

Bristol City Council
Minutes of the Public Safety and Protection
Committee



25 October 2022 at 10.00 am

Members Present:-

Councillors: Christine Townsend, Marley Bennett (Chair for the duration of the meeting), Chris Davies, Richard Eddy and Jonathan Hucker

Officers in Attendance:-

Lynne Harvey (Legal Advisor), Abigail Holman (Licensing Policy Advisor) and Jeremy Livitt (Democratic Services)

8 Election of Chair

RESOLVED – that, in the absence of the Chair, Councillor Marley Bennett be elected as Chair for the duration of the meeting.

9 Welcome and Safety Information

The Chair welcomed all parties to the meeting and explained arrangements for the emergency evacuation procedure.

10 Apologies for Absence and Substitutions

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Amal Ali and Councillor Tessa Fitzjohn.

11 Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.



12 Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 7th June 2022 (AGM)

It was noted that there were outstanding vacancies on this Committee which urgently needed to be filled. The Democratic Services Officer stated that he would contact the relevant party groups to remind them of the need to fill these vacancies as soon as possible.

RESOLVED – that the minutes for the meeting held on 7th June 2022 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

13 Public Forum

There were no Public Forum items.

At this point in the meeting, Councillor Christine Townsend attended. Councillor Bennett continued as chair for the duration of the meeting with the agreement of the Committee.

14 Consideration of Lower Age Limit In respect of Hackney Carriage Vehicles Current Global Impacts

The Team Leader (Licensing) introduced this report and made the following comments:

- Officers were proposing a number of changes to the existing rules on the age limit for vehicles
- Due to a combination of reasons, including Ukraine and Brexit, The supply of new vehicles was limited as much of the wiring and chips were affected by the war in Ukraine and worldwide shipping delays.
- There was a need to reduce older more polluting vehicles
- The cost of a brand new vehicle for trade was now high, especially since a Euro 6 was required in view of the forthcoming introduction of the Clean Air Zone on 28th November 2022. In addition, most Local Authorities were now moving towards emission based standards
- The number of hackney carriage vehicles was approximately 400, with around a quarter which weren't CAZ compliant.
- A charge of £9 per day would be difficult for carers and a further reduction in the number of available Hackney Carriage Vehicles would put Home to School Transport at risk
- The latest check of one of the main suppliers had indicated that there were only 6 new vehicles which met the required standards, all of which were already reserved. There was a very limited supply of second hand vehicles
- Officers recognised the cost burden for this on the trade and the impact of issues such as pollution



- The upper age limit for vehicles was 3.5 years. However, as a result of the recent changes, drivers were attempting to get more out of their existing vehicles. However, since there were a significant number of drivers who worked for multiple operators or shared the lease of a vehicle, a decrease in the number of drivers did not necessarily result in an impact on the number of vehicles

The Committee considered whether not to proceed immediately with the proposed changes or whether to hold a short consultation period (approximately 4 weeks) to assess these. It was noted that the proposal required vehicles to meet the Euro 6 standard or better rather than setting an age limit.

The legal officer to the Committee advised that the Department of Transport guidance referred to vehicle emission and recommended no arbitrary age limits. The Committee noted that the less risky option would be to hold a short consultation to change the policy whilst keeping the situation under review. Since each individual case had to be considered on its own merits, any blanket delegated authority would be open to challenge and increase the risk of Judicial Review.

In response to Councillor's questions, officers confirmed that the issues arising from the situations in Ukraine impacting on wiring were not immediately apparent. Similarly, the gap in the availability of chips had not been initially recognised.

The Committee further noted that, if a consultation period was held, this would not prevent any outstanding applications being made in the meantime.

Councillors discussed the situation further and the majority agreed that a brief consultation period would be the best option since the Clean Air Zone was only a month away.

It was moved by Councillor Marley Bennett, seconded by Councillor Chris Davies and upon being put to the vote, it was

RESOLVED (4 for, 1 against) –

- (1) that a consultation is carried out on the proposed changes to vehicles set out in the report with officers to determine the method of consultation in accordance with existing practice
- (2) that a report be brought back to a future Committee meeting at 10am on Tuesday 20th December 2022 with the results of the consultation and a recommendation concerning any proposed changes to existing policy.

15 Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policy - Medicals

The Team Leader (Licensing) introduced this report and made the following comments:

- Officers were not proposing a change to the Group 2 medical since it was recognised that a higher standard was appropriate
- However, since under the current arrangements, it required a GP at the registered medical practice to complete the medical. Previously other GPs had been permitted to complete the medicals but were unable to get access to medical notes



- Under DTTE best practice, the Government amended the Road Traffic Act to allow other medical professionals to complete certain reports. They already permitted a GP in a different medical practice to carry out a medical assessment as long as they had access to the relevant medical notes
- Other Local Authorities were already operating this practice. However, since the Group 2 Medical Licence was not codified, it varied across Local Authorities

The Committee agreed with the proposal made by officers in the report.

Councillor Marley Bennett moved, seconded by Councillor Richard Eddy and upon being put to the vote, it was

RESOLVED - that the recommendations contained in the report be approved.

The meeting ended at 10.40 am

CHAIR _____

