

GENERAL PURPOSES BOARD – 11 NOVEMBER 2015

General Purposes Board

Wednesday 11 November 2015 at 3.00 pm

Present: Councillors Ahlfeld, Brennan, Brooks, Campbell-Sturgess, Loughran, McColgan, McIlwee, McCormick, Shepherd and Rebecchi.

Chair: Councillor Brennan presided.

In attendance: Mr J Douglas (for Head of Legal & Property Services); Mr J Bradley (for Head of Environmental & Commercial Services), Inspector D Kane and Sergeant J Curran, Police Scotland.

The following paragraphs are submitted for information only, having been dealt with under the powers delegated to the Board.

739 Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest 739

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillor Grieve, Councillor Jones with Councillor Shepherd substituting and Councillor Dorrian, with Councillor McCormick substituting.

Councillor McIlwee declared an interest in Agenda Item 5 (Request for Suspension of Taxi Driver Licence – Kevin Porteous).

740 Mandatory Training of Taxi Drivers 740

There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal & Property Services requesting the Board to consider introducing mandatory training of taxi drivers.

Mr Douglas advised on the background to the report and informed Members of the outcome of the consultation process.

Following discussion, Councillor Campbell-Sturgess moved that it be remitted to the Head of Legal & Property Services to report further to the Board at a later date to allow officers to investigate training facilities and costs and to carry out further consultation relative to multi access vehicle drivers.

Decided: that the item be continued to allow officers to prepare a report into requiring drivers of wheelchair accessible vehicles to undertake a mandatory training course on how to move and handle disabled passengers and how that might be funded.

741 Licenced Vehicle Engine Capacity 741

There was submitted a report by the Head of Environmental & Commercial Services requesting the Board to consider the modification of guidelines for vehicles to be issued as Taxis or Private Hire.

Mr J Bradley advised on the background to the report and informed Members that the Taxi Trade supported the recommendation.

Decided: that it be agreed to modify the guidelines for vehicles to be used as Taxis or Private Hire as detailed in the report.

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It was agreed in terms of Section 50(A)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 as amended that the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items on the grounds that the business involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 6 of Part I of Schedule 7(A) of the Act.

742 Request for Suspension of a Taxi Driver Licence – John Eardley 742

There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal & Property Services requesting the Board to consider the suspension of Mr Eardley's taxi driver licence which expires on 31 January 2016 following a letter submitted by Police Scotland dated 22 September 2015.

Mr Eardley was present for this item.

Mr Douglas advised on the background to the report and informed Members that Mr Eardley's licence had not been suspended following receipt of Police Scotland's letter.

The Board heard Inspector Kane in support of Police Scotland's recommendation and Mr Eardley in support of his licence.

Decided: that Mr Eardley's taxi driver licence not be suspended.

743 Request for Suspension of a Taxi Driver Licence – Kevin Porteous 743

There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal & Property Services requesting the Board to consider the suspension of Mr Porteous' taxi driver licence which expires on 30 November 2015.

Councillor McIlwee declared a non-financial interest in this item as a relative of the applicant's representative and left the meeting.

Mr Porteous was present with his representative, Miss Lauren Reid, Solicitor, Robert Kerr Solicitors.

Mr Douglas advised the Board on the background to the immediate suspension.

The Board heard Inspector Kane in support of Police Scotland's recommendation and Miss Reid in support of Mr Porteous' fitness to continue to hold a licence.

Following discussion, Councillor Campbell-Sturgess moved that the suspension be upheld. As an amendment, Councillor Ahlfeld moved that the suspension be not upheld. On a vote, three Members voted for the motion and six for amendment which was declared carried.

Decided: that the decision of the Head of Legal & Property Services be not upheld and that the suspension of Mr Porteous' Taxi Driver Licence not be continued or imposed for any period of time.

Councillor McIlwee returned to the meeting following consideration of this item.

744 Application for Licence of House in Multiple Occupancy – FSL Properties Greenock Ltd 744

There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal & Property Services requesting the Board to consider an application for a House in Multiple Occupancy Licence by FSL Properties Greenock Limited following receipt of a public objection which had been continued from the previous meeting of the Board.

Mr Douglas advised on the background to the report.

The Board heard Mr David Adams, Solicitor, Messers Levy McRae, in support of the applicant.

Decided: that the application be approved in principle for further consideration of the Head of Legal & Property Services