
GENERAL LICENSING COMMITTEE, 07.03.16

Present: Councillors Annwen Hughes, John Brynmor Hughes, Louise Hughes, Eryl Jones-Williams, Tudor Owen, Ann Williams, Elfed W. Williams and Wyn Williams

Also in Attendance: Sheryl Le Bon Jones (Licensing Manager), Geraint B. Edwards (Solicitor) and Lowri Haf Evans (Member Support and Scrutiny Officer)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Annwen Daniels, Dilwyn Lloyd, Peter Read and John Wyn Williams and from Gareth Jones (Senior Manager - Planning and Environment Service)

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received from any members present.

3. URGENT ITEMS

In response to a concern regarding appropriate training for taxi drivers, it was noted that the North Wales Group had collaborated with Barnardos and North Wales Police to draw up a training programme in response to the Rotherham Report (in the context of sexual misconduct with children).

It was reported that Conwy had already imposed a condition on driving licences for the driver to have a taxi driver qualification (BTEC Level 2). It was highlighted that this qualification included elements such as health and safety, customer care, transporting and loading parcels and transporting children and vulnerable adults, and a two-year completion period had been set. It was noted that Gwynedd had identified this need and it was suggested that this should be considered when the policies were reviewed.

The Licensing Unit's referral to the training field for taxi drivers was welcomed and a request was made for the unit to share information about the training with the members.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chairman signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee, held on 1 December 2015, as a true record.

In response to the request made for more information about the use of orange wallets on public transport where purposeful cards were used to communicate with

transport providers, it was reported that the North Wales Group had provided similar provision for taxi journeys.

It was accepted that this was good practice.

5. MINUTES OF THE GENERAL LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE

Submitted - for information, the minutes of a meeting of the General Licensing Sub-committee held on 12.11.15.

6. REVISION OF GWYNEDD COUNCIL'S POLICIES

- **Combined Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Vehicle Driver Licence Policy**
- **Hackney Carriages/Private Hire Vehicles Licensing Policy**
- **Private Hire Operators Licensing Policy**

A verbal update from the Licensing Manager was provided on the work of reviewing the licensing policies to create a unified policy. It was reported, due to the service's Ffordd Gwynedd exercise to review its work processes to ensure that the people of Gwynedd were at the centre of what was implemented, that the review work was slightly behind schedule and the intention was to continue with the review when the exercise had been completed.

Nevertheless, the opportunity was taken to report that one likely change would be included in the review, namely the requirement for a local test for vehicles. It was noted that this test would be additional to the simple one that was currently being operated – it would set detailed and specific guidelines on the condition of the vehicle (inside and out) and would ensure that it was safe and aesthetically pleasing. It was reported that VOSA (*Vehicle and Operator Services Agency*) had suggested that every Council implement this test and it was highlighted that some Councils had already adopted it. Consequently it would be possible to remove the 'vehicle age restrictions' and only take the condition of the car into consideration.

In response to a question, it was noted that the Ffordd Gwynedd exercise would identify current obstacles within the service and the need to respond to them effectively.

The Licensing Unit staff was thanked for its work.

The meeting commenced at 10.50am and concluded at 11.15am.