

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

TAXI & GENERAL LICENSING COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 13 October 2020

PRESENT: Councillor Flavell (Chair); Councillors Aziz, Beardsworth, Haque, Kilbride, Larratt and Walker

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Ansell, Davenport, Duffy and G Eales.

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2. MINUTES

The minutes from the meeting held on 8 September 2020 were agreed and signed as a true and accurate record.

3. DEPUTATIONS/PUBLIC ADDRESSES

There were none.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

5. MATTERS OF URGENCY WHICH BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THE CHAIR IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED

There were none.

7. EMISSIONS POLICY AMENDMENT

At the Chair's invitation, the Licensing Team Leader introduced and presented the report. The Licensing Team Leader explained that at the meeting held on 3 May 2018, the Licensing Committee agreed to adopt the Emissions Policy as outlined in Appendix A of the report, which detailed the proposed move towards a lower emission standard licensed fleet by 31st December 2020, or the licensed vehicle's next renewal after this date. As the Covid-19 pandemic has had an adverse financial effect on the taxi and private hire industry, and as a result several representatives from the taxi and private hire industry had requested an extension on the policy considering the unforeseen circumstances. In preparation for the West Northants Unitary authority, all current local taxi and private hire policies were being reviewed, and any future West Northants Council vehicle policy would raise standards in terms of more efficient emission licensed fleet vehicles, as required by law.

The Licensing Team Leader explained the options available to the Committee as stated in section 3.3 of the report. The solicitor explained that the Committee had two decisions to make regarding the proposed extension to the policy from 31st December 2020 to either 31st December 2021 or 2022, as outlined in options 1 and 2, or keep the policy the same and agree to option 3. The second decision was in regards to delegating authority to the Environmental Health & Licensing Manager as proposed in options 4 and 5.

Members considered the report and the presentation from the Licensing Team Leader and expressed their concerns for the financial impact for hackney and private hire drivers during the pandemic. They felt that an extension would show their support for drivers, giving them a

longer period to purchase new vehicles if necessary, in line with the new policy.

RESOLVED:

- That, taking into account the contents of this report, the Taxi and General Licensing Committee (“the Committee”) adopt the proposed amendment to the existing Hackney and Private Hire Vehicle Emission Policy, as set out at paragraph 3.3.4 as Option 1.
- That, taking into account the contents of this report, the Committee delegates the power to make any further amendments to the Hackney and Private Hire Vehicle Emission Policy to the Environmental Health & Licensing Manager, in consultation with the Chair of the Taxi and General Licensing Committee, as may be required due to unforeseen and exceptional circumstances, as set out at paragraph 3.3.7 as Option 4 and that any such amendments are to be the subject of a report submitted to the Committee at the first available opportunity after having been made.

The meeting concluded at 6:30 pm