

MINUTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
LICENSING COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, 2 NOVEMBER 2022

Held at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Rushcliffe Arena, Rugby Road,
West Bridgford

PRESENT:

Councillors L Healy (Chairman), S Bailey, K Beardsall, L Howitt, R Mallender,
D Simms, J Stockwood and J Walker

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

G Carpenter
M Hickey
D Roberts
H Tambini

Service Manager - Public Protection
Principal Officer
Senior Licensing Officer
Democratic Services Manager

APOLOGIES:

Councillors R Adair, B Bansal, N Begum, B Buschman, G Dickman, G Wheeler
and G Williams

1 Declarations of Interest

Councillor J Walker declared an interest in Item 3 as she was in the process of
applying for a premises licence.

2 Minutes of the Meeting held on 4 November 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2021 were approved as a true
record and signed by the Chairman.

3 Presentation - Progress with Licensing Matters

The Service Manager – Public Protection introduced the Senior Licensing
Officer who gave a presentation on progress with licensing matters, which
covered the following issues:

- The Licensing Act 2003
- Licensing Act Amendments
- Taxi and Private Hire
 - Enforcement
 - City of Wolverhampton Council
- Recent Legislation
- Gambling Act 2005
- HiMOs
 - Housing Act 2004
- Animal Welfare
- Street Traders
- Caravan Parks

- Scrap Metal
 - Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013
- Beauty and Skin
- National Anti-Fraud Network NR3 database

Following the presentation Councillors asked questions, and officers responded.

Councillor Mallender asked if an image of what the scrap metal licence looked like was available, as it was likely that people would be unaware of what to look for on a vehicle and the Senior Licensing Officer advised that an image of the licence would be uploaded on to the website.

Councillor Simms asked if organised bonfire night celebrations required a temporary events notice, and the Senior Licensing Officer advised that one would only be required if they were serving alcohol or had regulated entertainment.

Councillor Stockwood referred to the budget figures and asked if there were set targets, did income cover costs and had working with other councils been investigated, to consider the possibility of having one service across a number of counties. The Service Manager – Public Protection advised that there were no set financial targets, as the majority of licensing fees were statutory, and those that were not were audited, to ensure that the fee reflected the cost of the licence. In respect of sharing services, the Service Manager – Public Protection confirmed that this could happen and there were instances of it working elsewhere.

Councillor Stockwood referred to the differing standards in the market and the problem of trying to enforce Rushcliffe's high standards and questioned if in the future the Council should no longer be involved with taxi licensing or set a test so high that no-one would apply. The Principal Officer – Environmental Health advised that the Council was legally obliged to issue licences and tests were set according to Department of Transport guidance, and if the test was set excessively high, then that could be considered unreasonable. The Service Manager – Public Protection stated that an alternative approach could be to lower the standard at Rushcliffe, when the Taxi Policy was reviewed in 2025, to make it easier for drivers to apply; however, that might not be considered appropriate.

Councillor Butler asked if customers knew if the taxi they had ordered was locally registered and asked if many enquiries were made as to why so many taxis were licenced in Wolverhampton. The Senior Licensing Officer advised that the majority of vehicles being used were local; however, most were licenced in Wolverhampton and confirmed that yes numerous enquiries were received. The Principal Officer – Environmental Health stated that locally run taxi firms also had apps, it was not just larger companies. The Senior Licensing Officer advised that the Institute of Licensing was working hard with the Department of Transport to upgrade the guidance and legislation in relation to taxis. In relation to Uber, a recent development involved "surge" pricing, which involved prices doubling at peak times, with customers often not being made aware of that change. To help combat the recent cost of living

increases, the Council had also agreed to increase fares, in-line with increases made by the City Council.

Councillor Beardsall asked if Environmental Permits were administered by the Council or the Environment Agency and the Principal Officer – Environmental Health advised that the Council did have expertise in this field but not within the Licensing team.

Councillor Bailey referred to the licences given to collect scrap metal and asked if checks were made to ensure that lead from churches and other buildings was not included and officers advised that checks were made, ID had to be shown and payments could be traced, to ensure that if at a later date a load needed to be investigated by the Police, that could be done.

Councillor Healy referred to hospitality and how licence breaches were monitored and the Principal Officer – Environmental Health confirmed that if complaints were made about any premises, the Police would visit, and if they had any concerns they could petition the Council, as the Licensing Authority to revoke or add things to a licence.

The meeting closed at 8.13 pm.

CHAIRMAN