

Medway Council
Meeting of Licensing and Safety Committee
Tuesday, 7 February 2023
6.00pm to 6.22pm

Record of the meeting

Subject to approval as an accurate record at the next meeting of this committee

Present: Councillors: Mrs Diane Chambers (Chairman), Fearn (Vice-Chairman), Browne, Carr, Sylvia Griffin, Hackwell, McDonald, Prenter and Mrs Elizabeth Turpin

In Attendance: Mandy Francis, Licensing Manager
Nigel Jackson, Chairman, MLTDA
Emily Lane-Blackwell, Senior Licensing Officer
Vicky Nutley, Head of Legal Services
Stephen Platt, Democratic Services Officer

591 Apologies for absence

There were none.

592 Record of meeting

The record of the meeting held on 11 November 2022 and the record of the Joint Meeting of Committees held on 18 May 2022 were agreed and signed by the Chairman as correct.

593 Urgent matters by reason of special circumstances

There were none.

594 Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests and other interests

Disclosable pecuniary interests

There were none.

Other significant interests (OSIs)

There were none.

Other interests

There were none.

595 Statement of Licensing Policy 2023-2028

Discussion:

The Committee considered a report on the consultation responses received in respect of the draft revised Statement of Licensing Policy under the Licensing Act 2003.

The Licensing Manager advised that an 8-week consultation had been undertaken, during which one response was received from a Premises Licence Holder, who had no comment to make on the proposed changes to the policy.

Decision:

1. The Committee acknowledged that no comments had been received requiring any further amendment to the draft policy document.
2. The Committee recommended the draft Statement of Licensing Policy 2023-2028, as attached at Appendix A to the report, to Full Council for approval.

596 Contactless payments facilities in taxis

Discussion:

The Committee considered a report seeking Members' approval to consult on amending the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy to include a mandatory condition for all Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles to have a functioning cashless payment facility available for fare paying passengers.

The Licensing Manager said that contactless transactions generally had increased dramatically in recent years, particularly during the pandemic and there had been an increasing number of complaints from taxi passengers who had been unable to pay their fare by card. She referred to the report's appendices which set out the costs associated with card payment machines; a submission from the Medway Taxi Licensed Taxi Drivers Association (MLTDA); and proposed guidelines for electronic payment devices.

Members discussed the proposal and clarification was sought on whether the payment machines would be contactless only or able to accept a card so that payments above the contactless limit could be made by pin number. The issue of wi-fi blackspots was also raised.

The Chairman of the (MLTDA) addressed the meeting and confirmed that most payment machines accepted pin transactions. Alternatively, a payment link could be sent to customers. He advised that there were fewer blackspots in Medway

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than had previously been the case and these did not prevent payments being taken as the transaction would proceed when wi-fi was available again. He also said that an increasing number of MLDTA members were in favour of this proposal.

The Licensing Manager confirmed that all options would be made clear in the consultation.

Decision:

The Committee agreed for officers to consult on the proposed revisions to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy in accordance with the consultation methodology, both as outlined in the report, and present a post-consultation report at a future meeting of the Committee.

597 Review of memberships of sub-committees

Discussion:

The Committee considered a report on the review of the memberships of its sub-committees, these being the Licensing Sub-Committee, the Licensing Hearing Panels, and the Licensing 1983 Act Hearing Panels.

Decision:

1. The Committee agreed the size, allocation of seats and memberships on the Licensing Sub-Committee, Licensing Hearing Panels and Licensing 1982 Act Hearing Panels, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.
2. The Committee agreed that the requirement for political balance should be waived in respect of Licensing Hearing Panels and Licensing 1982 Act Hearing Panels and that the process for selection of Panel Members should be as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

Chairman

Date:

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