

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL LICENSING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday 26 March 2024, 7.00 pm - 7.30 pm

Council Chamber - Civic Offices

Members Present:	Councillors R Morgan (Chairman), L Mead (Vice-Chairman), I Allgood, S Heather, P Keska, A Lion, D Sunger and J M Whitehouse
Apologies:	Councillor(s) I Hadley, L Morgan, Caroline Pond and R Sharif
Officers In Attendance:	David King (Licensing Manager), Rebecca Moreton (Corporate Communications Officer), Therese Larsen (Democratic Services Officer) and Gary Woodhall (Team Manager - Democratic & Electoral Services)

[A RECORDING OF THIS MEETING IS AVAILABLE FOR REPEATED VIEWING](#)

15 WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

The Chairman reminded everyone present that the meeting would be broadcast live to the internet and would be capable of repeated viewing, which could infringe their human and data protection rights.

16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made by the Councillors present pursuant to the Council's Member Code of Conduct

17 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- Cllr Keska asked Mr King, the Licensing Manager, to explain how the Out of Hours Noise Service phone line being discontinued will affect Licencing?
Mr King confirmed the Out of Hours phone line will no longer be available as from 3rd April 2024, and explained that complainants will be contacted and asked to keep a diary of the noise. The issue will be assessed and monitored.
Cllr Keska was concerned that ward Cllrs will be contacted more than they currently are.

18 MINUTES OF THE LICENSING COMMITTEE

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 26 October 2023 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

19 MINUTES OF THE LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEES

T Larsen, Democratic Services, informed the Committee that minutes from previous meetings of Licensing Sub-Committees would not requiring signing at this meeting.

20 TAXI LICENCE TARIFF UPDATE 2024

Mr King (Licensing Team Manager) updated the committee on the Taxi Licence Tariff Update 2024.

In response to questions from the committee, Mr King explained that:

- There were some drivers with old meters that could not implement the software update. This meant an additional cost of about £200 for the drivers in addition to the £20 cost for the software update, and therefore a small number of drivers were reluctant. They have been given guidance on how to update the meters in the next months.
- Going forward fees will be reviewed annually to stop tariffs falling behind compared to other areas.
- It is too early to tell if the change in tariff has any impact on number of hackney carriages.
- Hackney Carriage Licensing policy is due to be reviewed to be in line with air quality and sustainable transport policies. Safeguarding, emissions, and other EFDC policies will also be considered when the Hackney Carriage Taxi Licence policy is reviewed.
- Technology for Smart meters is not available yet but will be considered when it is.
- The upgrades were done over 2 days and in addition there were a 'mop-up session'. About 15% of vehicles were road-tested and came back with the correct measured mile.
Going forward the updates it will be done over 2 days, and anyone else can go to Oakwood Garage where they can have their meters re-calibrated and re-sealed.
- Mr King will get back to the Committee with the percentage of electric and hybrid vehicles.
- There are barriers to the percentage of electric vehicles. The old meters were a barrier, lack charging points are another barrier.
- Mr King and other colleagues in EFDC are looking into Government Grants to increase a greener fleet.

21 LEVELLING UP WHITE PAPER

Mr King (Licensing Team Manager) summarised the Levelling up white paper for the committee.

Mr King explained that if the result for the Consultation from Department for Transport comes back before the next Licensing Committee meeting in October, there may be a special meeting to consider the report and the proposal, as early as the summer.

22 REVIEW OF LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE PROCEDURES

The Committee felt that the current training was satisfactory. D King advised the Committee that the Licensing Training would be available online in Litmos.

- D King explained that annual statistics will be brought to the October meeting as they have not been finalised yet. Anecdotally there has been fewer applications this year, however two applications have attracted the highest amounts of representations. The report in October will break down the number of applications and how they are dealt with.
- Committee reports and templates are being looked at to consolidate information where possible.
- Planning Legislation and Licencing Legislation are two entirely different regimes and should not be confused. D King will provide guidance notes and may also be able to add this to the Committee Reports as per above.

23 REVIEW OF CURRENT AND FUTURE TRAINING NEEDS FOR THE COMMITTEE

The Committee felt that the current training was satisfactory for Committee members, however, would like for Parish and Town Councillors to get further training in order to understand how Licensing Legislation is different to Planning Legislation.

D King suggested he will add guidance to the next Licensing Committee agenda. And the guidance can be circulated to Town and Parish Councils.

D King advised the Committee that the Licensing Training would be available online in Litmos.

24 MATTERS ARISING

No matters arising.

25 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Committee noted that the next meeting was scheduled for 10 October 2024.

CHAIRMAN