

MINUTES

Present:

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

Officers:

Kiran Lahel, Hazel Powell and Vanessa Brown

Democratic Services Officers:

Gavin Day

10. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Juma Begum with Councillor Sharon Harvey in attendance as substitute.

Apologies were also received from councillor Sachin Mathur.

11. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

12. PUBLIC SPEAKING

There was no public speaking

13. DELEGATION OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES OUTSIDE OF POLICY DUE TO AGE. RESPONSES RECEIVED TO THE 6 WEEK CONSULTATION.

The Licencing and Support Services Manager, Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS), presented the report to Members.

The purpose of the report was for Members to consider the consultation responses and to resolve whether to proceed with the actions required to permanently delegate authority to officers to determine applications for licences to use vehicles as hackney carriages or private hire vehicles where the vehicle does not meet the Council's required criteria in respect of the age of the vehicle.

Chair

Officers drew Members attention to the table at 3.7 on page 7 of the Public Documents pack and detailed that of the 47 responders 74.47% were in Favor of delegating decision making to Licencing Officers. Additionally, it was further noted that there was a good response to the survey and Officers were content with the validity of the result.

The comments made by consultees were found on pages 11 to 17 of the Public Reports pack, Officers noted that although some of the comments were very unfavourable to Members, they believed that it was only suitable for all the responses to be shown to give Members an overview of the consultation feedback.

Officers clarified that as per the consultation criteria, the delegation would only be for vehicle renewals which were outside of the age criteria. Additionally, Officers further clarified that the next step would be a recommendation to the Constitutional Review Working Party group who would then Recommend the item on to full Council for a determination.

Members drew officers' attention to the comments in regard to reversing the milage on vehicles before a safety inspection and some of the other responses and asked if Officers could reach out to investigate the issues. Officers replied that the consultation was an anonymous exercise and therefore, it was not possible to identify the individual to approach them for more information.

Members commented that although they initially had some reservations with regard to the delegation, the trade appeared to be generally in favour of the change and that Licencing Officers and the Vehicle Safety Engineer were best suited to review those applications. Therefore, on being put to a vote it was

RESOLVED that

It be recommended to the Constitutional Review Working Party that authority be delegated to officers to determine renewal applications for licences to use vehicles as hackney carriages or private hire vehicles where the vehicle does not meet the Council's required criteria in respect of the age of the vehicle

14. UPDATE ON THE WORK AT CROSSGATES.

The Principal Licensing Officer, Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS), presented the report to Members. The purpose of the report was to update Members on work progressing at the Crossgates depot.

Officers detailed that following the discussion from the last Licencing Parent Committee, Members expressed a desire to seek feedback from drivers regarding the work at Crossgates to identify any potential shortcoming in the service. Information would also been sought on the testing timeslots to assess their viability, and a feedback form would come into effect in January 2026.

The Assistant Director for Environmental and Housing Property Services and the Taxi Engineers at Crossgates had been consulted and were in support of offering a written feedback form which drivers could complete and post in a secure box at the depot or return the form via the post to Licencing Officers at WRS.

It was further detailed that the decision had been taken to use a written feedback form to make it more accessible to drivers so as not to exclude those who were not as technically adept.

Members expressed the opinion that some drivers may not feel that it was anonymous leaving the feedback for in a box which could limit the number of genuine responses that were received. It was proposed that an online questionnaire could be a better solution as a driver could scan a QR code and then fill it in outside of the depot. After some debate regarding the best method to use, Officers agreed to investigate the viability of utilising both methods together to permit a greater number of drivers to respond.

The report was noted by Members.

15. WORK PROGRAMME

Members noted a typographical error in the Work programme in that the next meeting was due on the 9th March 2025 and not the 8th.

Officers noted that the annual review of the table of Fares needed to be added to the work Programme for the meeting on the 9th March 2025.

16. 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.

17. MINUTES

The PUBLIC and PRIVATE minutes of the Licensing Committee meeting of 6th October 2025 were presented to Members.

RESOLVED that

The minutes of the Licensing Committee meeting held on 6th October 2025 be approved as true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.

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

Restricted Minutes

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 7.45 pm