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North Yorkshire County Council

Transition (LGR) Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 14th December, 2022 commencing at 1.30 pm.

County Councillor Malcolm Taylor in the Chair, plus County Councillors Philip Broadbank, Nick Brown, Caroline Dickinson, Kevin Foster, Richard Foster, Bryn Griffiths, George Jabbour, Heather Moorhouse, Andy Paraskos (Substitute), Clive Pearson and John Ritchie.

Officers present: Dean Henderson - Head of Safer Communities, Harrogate BC; Sharon Cousins - Licensing Manager, Selby DC; Mark Heaton - Senior Licensing Officer, Ryedale DC; Will Baines

Apologies: County Councillors Andrew Lee, John Mann, Stuart Parsons and Kirsty Poskitt.

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

18 Welcome and Apologies

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were received from County Councillors Lee, Mann (substitute County Councillor Andy Paraskos), Poskitt and Parsons.

19 Minutes of the Meeting held on 9 November 2022

Resolved -

That the minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2022, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and confirmed by the Chairman as a correct record.

20 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

21 Public Questions or Statements

There were no public questions or statements.

22 Consultation of Draft Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy

Considered – Presentation of Dean Henderson, Head of Safer Communities, Harrogate BC, Sharon Cousins, Licensing Manager, Selby DC and Mark Heaton, Senior Licensing Officer, Ryedale DC.

Some of the key points highlighted in the presentation are as summarised below:

- The aim of the Licensing workstream has been to ensure that the new administrative area has a safe and legal licensing service at the commencement of the new council and fulfils its statutory duties.

- The draft policy currently out to public consultation has been put together in conjunction with the member working group, which included councillors from across the county who have lots of experience sitting on Licensing Committees
- It is hoped that by mid-February, the policy will go to the NYCC Executive and then onto the County Council for approval.
- The new policy will create one single hackney carriage zone for the whole of North Yorkshire, aiming to increase the availability of hackney carriages and customer choice. The single zone will provide consistency for the public and will assist in reducing dead mileage for drivers.
- Evidence from other unitary authorities indicates that any swamping of areas is likely to level out over time as market forces take effect and supply flexes to meet demand, ultimately providing a better service for users.
- An open market approach should increase the availability of wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAVs) and help maintain a mixed fleet.

There followed a discussion, the key points of which are summarised below:

- Following a concern about the ten-year vehicle limit for renewal applications set out in the draft policy, it was noted that this may be able to be looked out again in the future by the Licensing sub-committee.
- A query was raised about the standards required for executive vehicles and the requirements for the wearing of seatbelts.
- The consideration of fees and charges for hackney and private hire vehicles will be considered separately to the policy decision.
- It was asked why the mandatory installation of CCTV cameras in vehicles is not included in the draft policy.
- The requirements for a practical driving assessment and what a North Yorkshire local knowledge test for new drivers would look like for applicants.

Following this, a snapshot of the consultation responses received to date was given to members.

Resolved – That the presentation be noted.

23 LGR Discussion and Future Committee Priorities

Considered.

The committee held a general discussion about Local Government Reorganisation progress and future priorities.

In the conversation that took place, it was acknowledged that the initial priority was to achieve 'safe and legal' at day 1 of the new council, ahead of any major service transformation and cost savings.

A number of topics were put forward as suggestions to be considered by the committee at future meetings, these were to be taken up with the directorates concerned.

24 Work Programme

Considered –

A report by Will Baines, Principal Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer, outlining the committee work programme.

Will Baines introduced the report and asked that Members review the committee's work programme, taking into account the outcome of discussions on previous agenda items and any other developments in relation to Local Government Organisation.

Resolved – That the committee work programme be noted.

25 Other business which the Chair agrees should be considered as a matter of urgency because of special circumstances

There was no other business.

The meeting concluded at 2.50 pm.

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