

Minute of Meeting



General Purposes Committee

Date	Time	Venue
8 October 2019	10.05 am	Council Chamber, Midlothian House, Buccleuch Street, Dalkeith

Present:

Councillor Smaill (Chair)	Councillor Alexander
Councillor Cassidy	Councillor Curran
Councillor Hackett	Councillor Hardie
Councillor Imrie	Councillor Johnstone
Councillor Lay-Douglas	Councillor Milligan
Councillor Muirhead	Councillor Munro
Councillor Russell	

In attendance:

Alan Turpie, Legal Services Manager	Verona MacDonald, Democratic Services Team Leader
Inspector E. Smith, Police Scotland	

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received for Councillors Baird, McCall, Parry, Wallace and Winchester.

2. Order of Business

The order of business was as set out on the Agenda together with an additional item raised under Item 5.

3. Declarations of interest

Councillor Curran indicated he would be declaring an interest in the applications on the agenda relating to private hire and taxis on the basis of his business interests in the taxi trade.

4. Minutes of Meetings

Following consideration, the full Minutes of Meetings held on 27 August and 2 September 2019 were unanimously approved and the Chair was authorised to sign them as correct records of the meetings.

Sederunt: Councillor Curran, having previously intimated a declaration of interest, left the meeting at 10.07 am and did not return.

5. Public Reports

Private Hire Cars – Passenger Capacity – Report by Legal Services Manager

The Chair advised he had acceded to a request from the Legal Services Manager for a report not included on the agenda circulated to be considered by the Committee. He further referred Members to the report entitled “Private Hire Cars – Passenger Capacity” circulated separately. The Legal Services Manager spoke to the terms of the report which advised of a change at the Taxi Examination Centre regarding the calculation of passenger capacity numbers for private hire cars. He suggested the Committee may wish to invite the Taxi Examiner to meet them to discuss the matter further.

Councillor Milligan advised that as a result of the change imposed by the Taxi Examiner, Private Hire Association members had experienced newer models of the same vehicle failing the capacity test whereas older models passed. He also mentioned other changes which he understood had been implemented at the Taxi Examination Centre without consultation and/or approval by the Council. He stated that prior to any change being implemented which affected the standard conditions attached to licences, a report required to be considered by the Committee and subsequently approved.

Inspector Smith in noting the standard conditions were often silent with regard to matters relating to vehicle testing, advised the Taxi Examiner would adhere to the conditions in City of Edinburgh and West Lothian which were more specific. He stated that the Committee was aware the standard conditions applicable to vehicles licensed by Midlothian required to be updated.

Thereafter, it was unanimously agreed to invite the Taxi Examiner to attend the next meeting of the Committee.

The Legal Services Manager, with regard to progress in relation to revising the standard conditions, advised he hoped to bring drafts before the next meeting of the Committee. Following a short discussion, it was unanimously agreed to meet with the Taxi Examiner prior to considering and reviewing the standard conditions.

Exclusion of Members of the Public

In view of the nature of the business to be transacted, the Committee agreed that the public be excluded from the meeting during discussion of the undernoted item, as contained in the Addendum hereto, as there might be disclosed exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3, 6 and 14 of Part I of Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973:-

- 6.1 Application for a Private Hire Car Driver Licence – G. Black
- 6.2 Application for a Private Hire Car Driver Licence – J. Kay
- 6.3 Application for a Private Hire Car Driver Licence – E. Reynolds

The meeting terminated at 11.00 am