

REGULATORY COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Regulatory Committee on Monday, 17 March 2014 in the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall

Present: Councillors K. Loftus (Chairman), Wallace (Vice-Chairman), Fry, P. Hignett, Lea, A. Lowe, McDermott, Nelson and G. Stockton

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Fraser and Howard

Absence declared on Council business: None

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

Also in attendance: Three members of the public

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE COMMITTEE

Action

REG14 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2014 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

REG15 TAXI LICENSING - TEMPORARY EXTENSION TO CURRENT AGE LIMITS FOR HACKNEY CARRIAGES AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES

The Committee considered a request from elements of the taxi trade to extend by one year the two year Moratorium which related to the maximum age limits of Licensed vehicles. The Moratorium was previously agreed by the Committee to take effect from 19th March 2012 and would expire on 19th March 2014.

It was noted that the current vehicle age policy was adopted by the Committee on 19th March 2007 (Minute REG23) and was re-considered when the Moratorium was introduced. Age limits relating to Licensed Hackney Carriages and Private hire vehicles were currently based upon the expiry of the licence extant on the date that the following vehicle ages are arrived at:

Saloons Estates and MSV's Maximum age 8 years

MPV Style vehicles
Purpose Built vehicles

Maximum age 12 years
Maximum age 16 years

In each of the above cases the minimum age of vehicles has been set at 3 years prior to the maximum age for the relevant category of vehicle. The minimum age policy was adopted on 1st July 2013.

The request to the Committee was submitted by APEC and was in two parts:

1. to permanently extend by one year the maximum age of all vehicles and an equivalent extension of the minimum age of all vehicles; and
2. a one year temporary extension to the existing moratorium with immediate effect. This would not require consultation.

Members were advised that no detailed reasons had been provided by APEC in support of its request, however the underlying reason was the same as when the moratorium was introduced, namely the state of the economy and the financial problems being experienced by the trade.

The Committee considered the request and took into consideration additional comments and representations on the matter.

RESOLVED: That the requests to: 1. permanently extend by one year the maximum and minimum age of all vehicles; and 2. to extend by one year the two year Moratorium which related to the maximum age limits of Licensed vehicles, be refused.

Strategic Director
Policy and
Resources

REG16 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

The Board considered:

- (1) whether Members of the press and public should be excluded from the meeting of the Board during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be considered, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section

100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972; and

- (2) whether the disclosure of information was in the public interest, whether any relevant exemptions were applicable and whether, when applying the public interest test and exemptions, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information.

RESOLVED: That as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

REG17 TAXI LICENSING MATTER

Case No. 689

The Committee considered a request for an exemption from age restrictions on licensed Hackney Carriage as set out in Halton Borough Council conditions 2.1.2 (conditions adopted 19 March 2007).

RESOLVED: That

1. the application be refused; and
2. the Operational Director Legal and Democratic, in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee, be authorised to determine any further applications for exemption from (or relaxation of or waiver of) the Council's policy on the maximum/minimum ages of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles.

Strategic Director
Policy and
Resources

Meeting ended at 7.25 p.m.