

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor David Munro (Chair) and Councillors Juliet Barker Smith, Brandon Clayton, Matthew Dormer, Sharon Harvey, Sid Khan, Gary Slim, Jen Snape, Ian Woodall and Paul Wren

Officers:

Michelle James and Vanessa Brown

Democratic Services Officers:

Gavin Day

29. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Monica Stringfellow with Councillor Ian Woodall in attendance as substitute.

Apologies were also received from Councillor Sachin Mathur.

30. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

31. PUBLIC SPEAKING

There was no public speaking.

32. RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION ON MANDATORY SAFEGUARDING REFRESHER TRAINING FOR TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE DRIVERS - THIS ITEM HAS BEEN DEFERRED TO A FUTURE MEETING OF THE LICENCING COMMITTEE.

The Chair announced that Agenda item 4 (Minute No32) had been deferred to a future meeting of the licencing Committee due to some inaccuracies in the report and that a new report will be circulated to Members in the agenda to be considered at that meeting.

33. REPORT ON PRIMATE LICENCING

The Interim Principal Licensing Officer, Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS), presented the report to Members. The purpose of the report was for Members to note the report and recommend to Council that the applicable Fees and charges are set.

Officers detailed that in March 2024, The Animal Welfare (Primate Licences) (England) Regulations 2024 was made, due to go into effect from 6th April 2025 and being enforceable from 6th April 2026.

As the regulation was determined by central government, a consultation was not required by Local Authorities and therefore members were asked to note the report and Recommend to Council that the applicable licence fees were set.

Officers detailed that from information provided by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA), approximately 5000 primates were being kept privately within Britain, the most common of which being Marmosets, Tamarins and Squirrel Monkeys.

During 2019 following manifesto commitments, a call for evidence was undertaken which found that 98.7% of respondents expressed support for the ban of keeping, selling, breeding or otherwise transferring ownership of Primates unless appropriately licenced. It was further detailed that there was strong support for any licence holder being required to maintain their care to "Zoo Level Standards".

In 2023 the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) were consulted on introducing a licencing regime and on 5th March 2024, Animal Welfare (Primate Licences) (England) Regulations 2024 were made under section 13 of the Animal Welfare Act 2006.

Officers detailed that the regime would come into effect on 6th April 2025 and it would be illegal to own a primate without an appropriate licence from 6th April 2026.

The legislation did not detail the level of qualification which inspectors had to attain, nor clarify if further training was required. WRS would be monitoring this detail and would act accordingly when new information was available.

A web page had been implemented by WRS to inform the public of the new legislation, Officers commented that it would be difficult to identify private owners of primates but that they were relying on information provided by Members of the public, however, they would

also contact veterinary practices which may be aware of owners who they have assisted previously.

After questions from Members, the following was clarified:

- No guidance had been given as to what would happen to Primates whose owners did not intend to pursue attaining a licence.
- That a licence would have a maximum duration of 3 years before expiry when it needed to be renewed.
- Fees were a best estimate, based on current fee amounts. Should it cost more than expected to undertake the work, an amendment would be put forward by WRS to the relevant body to adjust the fees.
- That inspections would be undertaken at random, it was detailed that an inspection would be undertaken at the start/renewal of the licence and it was intended for there to be one unannounced inspection during its 2 or 3 year duration.

Members were generally in support of the regulation of keeping Primates and that it would promote safe keeping and handling. It was noted that more random inspections to maintain standards would be preferred, however, Members appreciated that the guidance was determined within the legislation.

On being put to a vote it was:

RESOLVED that

- The contents of the report be noted.**
- The fees applicable to Primate Keeper Licence applications, as detailed under section 3.28 on page 28 of the Supplementary Agenda pack be recommend to Council.**

34. UPDATE ON THE VIABILITY OF ALTERNATIVE TESTING STATIONS

Officers detailed that the agenda item had been added onto the work programme for 14th July 2025. Officers' apologised for the delay in submitting a report but due to key Officer changes within WRS some of the information had been delayed.

35. WORK PROGRAMME

Following Questions from Members, Officers detailed that the item marked as having no set date **"CCTV in Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles"** would be put on the work programme

following Officer discussions and that a date will be set before the meeting in July.

Officers also detailed that there would be an additional meeting to consider the deferred item “**responses to consultation on mandatory safeguarding refresher training for taxi and private hire drivers.**”. Additionally, following consultation with the Redditch Taxi Association (RTA), support has been expressed by the association for an increase in Hackney Carriage fares, therefore, Officers would also bring “**Annual review of Hackney Carriage table of fares**” to that meeting.

36. MINUTES

The Public and Private minutes of the Licensing Committee of 18th November 2024 were presented to Members.

RESOLVED that

The minutes of the Licensing Committee held on the 18th November 2024 were approved as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.

37. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED that

Under S100 A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, the public were excluded on the grounds of the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 of the said act, as amended.

38. OFFICER UPDATE(S) - ENFORCEMENT AND APPEAL MATTERS

Restricted Minutes.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 7.55 pm