

## REGULATORY COMMITTEE

*At a meeting of the Regulatory Committee on Tuesday, 10 April 2012 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Runcorn*

Present: Councillors Philbin (Chairman), K. Loftus (Vice-Chairman), Fraser, Fry, A. Lowe, M. Ratcliffe and Wallace

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Browne, Howard, McDermott and Wainwright

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: G. Ferguson, L. Davies, K. Cleary, J. Tully and J. Findlow

Also in attendance: 2 members of the public.

### ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE COMMITTEE

#### REG36 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2012 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

#### REG37 TAXI LICENSING - CURRENT AGE RESTRICTIONS ON LICENSED HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES

The Committee considered a report which outlined the concerns within the Taxi trade relating to the replacement of vehicles on reaching the prescribed age limits. At a previous meeting of the Committee held on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2007 (Minutes23/2007 refers) it was resolved that Licensed Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles in Halton would be subject to age restrictions.

Members were advised that the current concerns within the trade were that replacing a licensed vehicle on attaining current age limits could, in the current time of austerity, be punitive to the proprietor and place unreasonable financial and/or personal pressures on Licence holders. However it was recognised that removing the condition in its entirety could lower the standards

*Action*

achieved in the Borough since the age restrictions were established, to the detriment of service to which the public were entitled. The Committee noted comments received from Taxi Operators, information contained in two letters from Taxi drivers and a petition from representatives from the trade which had been submitted.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) with effect from 19<sup>th</sup> March 2012 any Hackney Carriage Vehicle or Private Hire Vehicle licensed by the Council on that date may continue to be capable of being a qualifying vehicle notwithstanding that on or after that date the vehicle exceeded the adopted qualifying vehicle age threshold of the Council ("the Dispensation") subject to the conditions ("the Conditions") set out below; and
- (2) the Dispensation shall apply for a period of two years commencing on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2012 (but for the avoidance of doubt any licence granted during this period shall continue to the end of the period of that licence) and thereafter the Council's adopted qualifying vehicle criteria for the time being in force shall apply and the Dispensation shall cease to apply;
- (3) the Conditions shall be:
  - Any vehicle taking advantage of the Dispensation shall be subject to three tests per year
  - No vehicle taking advantage of the Dispensation may be transferred to another proprietor; and
- (4) a review of vehicle conditions be undertaken with immediate effect.

Chief Executive

*Meeting ended at 7.35 p.m.*