



LICENSING AND ENFORCEMENT COMMITTEE

- MEETING** : Tuesday, 14th June 2022
- PRESENT** : Cllrs. Ackroyd, Bowkett, Brooker, Chambers-Dubus, D.Brown Patel, Radley and Tracey
- Officers in Attendance**
Licensing Team Leader
Senior Lawyer, One Legal
Democratic & Electoral Services Officer
- APOLOGIES** : Cllrs. Finnegan, Hyman, J.Brown (D.Brown attended as a sub), O Donnell, K.Williams

Owing to apologies being sent by the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee, Councillor Brooker was elected Chair by the Committee for the duration of the meeting. Councillor Tracey seconded Councillor Brooker's nomination to be Chair and there was no dissent by members present.

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

Councillor Finnegan and Councillor K. Williams were confirmed as Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee respectively.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on the 14th September 2021 were confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

4. MINUTES OF LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEES

The minutes of the meeting of the Licensing Sub-Committee on the 27th April 2022 and the 30th September 2021 were received.

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5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions.

6. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES, MAXIMUM 3 MINUTES PER PERSON)

There were no petitions or deputations.

7. DRAFT COUNTY CCTV CONSULTATION DOCUMENT FOR LICENSED HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES

The Licensing Team Leader presented the report. The purpose of which was for Members' to approve an 8-week public consultation on the Draft County CCTV consultation document on Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles.

Councillor Tracey asked who would monitor the CCTV in the vehicles, should a policy of mandatory CCTV be adopted.

The Licensing Team Leader responded that the trade would be consulted to see if there was a need in the first instance, which was what the report was about. If a policy was then formulated that stipulated mandatory CCTV, there would have to be a data controller, which would be a City Council officer.

Councillor Tracey noted that this process may be time consuming for officers. She asked whether, if there was an incident, the data controller would be able to rewind a recording to the incident and date.

The Licensing Team leader replied that she was correct.

Councillor D.Brown asked how the consultation would be conducted.

In response, the Licensing Team Leader stated that there was a questionnaire listed in Appendix 1 of the report that would be going out to the trade for drivers to respond to. He said that the drivers would receive a text message via the 'firetext' service with a link to the questionnaire and that emails would also be sent to other relevant parties so that they could provide feedback.

Councillor D.Brown noted that the introduction of CCTV could protect the safety of drivers as well as passengers. He asked whether the Licensing Team Leader had received any anecdotal feedback on the usefulness or harms of CCTV in vehicles.

The Licensing Team Leader noted that prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Gloucestershire County Council introduced CCTV for drivers who had school contracts. He said that when this was introduced, there was not much resistance from drivers in the trade but that they did ask for there to be a standardised level of CCTV camera installed. This was so that cameras in every vehicle could produce

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clear images which would ensure that some drivers were not purchasing low quality cameras at a cut price compared to other drivers.

Councillor David Brown asked how the consultation would be judged.

The Licensing Team Leader responded that there would be a report with the results of the consultation that would go before the Licensing Committee in September 2022.

Councillor Tracey asked who would pay for the installation of the Cameras. She added that, if it was the drivers who had to pay, whether it would be worth finding a contractor that would fit all vehicles so that the cameras were at the same standard and cost.

The Licensing Team Leader stated that, should CCTV be made mandatory for drivers, it would be the driver who would pay for the installation. He stated that it would be up to the Council as to the type and quality of camera that would be used, as they would have to create a policy to mandate installation. He stated that the purpose of the report before Committee was simply to conduct an 8-week consultation.

Councillor Tracey noted that she believed that there was a need for CCTV in vehicles to protect passengers, particularly vulnerable persons.

Councillor Chambers-Dubus noted that she fully agreed with the theory of installing CCTV as it may help to protect vulnerable persons, but raised concerns about the potential cost to drivers, particularly considering the increase in the cost of fuel prices and the cost of living crisis.

The Licensing Team Leader noted that Members had raised salient points. He stated that prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the feedback from the trade was positive but that the Department of Transport were requesting that local authorities consult drivers and relevant parties about installing CCTV. He said if the issue of cost was raised by the trade, this would be a consideration at a future Licensing Committee. He added that any policy would be under constant review.

Councillor Radley asked whether the Licensing Team Leader was aware of what the cost of installing CCTV would be for each driver.

The Licensing Team Leader stated that he could not answer that at this stage because it would be dependent on the quality of camera installed.

Councillor Patel asked whether the Licensing Team Leader was aware of how many Hackney and Private Hire vehicles already had cameras installed.

The Licensing Team Leader replied that he was not in possession of those figures, and that it was up to the individual driver as there was not a policy that mandated it. He added, however, that many vehicles already had cameras as Gloucestershire County Council introduced a policy that all drivers who had a school contract must have CCTV installed.

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Councillor Radley asked if CCTV was mandatory, and if a passenger was particularly uncomfortable with being recorded, whether they could request not to be recorded.

The Licensing Team Leader stated that he believed that recordings needed to always be readily available but in instances where the driver felt intimidated that they could turn on the recording option. He added that he was not completely sure on the legality of the use of sound recording but would look into it and report back to Councillor Radley when he had a definitive answer.

Councillor Bowkett noted that if that was the case then a driver could switch off the recording and back on for nefarious reasons.

The Licensing Team Leader responded that if it was mandatory to install Cameras then a driver would not be allowed to tamper with the CCTV.

The Licensing Team Leader further noted that there would be a requirement for there to be adequate signage stating that there was CCTV if it became mandatory for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles.

The Chair asked if Members had any objections to approving the recommendations laid out in the report. There being no dissent, it was:

RESOLVED that the Licensing and Enforcement Committee Approve an 8-week public consultation on the Draft County CCTV consultation document in Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles as detailed in Appendix 1 of the Council report.

8. QUARTERLY UPDATE

The Licensing Team Leader asked if any Member had a query on the content of the Quarterly Update.

Members indicated that they had read the report and understood its content.

RESOLVED that the Licensing and Enforcement Committee note the contents of the report.

9. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

No Member indicated that they wished to discuss the content of the exempt minutes. Therefore, it was not necessary to exclude the press and public.

10. EXEMPT MINUTES OF LICENSING AND ENFORCEMENT SUB-COMMITTEES

RESOLVED as per the exempt minutes.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

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Tuesday 13 September at 6:30pm.

Time of commencement: 6.30 pm hours
Time of conclusion: 6:51pm hours

Chair