

# GENERAL PURPOSES LICENSING COMMITTEE

Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2007

**COUNCILLORS PRESENT:** Councillor Sareva (Vice Chair) in the chair, Councillors Brundin, Clarkson, Cook, Goddard, Keen, Royce and Williams

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Brenda Lammin and Daniel Smith (Legal and Democratic Services Business Unit), Jill Cramer (Taxi Licensing – Transport and Parking Business Unit), Kevin Keating (Environmental Health Business Unit) and Michael Crofton-Briggs (Planning Services Business Manager).

## 27. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Turner (Chair) and Young.

## 28. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made

## 29. URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

## 30. MINUTES

Resolved to: -

- (1) confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2007;
- (2) note further to minute 19 (1) that negotiations with Oxfordshire County Council in respect of the location of an additional hackney carriage rank in the Castle Street area had not yet produced a solution, and that the County Council be urged to agree a location as soon as possible.

## 31. HACKNEY CARRIAGE PLATE – DRAW

It was noted that the draw would take place at the Council meeting on 30 April 2007, in accordance with minute 20 of this Committee.

## **32. LICENSING OF RICKSHAWS**

The Transport and Parking Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) setting out the obstacles to be overcome before rickshaws or trishaws could be licensed in Oxford.

With the permission of the Chair, Mr Ted Maxwell addressed the Committee concerning the benefits to Oxford of this form of transport and the constraints on operators who acted within the law. He asked the Committee to consider ways of allowing rickshaws to be licensed in Oxford and acknowledged that operators would have to contribute to the funding of any licensing scheme for unpowered vehicles.

The following points were raised during the discussion: -

- although rickshaws were classed as hackney carriages in law for the purposes of licensing it was clear that they were a different type of vehicle;
- there was a need to lobby the government to have the law changed, particularly in view of the current interest in environmental issues;
- there was some logic to reconsidering the decision to limit the number of hackney carriage licences issued in Oxford;
- existing byelaws were not effective because they could not over-ride legislation;
- it was not possible under current legislation for the Council to introduce a separate category of vehicle into hackney carriage licensing scheme;
- there was a need to be innovative rather than simply looking at what other local authorities were doing;
- a completely fresh look at the whole issue of licensing hackney carriages, private hire vehicles and rickshaws was needed and this should be done jointly by members and officers.

Resolved that the Environment Scrutiny Committee be invited to hold an enquiry into the licensing of hackney carriages, private hire vehicles and rickshaws in Oxford.

## **33. OPERATOR SIGNING ON PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES**

The Transport and Parking Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) concerning proposed amendments to the Private Hire Vehicle Regulations.

Resolved that the existing Private Hire Vehicle Regulations be amended by the addition of the following after paragraph “d” in the section “Operator’s Sign”:

- e. The design and size of the sign provided by each Operator shall be approved by the Taxi Licensing Office and may not be altered in any way from that approved;
- f. Signs approved after 29<sup>th</sup> March 2007 have to be the same size as this authority’s yellow identification stickers (420 mm in length and 220 mm in height).

#### **34. STREET TRADING – BONN SQUARE REDEVELOPMENT**

The Environmental Health Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) concerning three street trading pitches affected by the Bonn Square redevelopment.

Resolved that: -

- (1) where it was not possible to retain street trading sites during the redevelopment of Bonn Square, individual street trading consents be extinguished a month before the start of the phase of redevelopment that affects the pitch;
- (2) it be noted that arrangements were in hand for temporary sites to be allocated to the three street traders affected during the Bonn Square redevelopment;
- (3) reports be submitted to the Central, South and West Area Committee and the General Purposes Licensing Committee prior to completion of the redevelopment setting out proposals for the pattern, type and accommodation of street trading in Bonn Square so that implementation can take place on completion of the development.

#### **35. STREET TRADING – LITTLE CLARENDON STREET**

The Environmental Health Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) concerning proposals for the redesignation of Little Clarendon Street under the City Council’s Street Trading Scheme.

Resolved that: -

- (1) Little Clarendon Street be redesignated under the City Council’s Street Trading Scheme from a “Prohibited” to a “Consent” Street;

- (2) The Environmental Health Business Manager be authorised to carry out the required consultation prior to the Council making a formal resolution in favour of redesignation.

**36. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2007 (following the Annual Council meeting).

The meeting started at 9.30am and ended at 10.30 am.