could put in an application for a further tariff increase in the future.

Resolved: Members approved the proposed new tariff.

LCCA/9/22-23 Exclusion of the Press and Public

Resolved: that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting from the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act indicated against the item.

LCCA/10/22-23 Review of a Hackney Carriage Driver licence

Before the Committee was a report by the Interim Director for Communities, a copy of which had been circulated to all members, a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these minutes as item 5. Members were requested to consider and determine a review of a Hackney Carriage Driver Licence.

The Committee carries out the procedure laid before it.

The meeting adjourned at 7:55pm for the members to consider their decision and reconvened at 8:26pm

In reaching its decision, the Licensing Committee gave due regard to relevant legislation and guidance within the Councils Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Handbook. The Committee also gave regard to human rights legislation and the rules of natural justice.

Resolved: That the licence be suspended until a driving assessment course is successfully completed by the driver.

Reasons for decision: The committee's overriding concern was public safety. They felt that the respondents' standard of driving fell below the standard that was expected of a professional driver. The Committee were concerned that the respondent did not demonstrate that he would act any differently should the situation arise again. The respondent did not slow down when he saw the lady in the road, and he was driving with one hand on the steering wheel which did not demonstrate that he was in proper control of the vehicle and it was apparent that there was an accident and the respondent failed to stop and failed to report the incident. Therefore the Committee believed it was proportionate and necessary that the respondent demonstrate that he could successfully complete a driving assessment and, to ensure public safety, he should be suspended from driving with immediate effect until he had successfully completed the course.

LCCA/11/22-23 Review of a new Private Hire Driver Licence

Before the Committee was a report by the Interim Director for Communities, a copy of which had been circulated to all members, a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these minutes as item 6. Members were requested to consider and determine an application of a new Private Hire Driver Licence.

The Committee carries out the procedure laid before it.

The meeting adjourned at 21:00pm for the members to consider their decision and reconvened at 21:30pm.

In reaching its decision, the Licensing Committee gave due regard to relevant legislation and guidance within the Councils Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Handbook. The Committee also gave regard to human rights legislation and the rules of natural justice.

Resolved: The Committee has taken the following decision to: grant the application.

Reasons for decision: The Committee had carefully considered whether the applicant was a fit and proper to hold a licence. They believed that he was, but was concerned at the history of drug use and to ensure that he remained fit and proper they required, before December 2022, for the applicant to undertake a hair drugs test from an accredited authority and to provide the results to the licensing authority and thereafter every 6 months until December 2023 which is proportionate and necessary to protect the public.

The meeting ended at 9.40 pm