

**LICENSING COMMITTEE held at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD
SAFFRON WALDEN at 6.30 pm on 5 NOVEMBER 2003**

Present:- Councillor M J Savage – Chairman
Councillors R K Artus, H D Baker, A Dean, E W Hicks,
B M Hughes, V J T Lelliot , J P Murphy and A R Row.

Officers in attendance:- J Harrison, R Kirmani, R Secker and G Smith.

LC8 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Marchant

LC9 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 10 September 2003 were received, confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

LC10 REFORM OF LICENSING LAWS

The Principal Environmental Health Officer informed the Members that further to the report to the Committee on 10 September 2003, this revised draft had incorporated Members' comments and was again submitted for their consideration. This revised copy of the draft Licensing Policy had been jointly produced by the Essex Licensing Group. A final draft could not be produced until the Government approved and published the regulations and the guidance. It was anticipated that there would be some slippage in the implementation dates by at least one month.

Members discussed the Draft Statement (version 5) of Licensing Policy at length and it was

RESOLVED that

- 1 the draft (revised version 5) be approved and accepted;
- 2 any major changes brought about by the Government's final approval in November to be submitted to this Committee for approval.

LC11 HACKNEY CARRIAGES AND PRIVATE HIRE FEES

The Head of Environmental Services advised the Committee on the Council's review of the process involved in the Council's recent increase in Hackney Carriage and private hire fees. It was noted that the fees increase was still below the Essex average. The Council had no other option than to increase the fees as these services were based on a full cost recovery basis.

The Committee was also informed that some drivers had expressed an intention to form an Uttlesford Hackney Carriage Drivers Association although

there already existed the Uttlesford Taxi Drivers Association, which had membership of both Hackney Carriages and Private Hire sections of the Trade.

RESOLVED that

- 1 the report be noted,
- 2 the officers to liaise with any properly constituted association representing Hackney Carriages and/or Private Hire drivers/operators across the District.

LC12

ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

(i) Question Time at the Start of Meeting

The Chairman agreed to consider this item under any other urgent business as the matter was causing concern and had been raised in a letter received shortly before the meeting.

The Members considered the various aspects of allowing public speaking time at the start of this meeting. Members agreed that several issues were involved as this Committee had to deal with various types of licences and different standards applied to each type of licence.

RESOLVED that a report be submitted on the effect of allowing 15 minutes for public question time at the start of the Licensing Committee meetings.

(ii) Start Time of Meetings

The Chair certified this item as urgent as a decision was required before the next meeting. Some Members expressed concern that they were unable to attend meetings at an early start time of 6.30pm.

The Head of Environmental Services informed the Members that early start time was useful as the Committee was required to consider individual licensing applications. The Committee allocated at least 40 minutes for the determination of each licensing case.

RESOLVED that the meeting of this Committee would start at 6.30pm whenever individual licensing applications would be discussed and other meetings could start at 7.30pm where policy issues would be considered.

LC13

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on Tuesday 9 December 2003 at 6.30pm.

The meeting ended at 7.50 pm Page 2