

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Licensing  
Committee held at Council Chamber,  
Surrey Heath House on 15 March 2017**

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+ Cllr Bill Chapman (Chairman)  
+ Cllr Ian Sams (Vice Chairman)

+ Cllr David Allen	+ Cllr Oliver Lewis
+ Cllr Nick Chambers	+ Cllr Bruce Mansell
+ Cllr Mrs Vivienne Chapman	+ Cllr Nic Price
+ Cllr Surinder Gandhum	+ Cllr Pat Tedder
+ Cllr Ruth Hutchinson	- Cllr Joanne Potter
+ Cllr Paul Innicki	- Cllr Valerie White
+ Cllr David Lewis	

+ Present  
- Apologies for absence presented

In Attendance: Cllr Chris Pitt

**10/L Minutes of Previous Meeting**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Licensing Committee held on 23 November 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**11/L Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**12/L Safeguarding Training and Convictions Policy for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers and Private Hire Operators**

The Committee received a report providing an update on work to introduce mandatory safeguarding training for hackney carriage and private hire licence holders and the work taking place to review the Convictions Policy for Licenced Drivers and Operators.

The 2014 Jay Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) in Rotherham and the subsequent Government Review of Rotherham Borough Council identified not only that taxi drivers had had a key role in facilitating and engaging in CSE but also that those involved in the licensing and enforcement of taxi and private hire regulations were often unable or unwilling to tackle the issue and were not using their regulatory powers effectively.

The government places a responsibility upon local authorities, private hire operators and individual drivers to ensure that licensed drivers are aware of warning signs that could indicate a passenger was at risk of CSE and that training

was available for hackney carriage and private hire vehicle drivers and operators to help them deal with potential CSE scenarios.

The Council played a pivotal role in ensuring that those wishing to hold a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Driver or Operator's Licence are considered to be 'fit and proper' persons and that drivers and operators were aware of the signs that could indicate that a passenger was at risk from CSE. Surrey Heath Borough Council does not currently include CSE specific training in its requirements for those wishing to drive a licensed vehicle however drivers and operators were strongly advised to take up offers of safeguarding training that were made by the Council and other organisations. A standalone safeguarding training session run by the Council on 28 February 2017 had been attended by 103 drivers and operators and 60% of the drivers and operators holding licences issued by the Borough Council have now participated in safeguarding training.

The Committee was informed that, in an effort to further improve the calibre of the Borough's licensed trade, officers were exploring the possibility of introducing a requirement for drivers and operators to undergo mandatory safeguarding training as part of the licence requirements. Officers are working with Surrey County Council and the other Surrey District Councils to develop a consistent approach to CSE and to agree consistent procedures for the vetting and licensing of drivers and taxis and agree standards for revoking licences across Surrey and a further report on the matter would be brought to the Committee's next meeting.

The Committee was informed that as part of its ongoing review of policies, the Council's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Convictions Policy had been reviewed to ensure that it took into account the latest legislation and was in line with recognised best practice.

The draft Policy had been developed using Local Government Association guidance. It was felt that the policy not only reflected the current social climate but also provided an appropriate balance between the need to safeguard the public and the rights of applicants.

It was clarified that currently all applicants had to apply for an enhanced Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) Check and submit this with their licence application. Drivers and operators were then required to complete a new DBS check every three years in order to continue working.

The Draft Policy would be subject to a six week public consultation period and a report on the outcomes would be brought back to the Committee's meeting on 23 June 2017 for consideration.

**RESOLVED** that:

- i. The work currently being undertaken by officers in relation to Child Sexual Exploitation be noted.
- ii. The draft Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Convictions Policy, attached as Annex A to the report, be approved for the purposes of consultation for a period of 6 weeks.

**13/L      Licensing Act 2003 - Summary of Decisions**

The Committee received a report setting out a summary of the decisions taken under delegated powers in respect of licence applications where no representations had been received from the responsible authorities or any other persons.

The Committee noted the report.

**Chairman**