NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of **General Purposes Commitee** held in the Castle House, Great North Road, Newark, Notts. NG24 1BY on Thursday, 14 June 2018 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs R Crowe (Chairman)
Councillor I Walker (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Mrs B Brooks, Councillor Mrs I Brown, Councillor D Clarke, Councillor M Cope, Councillor P Duncan, Councillor Mrs S Michael, Councillor D Payne, Councillor Mrs S Saddington, Councillor B Wells and Councillor Mrs Y Woodhead

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor Mrs K Arnold, Councillor Mrs S Soar and Councillor Mrs L Tift

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS FROM MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

NOTED: that no Member or Officer declared any interest pursuant to any statutory requirement in any matter discussed or voted upon at the meeting.

2 DECLARATION OF ANY INTENTION TO RECORD THE MEETING

NOTED: that an audio recording was to be made of the meeting by the Council.

3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

AGREED (unanimously) that the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4 HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARE REVIEW

The Committee considered the report presented by the Business Manager Environmental Health & Licensing which sought Member consideration for the approach to undertake a review of Hackney Carriage fares.

The current Hackney Carriage Fares for Newark and Sherwood were tabled at the meeting.

The report set out the background information as to how the District Council fixed the fares applicable to Hackney Carriages, which included the current fare charging policy. The last review of fares was undertaken in 2012 where a decision was taken that no change to the fares was required.

The report sought Member consideration on whether the fares should be set so as to favour short or long journeys. This could be achieved by changing the balance between the flag drop and the tariff for distance. Members were also asked whether they would like to see any change to the multiplier used to calculate the rates for evenings, Sundays and public holidays. A table was included within the report which illustrated the effect that the multiplier had on the T2 tariff.

The report proposed to undertake informal consultation with a range of taxi companies and individual drivers to ascertain their opinions on how the fares were currently calculated and the impact of the tariff 2 and 3 multiplier. On completion of those informal consultations it was proposed to distil the findings down to a small number of fare review options and then to undertake a ballot of all drivers as to which method they would like to see introduced.

The Chairman requested that the night time rate should be reviewed carefully as the night time economy for businesses was crucial. Clarification was also sought as to whether a notice of the tariffs was displayed in the vehicle. The Business Manager confirmed that would be addressed and if the notice was not displayed then it would be included in the recommendation as an action.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

(a) the details relating to the fare reviews of Hackney Carriage fares be noted;

(b) the proposals for carrying out the fare review be supported; and

(c) the Business Manager check whether the Hackney Carriage displays a notice of the tariffs and if not that be included as an action.

5 REVIEW OF STATEMENT OF GAMBLING POLICY

The Committee considered the report presented by the Business Manager Environmental Health & Licensing which sought the Committee's approval to revise the Council's Statement of Gambling Policy and to begin the consultation process.

The report set out the responsibilities of the Council, as Licensing Authority, under the Gambling Act 2005. The Act required the policy to be reviewed every five years. The current policy was adopted in January 2013 and therefore needed to be reviewed before January 2019.

It was reported that in order to achieve a level of consistency across the County the Nottinghamshire Authorities had been working together on a joint format for the Statement. Members were informed that the Councils across the County were different and therefore it was not possible to have identical documents, however, wherever possible attempts had been made to apply consistent phraseology.

It was proposed to undertake an extensive consultation exercise by directing organisations to the Council's website where a copy of the draft Policy would be posted. Printed copies would be available on request. It was also proposed that the consultation period would last for ten weeks.

Members raised concern that the changes to the Gambling Policy may force people onto the internet gambling sites, which were out of the Local Authority's control. The Chairman commented that she was attending the Nottingham Licensing Chairman's meeting and she would ask the representative from the Gambling Commission if she would attend a future meeting of the Committee to provide information relating to this issue.

A Member also requested that the Nottingham and Derby Law Society to be added to the list of consultees within the Statement of Gambling Policy.

AGREED (unanimously) that the requirement that the Gambling Policy be reviewed.

6 UPDATE ON PERFORMANCE AND ENFORCEMENT MATTERS

The Committee considered the report presented by the Business Manager Environmental Health & Licensing in relation to the activity and performance of the Licensing Team with details of the current ongoing enforcement issues.

The report covered the period from 1 January to 31 March 2018 inclusive and set out the range and number of licence applications during this period. It also highlighted any activity required as a result of the applications.

Information contained in the report relating to the number of applications for grants and renewals of licences for Hackney Carriage; Private Hire; and Ambulance Drivers together with those for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles.

Also provided within the report was information relating to both street and house to house collections. Enforcement activity was also listed with information as to what action had been taken to-date for the period 1 January to 31 March 2018.

Members commented on a local fund raising event that was taking place at the Newark Festival and whilst they supported this event, they raised concerns as to whether the correct procedure was being adhered to. The Business Manager confirmed that a charity collection for a specific cause was taking place at the Newark Festival and collection buckets would be available in side the gates of the Festival. It was confirmed that as that was on Council land no licence was required for that fund raising event. It was further clarified that if the collection buckets were placed outside of the gates then a licence would be required. Members also commented that the fund raising would also continue in the Public Houses within Newark. The Business Manager confirmed that each Licensee would need to seek permission for that collection to take place. The Chairman suggested that the Business Manager Environmental Health & Licensing should contact the Clerk to Newark Town Council and the Charity organiser to provide advice regarding the correct procedure for street collections.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

(a) the report be noted; and

(b) the Business Manager - Environmental Health & Licensing contact Newark Town Council and the charity organiser to confirm where the collection would take place at the Newark Festival and that correct procedures are followed should any collections be undertaken in public houses.

7 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

That, under section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

8 MINUTES OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE & PRIVATE HIRE DRIVERS SUB-COMMITTEE

NOTED: the Exempt Minutes of the Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Drivers Sub-Committee held on 1 May 2018 at 10am.

9 MINUTES OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE & PRIVATE HIRE DRIVERS SUB-COMMITTEE

NOTED: the Exempt Minutes of the Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Drivers Sub-Committee held on 1 May 2018 at 11.10am.

Meeting closed at 6.37 pm.

Chairman