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**BRECKLAND COUNCIL**

**At a Meeting of the**

**LICENSING COMMITTEE**

**Held on Wednesday, 22 November 2017 at 10.00 am in  
Norfolk Room, The Conference Suite, Elizabeth House, Dereham**

**PRESENT**

Councillor M. Chapman-Allen (Chairman)	Mrs J. Hollis
Mr K. Martin (Vice-Chairman)	Mrs S.M. Matthews
Councillor C Bowes	Mr T. F. C. Monument
Mr M. P. Brindle	Mr W. R. J. Richmond
Mr P. R. W. Darby	Mr F.J. Sharpe
Mr K.S. Gilbert	

**In Attendance**

Donna Hall	- Licensing & Business Support Manager
Julie Britton	- Democratic Services Officer
Melanie Rushmore	- Assistant Licensing Officer

**Action By**

**17/17 MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 1)**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2017 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**18/17 APOLOGIES (AGENDA ITEM 2)**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Askew, Millbank and L. Monument.

**19/17 URGENT BUSINESS (AGENDA ITEM 3)**

None.

**20/17 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS (AGENDA ITEM 4)**

None.

**21/17 NON-MEMBERS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE MEETING (AGENDA  
ITEM 5)**

None.

**22/17 TAXI LICENSING AND THE EQUALITY ACT 2010 (AGENDA ITEM 6)**

Members were reminded that the decision to implement the provisions of Section 165, 166 and 167 of the Equality Act 2010 had been deferred from the previous meeting in March 2017 for further consideration.

**Action By**

The provisions contained in the Act were highlighted. It was noted that these provisions allowed a Licensing authority to create a list of “designated vehicles” – vehicles that were capable of carrying passengers in wheelchairs (section 167) and then required drivers of those vehicles to provide mobility assistance (Section 165). Members were informed that there had been quite a number of FOI requests nationally on this matter and a great deal of Local Authorities had already adopted such a list. The Department for Transport often contacted the Licensing Team offering guidance and was keen for Breckland to produce and adopt a list of designated vehicles.

If Members’ were mindful to approve the recommendation, such a list could be created following consultation with the owners of the vehicles. The drivers of those vehicles would also be made aware of their responsibilities and apply for medical exemption if necessary.

The list would then be published on the Council’s website.

In response to a question as to whether it was voluntary to be added to the list, Members were informed that if the vehicle was suitable to carry wheelchairs it would automatically be added to the list and would be an offence for a licensed driver on the designated list, unless exempt, to fail to comply with these duties. The exemptions were highlighted.

Councillor Monument asked if drivers could charge extra for this service. The Licensing & Business Support Manager explained that drivers could not and any complaints about charges for this service would be investigated.

The Chairman asked if the Licensing Team had received any complaints from wheelchairs users since the last meeting in March. Members were informed that no complaints had been received as most drivers already provided such assistance.

Councillor Brindle asked if the Licensing Team had a list of vehicles available that could carry wheelchairs as he had received a complaint from a constituent who had trouble finding one. The Licensing & Business Support Manager advised that there were not many in the Breckland area; in fact, there were only ten that she would consider to be wheelchair friendly and only six of those were hackney carriages. She pointed out that many authorities had their own Policies stating that a certain type of licensed vehicle had to have access for wheelchairs. This could be something that Breckland could consider.

Councillor Darby felt that if a company had more than a certain number of vehicles a provision should be made that one of them had to be wheelchair accessible. The Chairman felt that this would be difficult to enforce.

The Licensing & Business Support Manager suggested that this could be considered as part of the Policy and could be updated accordingly.

**RESOLVED** that the decision to implement the provisions under Section 165, 166 and 167 of the Equality Act 2010 be approved.

**Action By**

**23/17 LICENSING ACTIVITIES AND NEWS UPDATE (AGENDA ITEM 7)**

All taxi policy and procedures were being reviewed; Members would be contacted by email accordingly.

The dates of all Town Council meetings would be provided to allow the Licensing Team a wider consultation.

The meeting closed at 11.15 am

CHAIRMAN