

**BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE COUNCIL**  
**LICENSING COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the Meeting held on 08 December 2022 at 10.00 am

Present:-

Cllr J J Butt – Chairman

Cllr T Johnson – Vice-Chairman

Present: Cllr S C Anderson, Cllr R Burton, Cllr G Farquhar, Cllr D Farr, Cllr D Kelsey, Cllr L Williams and Cllr A Filer (In place of Cllr N Decent)

Present Cllr D Flagg

Virtually:

39. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs N Decent, B Dion, M Howell, D Brown and K Wilson.

40. Substitute Members

Cllr A Filer substituted for Cllr N Decent for this meeting.

41. Urgent Business - Election of Vice-Chair 2022-23

The Chairman advised the Committee that a resignation from the position of Vice-Chairman had very recently been received from Cllr D Kelsey due to personal reasons. The Chairman had therefor taken the decision to add the Election of Vice-Chair for 2022-23 to the agenda for this meeting as an urgent items of business in accordance with the constitution.

The Chairman advised that the reasons for adding this as an urgent item were that there needed to be a Vice-Chair in place at all times for the purpose of licensing sub-committees which needed to be chaired by either the Chairman of Licensing, the Vice-Chair or an experienced Licensing Committee member. With the number of hearings scheduled over the next few weeks and also the need to be available at short notice for TENS or emergency taxi hearings the Chairman did not feel that the election of a Vice-Chairman could wait until the next Committee meeting in January, particularly as there was only a small number of Committee members who were considered experienced in Licensing for this purpose. The Chairman did not feel that it was acceptable to risk the democratic process being impaired due to the absence of a Vice-Chair.

A Councillor questioned how electing a new Vice-Chair today would affect the number of people available to Chair a Sub-Committee. It was noted that from an administrative point of view electing a Vice-Chair at this meeting would enable the allocation of members to the scheduled Sub-Committees and increase the availability of someone to Chair these meetings.

Nominations were received and seconded for both Cllr D Brown and Cllr T Johnson. A secret ballot was then conducted.

**RESOLVED: That Cllr T Johnson be appointed Vice-Chair for the remainder of the 2022/23 municipal year.**

42. Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

43. Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the Licensing Committee held on 15 September 2022 and the Licensing Sub Committees held on 31 August, 14 and 29 September and 9 November were approved as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

44. Public Issues

There were no public issues.

45. Electric and Hybrid Vehicles - Taxi and Private Hire

The Interim Head of Safer Communities introduced the report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'A' to these Minutes in the Minute Book. The Committee was advised that, since the Council declared a climate emergency, policies have reflected the aim to reduce harmful emissions. When the Taxi and Private Hire Policy was recently amended the Licensing Committee had requested that additional wording be included within the policy to recognise the use of electric and hybrid vehicles within the licenced fleet and prepare for the review of the policy to be completed by 2025. It was noted that the Licensing Service had met with the trade in November and raised this issue which would continue to be an item of interest for future liaison meetings with the trade. The Committee was asked to consider the following proposed wording for the current Policy and approve it, approve it with amendments or to not accept the wording:

*“We propose (wish) to encourage the take up (use) of low emission vehicles while discouraging high emission fossil fuelled vehicles in our fleet. This may include introducing differing vehicle licensing fees for hybrid electric and ultra-low emission vehicles and high emission vehicles. We will seek to examine the feasibility of this by working with the taxi trade, to examine options that are available, with a view to differentiating the licence fees paid by vehicle type when the policy is fully reviewed in 2025.”*

The Committee raised a number of points during its consideration of this issue which were responded to by Officers, and which included:

- Whether there was any opposition from drivers to convert to electric or hybrid vehicles. It was noted that the choice of vehicle was up to the

drivers and they would need to make a decision in terms of both purchase and running costs.

- At present there was only one fully electric vehicle in the fleet. It was unknown if any other drivers intended to purchase them. Comments were made that it would be good to see a greater take up of electric vehicles and it was welcomed that the trade was consulting with drivers and stakeholders.
- Committee members asked about reducing idling of vehicles on ranks. However, Officers explained that as the ranks were not parking spaces but areas for vehicles to wait for a fare this would be difficult. It could be encouraged at quieter times with some messaging to the trade or with vehicles which were fitted with the appropriate technology. The Committee asked if officers could take this forward with the trade.
- It was suggested that there was a need to be careful with wording around reducing fees, to ensure that there weren't any adverse impacts. The Committee was advised that this was an incentive which some authorities were using, and the fees were top loaded to vehicles with higher admissions. It was noted that this wouldn't be looked at until the development of the new policy and would be kept as an option.
- The Committee asked what level of charging points was needed to accommodate further electric vehicles in the fleet. The trade hadn't raised any issues regarding this, but it could be raised at the next liaison meeting.
- The Committee asked how many phases there would be in the instillation of charging points and how long this would take. Members were advised of the outline of installation plans available on the website: [Electric Vehicle \(EV\) Chargers \(bcpcouncil.gov.uk\)](https://www.bcpCouncil.gov.uk/electric-vehicle-chargers). There were currently 28 public chargers installed and ready to go. It was noted that it would not be possible to install these in taxi ranks as they were not parking spaces, but it would be possible for them to be installed near to ranks.
- Comments were made that it would be good to have some sort of temporary discount or other incentive to move to electric vehicles.
- In terms of the timeline for making changes it was noted that any major changes to the current policy would need to go out to consultation and work would be beginning soon on a full review of the current policy which would need to be adopted by June 2025, it was therefore unlikely that any changes to the existing policy regarding electric vehicles would be able to be made sooner.

(Cllr A Filer left at 11.00am)

The Committee members discussed the specific wording of the amendment to the policy and suggested that it should state, "propose to encourage the take up of the use of..."

**RESOLVED: That the Policy be amended to include the following wording "We propose to encourage the take up of the use of low emission vehicles while discouraging high emission fossil fuelled vehicles in our fleet. This may include introducing differing vehicle licensing fees for hybrid electric and ultra-low emission vehicles and**

**high emission vehicles. We will seek to examine the feasibility of this by working with the taxi trade, to examine options that are available, with a view to differentiating the licence fees paid by vehicle type when the policy is fully reviewed in 2025”.**

Voting: Unanimous

46. Forward Plan

The Chairman outlined the current items on the Committee’s Forward Plan. The Interim Head of Safer Communities advised that an item on taxi vehicle and operators’ fees for the January meeting should state that there would be a period of consultation with drivers and the trade on any changes to fees.

It was noted that the item on wheelchair accessible vehicles would be moved to the May meeting date and a task and finish group to look at this issue would meet prior to the May meeting.

The meeting ended at 11.06 am

CHAIRMAN