

## **SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the Licensing Committee held on  
Thursday, 15 November 2007

**PRESENT:** Councillor RE Barrett – Chairman  
Councillor Mrs CAED Murfitt – Vice-Chairman

**Councillors:** R Hall Mrs PM Bear  
EW Bullman Mrs JM Guest  
RB Martlew RM Matthews  
DC McCraith A Riley

**Officers:** Myles Bebbington Licensing Officer  
Maggie Jennings Democratic Services Officer  
Fiona McMillan Senior Lawyer  
Dale Robinson Corporate Manager, Health & Environmental  
Services

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mrs A Elsby.

### **12. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None received.

### **13. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

Councillors DC McCraith and Mrs CAED Murfitt were nominated and seconded and, following a ballot of those Committee Members present, it was

**RESOLVED** that, by three votes to two, Councillor Mrs CAED Murfitt be elected Vice-Chairman of the Licensing Committee for the remainder of the municipal year.

### **14. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 June 2007 were agreed as a correct record.

### **15. REVIEW OF LICENSING POLICY**

The Corporate Manager explained to the Committee that the Licensing Policy, due for a 3-yearly review, had initially been presented to the Housing and Environmental Services Portfolio Holder meeting on 23 July. Changes to the Licensing Policy were in accordance with government guidance given to Local Authorities and the Portfolio Holder had approved the draft Licensing Policy statement for consultation purposes.

The consultation process was subsequently undertaken and the deadline for responses was 17 October; three responses were received and were attached in the agenda papers.

Reference was made to why the sentence in paragraph 7 relating to Children and Cinemas had been deleted. In response, the Committee were informed that updated guidance had indicated that as it was now part of the legislation it was therefore no longer required within the policy document.

As there was no further discussion on the contents of the revised policy, the Licensing

Committee

**RECOMMENDED** to the Housing and Environmental Services Portfolio Holder that the revised Licensing Policy document, attached as Appendix B to the report be adopted.

The Housing and Environmental Services Portfolio Holder,

**RECOMMENDS** that Cabinet recommends to Council, the above recommendation of the Licensing Committee.

*It was noted that a typographical error had appeared in para 2 of the covering report; this was due to the inadvertent deletion of some of the wording in the corporate template. Officers apologised for the error and that care would be taken in future when preparing reports.*

## 16. PRIVATE HIRE AND VEHICLE TESTING: CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

The Corporate Manager explained to the Committee that, due to a significant increase in the number of licensed vehicles and the ensuing difficulty in carrying out visual inspection prior to licensing within a reasonable time at the Council's Depot, Members were requested to consider the Certificate of Compliance system specifically designed for the testing of Private Hire and Hackney Carriage vehicles. Details of the system were included in the papers within the agenda, together with the names of garages that had expressed an interest in the scheme. Members noted that the scheme was in operation in other nearby local authorities.

Points raised as a result of discussion included:

- Approximately 1 in 7 vehicles failed the emissions test
- Although some of the garages had indicated charging a fee over and above £30 for the test, they would be limited to a charge of £30
- All garages wishing to join the scheme, would be subject to Vehicle & Operator Services Agency (VOSA) approval and would be entering into a Service Level Agreement with the Council. 'Mystery Shopper' tests would also be considered as a means of measuring the quality of the service provided by the garages
- Noting the contents of a letter from a proprietor of a garage in Braintree, Essex who had close links with this district and that he had been informed that this Council could accept his garage in Braintree, provided it was approved by VOSA.

As there was no further discussion, the Licensing Committee

**RECOMMENDED** to the Housing and Environmental Services Portfolio Holder that Cabinet:

- (a) Adopts the Government's Vehicle Inspectorate Certificate of Compliance testing regime for all Private Hire and Hackney Carriage vehicles,
- (b) Delegates authority to the Corporate Manager, Health and Environmental Services to approve the appointment of garages as required,
- (c) Agrees to the fee setting policy that allows sufficient garages to come forward to take part in the scheme whilst ensuring that it is not an undue burden on the trade,

- (d) That as a result of the fee policy above, the fee for the first year for the Certificate of Compliance element of the test be set at the maximum of £30.00 (Thirty pounds),
- (e) To adopt an implementation date for the scheme of no later than 1 April 2008 provided sufficient garages were approved, and
- (f) To amend the South Cambridgeshire District Council Vehicle Licence Conditions as detailed in paragraph 17 of the report

The Housing and Environmental Services Portfolio Holder,

**RECOMMENDS** to Cabinet the above recommendations of the Licensing Committee.

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**The Meeting ended at 10.40 a.m.**

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