



RURAL, ECONOMIC & ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

8<sup>th</sup> June 2016

Present:

Councillor E. Hutchison (Chairman), T. Beaken, G.E Botterill, T. Culley, R. De Burle, L. Higgins, P. Posnett, M. Sheldon, J. Simpson.

Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods, Central Services Manager, Regulatory Service Manager, Administrative Assistant for Communities and Neighbourhoods.

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R1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Baguley and Councillor Orson.

R2. MINUTES

The public and exempt minutes from the 17<sup>th</sup> March 2016 were authorised to be signed by the Chairman as were the public minutes of the 9<sup>th</sup> March. It was decided that the exempt minutes of the 9<sup>th</sup> March would be discussed at the end of this meeting.

R3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Posnett declared a personal and prejudicial interest in any item involving the County Council by virtue of her being a County Councillor.

R4. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

There were no recommendations from other committees

R5. UPDATE ON DECISIONS

The update on decisions was noted by the committee.

R6. DELEGATION MATTERS SUBJECT TO CONSULTATION WITH CHAIRMAN (OR VICE CHAIRMAN IN ABSENCE)

**RESOLVED** that the Chief Executives report was noted by the committee.

R7. RECONSTITUTE TASK GROUP

The Chairman looked for nominations for the Waste Task group.

After discussion about the terms of reference of the task group the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods clarified that a task group is not a decision making group and that the terms of reference can be agreed on the first meeting of the task group, unless there was a major deviation from the original waste group Task group ToR and then it would need to come back to this Committee for approval.

**RESOLVED** that the Members of the task groups are Councillor Orson, Sheldon, Botterill, DeBurle, Culley and Hutchison.

R8. **HACKEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY**

The Head of Regulatory Services submitted a report to invite Members to consider and approve a new Hackney Carriage and Private Hire policy.

The Regulatory Service Manager stated that the Licensing Policy has been renewed and updated as is advised on a regular basis.

The Regulatory Service Manager told Members that the comments received and officers responses are outlined in Appendix A and changes to the policy where highlighted in red on Appendix B

The Regulatory Services Manager drew Members attention to Appendix A and the comments that were made by the Melton Mowbray Taxi Drivers Association.

A discussion took place in reference to taxis charging for unoccupied journeys. Members were in favour of allowing drivers to transport goods rather than just passengers.

The meeting was suspended

The meeting was re-convened.

Discussion took place about whether the policy should state that a fire extinguisher should be carried in each vehicle. A member stated that although it was advised that a taxi driver didn't tackle a fire in the vehicle, the fire extinguisher could be used to tackle fires outside the cars

**RESOLVED** that

- 1) The policy as amended following the formal consultation process for the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy be agreed
- 2) Delegated authority been given to the Head of Regulatory Services in consultation with the chair of this committee to amend the policy to state that it is advisable for fire extinguishers to be carried in line with legal advice.

R9. TAXI LICENSING FEES- RESULTS OF CONSULTATION

The Head of Regulatory Services submitted a report to consider further issues arising from the consideration of objections received to proposals to increase taxi licenses that were proposed by the committee on the 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

The Regulatory Services Manager briefly outlined the methodology and the Welsh authority model that had been used to calculate the costs and drew member's attention to Summary of Consultation Responses in Appendix C.

It was noted by Members that the Melton Mowbray Taxi Drivers Association has commented that the new charge may be a burden for the drivers and the Melton Mowbray Taxi Drivers Association proposal for delaying the introduction of the charge until the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2016 was also noted.

A Member stated that the Council cannot afford to continually subsidise this service.

Members discussed the option of license holders paying in instalments. It was noted that this would increase the admin processes and may cause enforcement or compliance issues that would over time increase the license fee.

The Regulatory Service Manager stated that these delays in the introduction of increase license prices were not the case for other licenses issued by the council. It was also noted that the 15/16 taxi licensing fees only came into effect on the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2016.

A Member stated that she was pleased that the consultation had taken place to increase communication between the council and Melton Mowbray Taxi Drivers Association.

**RESOLVED** that

- 1) The separate accounts produced for 2015/16 for taxi vehicle, driver and operators licenses be noted
- 2) The level of fees set out in Appendix B be approved, with effect from 13<sup>th</sup> June 2016.

R10. MELTON FOOD ENTERPRISE ZONE: CONSIDERATION OF REPRESENTATIONS ON THE 'LOCAL DEVELOPMENT ORDER'

The Head of Regulatory Services to submit a report inviting Members to consider representations made to the draft 'Local Development Order' in its connection,

following its approval for consultation at the meeting of this committee on the 17<sup>th</sup> March 2016.

The Regulatory Services Manager brought Members attention to Appendix A, the comments and amendments from the consultation indicated in red.

The Regulatory Services Manager stated that the LDO should be in place in 2 years and the policy aims to stimulate economic growth and result in revenue from increased commercial floor space.

Discussion took place around the wording of criteria on page 5 of the draft policy. The Regulatory Service Manager reassured Members that the policy will be reviewed after 2 years and can be reviewed in the meantime if problems occur.

A Member drew attention to Appendix B regarding the Green Infrastructure and backed the consultants suggestion.

The Regulatory Services Manager explained that the aspiration was that the LDO was a light touch planning document that is easy to understand in its precision.

Members agreed that this is a very progressive document and welcomed the order.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Sheldon and seconded by Councillor Posnett

**RESOLVED** that the 'Local Development Order' with amendments be agreed and pursued in accordance with the content of Appendix A, for adoption with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2016 for an initial period of 2 years.

#### R11. PURPLE FLAG APPLICATION

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report to advise Members on the Purple Flag Application and ask for their support and approval.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods outlined the key issues and background of the purple flag accreditation. The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods stated that the accreditation takes into account elements such as the street scene environment, vibrancy of the night-time economy and the safety of the town.

Members showed support of the application and agreed that this would have a positive effect on the economy of the town.

A member stated that more work on the town centre car parking needed to be done and that it may be beneficial to look at more opportunities to implement the 'Free after 3' initiative or parking charge to stop at 5pm in line with Purple Flag

evening guidelines . The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods stated that these would be looked at within the car parking reports coming back to this committee.

Discussions took place regarding items of business going to the Town Centre Committee before being brought to relevant committees with recommendations.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Sheldon and seconded by Councillor Culley.

**RESOLVED** that the Purple Flag application be supported and approved.

R12. **URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no urgent business items.

R13. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED** that the Public be excluded during the consideration of the following item(s) of business in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (Access to Information: Exempt Information under Paragraphs 1 and 2.

Councillor Posnett left the meeting due to an interest in the item being referred to in the discussion on the exempt minutes.

Councillor Higgins left the meeting.

R14. **EXEMPT MINUTES- 9<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2016**

A member stated that he did not feel that para R70 of the exempt minutes of the 9<sup>th</sup> March 2016 were an accurate representation of what was discussed at the meeting. He stated that the minutes did not cover what was in the report and that the minutes were not representative of the details and options highlighted in the report..

A member also stated that she had made an observation in regards to the Food Enterprise Zone during the meeting of the 9<sup>th</sup> March 2016 which had not been included in the minutes

**RESOLVED** the exempt minutes of the 9<sup>th</sup> March be re-examined by the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods and reported back to the next meeting of this Committee.

The meeting that started at 6:30pm finished at 7:52pm.

Chairman