

REIGATE AND BANSTEAD BOROUGH COUNCIL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HACKNEY CARRIAGES SCRUTINY REVIEW PANEL

15 JULY 2004

Held at 6.30 p.m. in the Back Committee Room at the Town Hall, Reigate

Present: Councillor J.H. Prevett (Chairman), Councillors Mrs. N.J. Bramhall, T.A. Breen, R.M Bennett and G.L. Norman

Also present: Councillor A.J. Kay, Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Transport

Officers in support: Ian Tucker, Head of Environmental Health;
Di Mitchell, Licensing Manager; and
Kate Roffey, Licensing Officer
David Hurdle, Transport Consultant
Chris Phelan, Scrutiny Support Officer.

1. CHAIRMAN OF THE SCRUTINY PANEL

It was noted that Councillor J.H. Prevett had been appointed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as the Chairman of the Panel.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTES

None

3. REMIT, BACKGROUND AND WORKING ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE PANEL

The Panel received a report setting out the background to the current phase of the review and its remit, which was noted as follows:

- (i) To undertake a review of hackney carriage rank provision;
- (ii) To undertake a review of all policies and conditions relating to hackney carriage vehicles and drivers, and private hire vehicles, drivers and operators, including consultation with the trade; and
- (iii) to consider the conditions to be imposed in respect of any additional hackney carriage vehicle licences issued, i.e. licence nos.76 or higher.

The Panel considered the timetable to undertake the review and agreed that the consultation should take place for 6 weeks starting in August and that the Panel's work should be completed in time to report its recommendations to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 17 November and the Executive on 8 December 2004.

Corporate Governance issues

The Panel agreed the following operational arrangements for its work:

1. The early meetings of the Panel in considering the consultation papers should be closed meetings and on conclusion of the consultation when the Panel is considering the views received the meetings should be open to the press and public to attend;
2. The meetings should be held at 6.30pm at the Town Hall, Reigate;
3. Appropriate publicity arrangements should be made to advertise the meetings being open to the press and public;
4. The following elements of the work would be held open for future consideration by the Panel to determine as it requires:
 - receipt of evidence;
 - Co-Option of appropriate specialists to advise the Panel;
 - any additional information required to undertake the Review;
 - a mechanism of taking questions/statements from community members at its meetings;
 - witnesses to present evidence and answer questions;
 - overall scope of the questions to be put to witnesses

4. REVIEW OF TAXI RANK PROVISION

David Hurdle, Transport Consultant presented the report which he had undertaken to review the provision of taxi ranks in the Borough.

The Panel agreed the report for consultation purposes and authorised officers to progress with the next stages of consultation. The Panel asked that Pubwatch be added to the list of consultees together with others that emerge.

When the consultation questionnaires/letters are available they would be sent to the Panel members. As one of the questions to address in the review the Panel would be interested to know the trade's view on the proposed location of ranks.

5. REVIEW OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE – BYELAWS, POLICY AND CONDITIONS

Kate Roffey, Licensing Officer presented the existing conditions that are applied for Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles for vehicles, drivers and operators. An analysis had been undertaken on the conditions to seek to make improvements that will add to public safety for the use of the service.

The Panel considered the proposed changes to the conditions that had been put forward for consultation purposes.

The Panel agreed that the proposed changes to the conditions should be used as the basis for the consultation. This would be with all operators in the trade and be undertaken through letter, questionnaire, website and trade meetings.

Members indicated that they would like the consultation to indicate that representatives could attend the Panel to make their case (up to 15 minutes followed by questions).

6. **DATE OF THE NEXT AND FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE PANEL**

The next meeting would be held at 6.30pm on 30 September to consider the outcome of the consultation and a further meeting at 6.30pm on 7 October to consider any specific hearings from the trade arising from the consultation.

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