

Minutes of a Meeting of the Licensing and Regulatory Committee held in the John Meikle Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton TA1 1HE, on Thursday, 15 February 2024 at 2.00 pm

Present:

Cllr Simon Carswell (Chair)
Cllr Marcus Kravis (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Peter Clayton
Cllr Tony Lock
Cllr Mike Murphy
Cllr Diogo Rodrigues

Cllr Hugh Davies
Cllr Martin Lovell
Cllr Tom Power

Other Members present remotely:

Cllr Tony Robbins

24 Apologies for Absence - Agenda Item 1

Apologies were received from Councillor Andy Soughton and Councillor Tony Robbins (who attended the meeting virtually).

25 Minutes from the Previous Meeting - Agenda Item 2

Resolved that the minutes of the Licensing and Regulatory Committee held on 12 October 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.

26 Declarations of Interest - Agenda Item 3

Councillors present at the meeting declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Councillor of a Town or Parish Council or any other Local Authority:-

UNITARY COUNCILLOR	TOWN AND/OR PARISH COUNCIL
Simon Carswell	Street Parish Council

Peter Clayton	Burnham Highbridge Town Council
Marcus Kravis	Minehead Town Council
Tony Lock	Yeovil Town Council
Martin Lovell	Shepton Mallet Town Council
Mike Murphy	Burnham Highbridge Town Council
Tom Power	Wincanton Town Council
Diogo Rodrigues	Bridgwater Town Council

27 Public Question Time - Agenda Item 4

There were no public questions submitted.

28 Hackney carriage rank positions in Yeovil - Agenda Item 5

The officer presented his report and as part of his presentation and in response to question the following points were made:

- The project had originally looked to reduce traffic in that part of Yeovil but the RQ1 proposals had been watered down with the need to allow buses, loading vehicles, taxis as well as access to disabled parking bays.
- As part of the consultation the Licensing Team had contacted all registered drivers with the proposals (there were 260 Hackney and Private Hire drivers) to which they'd had 4 responses asking to retain the Silver Street rank and no issues were raised with any of the ranks.
- A secondary letter had been sent out to the drivers to which no responses had been received.
- There had been no responses from any members of the public.
- As part of the scheme it had been intended that Silver Street would become a one way thoroughfare. But this was currently an unfunded proposal.
- Any recommendations from the Committee would go to the Executive for final approval.

Cllr Lock addressed the Committee, explaining that he was also speaking on behalf of Cllr Soughton, the division member and fellow town councillor. He highlighted:

- That he supported the original proposal to move the Silver Street rank to Princess Street.
- He had been confused by the audit's conclusion, in section 4.3 of the report, as Princess Street was flatter and had a wider pavement than Silver Street.
- That the South Street rank no longer be retained on safety grounds as it was near the brow of the hill and that side of the road was often full up of vehicles accessing the day centre. Its removal would aid visibility and traffic flow.
- That the Hendford rank no longer be retained on safety grounds as that part of

the road was pedestrianised.

The Committee discussed the merits of the proposals for the Yeovil Refresh scheme, the recommendations before them, and the suggestions made by the Yeovil member which they unanimously supported. They acknowledged that, not having been part of the original proposals, the removal of the South Street and Hendford ranks would require further consultation.

Resolved:

To recommend the Executive:

1. Extinguish the Silver Street rank and relocate the provision to Princes Street.
2. Provide a new nighttime only rank in Stars Lane car park.
3. Remove the 2 car rank in Stars Lane.
4. Remove the rank in Middle Street, northeast of South Western Terrace junction.
5. Retain and amend the Old Station Road rank.
6. Retain the Earle Street rank.
7. Retain the South Street rank - But undertake further consultation for its removal on safety ground.
8. Retain the Hendford rank - But undertake further consultation for its removal on safety ground.

29 Minutes of the Licensing and Regulatory Sub-Committees - Agenda Item 6

The Committee **noted** that the minutes of the Licensing and Regulatory Sub-Committees held on 6 September 2023, 13 November 2023 (South – 10am), 13 November 2023 (North – 10am), 13 November 2023 (North – 11.15am), South – 12pm), 20 November 2023, 13 December 2023 and 19 December 2023 were confirmed as correct records.

Then, as members wished to discuss an exempt minute, the Committee went into a closed session.

Resolved:

The Public and Press were asked to leave the meeting while the item was being discussed because it involved the disclosure of information relating to an individual defined as exempt by paragraphs 1 & 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

Concerns were raised over a hearing involving a driver used by Transporting Somerset for school runs and the standard of training that they had been given. The

driver at the hearing had stated that their employer had provided no training and they had not been given the two leaflets that the School Transport Team indicated that they should have had.

The Licensing Officer confirmed:

- The issue had been flagged up with the School Transport Team.
- They were just starting, as a new unitary authority, to look at harmonising the training that they provided to hackney carriage and private hire drivers.
- Their safeguarding training had focused on the recognition of safeguard issues, exploitation and county lines.

Members, whilst acknowledging that all drivers would have to undergo a DBS check, felt that there was a need for appropriate training to be given to all drivers and that face to face training was their preferred method. Importantly, there was also a need for all training to be recorded. They agreed that there was a need to look at the training that was provided and to highlight their concerns with the Lead Member and the Scrutiny Committee.

Resolved:

To request that Licensing:

1. Bring a report back to the Committee on the harmonisation of the training that they provided to the taxi trade.
2. Raise the Committee's concerns over the training with the Lead Member for Transport and Digital.
3. To enquire if the training provided by the School Transport Team was something that could be added to the work programme for the Scrutiny – Children and Families Committee.

(The meeting ended at 3.35 pm)

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CHAIR