

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE

HELD ON TUESDAY 10 JUNE 2008

Present: Councillor A. Napier (Chair)
Councillors R Crute, Mrs J Freak,
D Myers, Mrs A Naylor, G Patterson
F Shaw, R J Todd and P G Ward

Apology: Councillors Mrs E Huntington

1. **THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING** held on 20 May 2008, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were confirmed.
2. **AMENDMENTS TO THE COUNCIL'S CONDITIONS IN RESPECT OF HACKNEY CARRIAGES**

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Member for Health which sought to amend the Council's current conditions for Hackney Carriages in respect of door access for wheelchair accessible vehicles, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member

Members were advised that in February 2008 the specification for vehicles to be licensed as wheelchair accessible Hackney Carriages were approved. The Council's overall aim was to increase the number of Hackney Carriages that were capable of carrying wheelchair users whilst remaining in their wheelchair.

It had since been highlighted that the wording in the specification regarding the securing of the access doors to these vehicles was not sufficiently clear. This could result in vehicles, which would otherwise be compliant, not being able to be licensed as wheelchair accessible.

Details of the current wording of the condition were outlined in the report.

The wording had been interpreted literally as the doors being required to have a locking mechanism and not as intended the ability to be restrained at this angle and not being capable of being closed unless positive pressure was exerted. The strict application of the requirement to have 'lock and key' system prevented the majority of vehicles that were suitable for adaptation to accommodate passengers in their wheelchairs from being licensed within the district.

It had also been identified by the Council's Vehicle Inspector that in respect of twin rear doors it was sufficient if the doors opened to 90 degrees only.

In order to rectify the situation it was proposed to amend the wording of the condition details of which were outlined in the report.

RESOLVED that the proposed amendment to the conditions regarding rear access doors in wheelchair accessible Hackney Carriages be approved.

3. **ADDITIONAL URGENT ITEM OF BUSINESS**

In accordance with the Local Government Act, 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, Section 100B(4)(b) the Chair,

Executive – 10 JUNE 2008

following consultation with the Proper Officer, agreed that the following item of business, not shown on the Agenda, be considered as a matter of urgency.

4. EASINGTON COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP – STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT 2008 & PARTNERSHIP PLAN SUMMARY REPORT (AOB)

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Member for Liveability which gave details of the findings of the Community Safety Partnership's Strategic Assessment for 2008 and proposed interventions identified in the 2008/09 Partnership Plan, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Members were advised that the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 placed a statutory duty on Community Safety Partnerships to conduct an audit and produce a strategy on a 3 year rolling cycle. March 2008 saw the completion of the 2005/08 audit and strategy cycle.

In 2007 a review of the Crime and Disorder Act replaced the 3 year cycle with an annual Strategic Assessment and Partnership Plan. The Assessment identified priorities for action and the Plan set out interventions, which addressed those priorities.

Local Government Review would also affect the structure of Community Safety delivery in the district from 1 April 2009 as the statutory requirement was for a single Crime and Disorder Partnership for each local authority area i.e. one covering all of County Durham. A County Durham Community Safety Board had now been formed to oversee the transition to a single partnership body. This Board had developed a Community Safety Agreement for the county which was drawn together as a composite document from the district Strategic Assessments and Partnership Plans.

It was explained that when the 2005/08 Strategy was set the CSP was given a PSA target by Government Office North East to reduce BCS (British Crime Survey) Comparator Crime by 15% on the baseline year of 2003/04. This overall target was then underpinned by supporting targets set against each of the comparator crimes details of which were outlined in the report.

Overall performance had been good but heavily influenced by the adoption of national recording standards for wounding which resulted in large increases in recorded Woundings from 2005/06 onwards. The achieved reduction of 5% was increased to 14% when Wounding was removed from the equation.

There had been some notable successes within the offence categories with significant reductions in Common Assault (32%) Domestic Burglary (20%) and Thefts from Vehicles (44%). Criminal Damage had fallen only marginally (1%) but in April 2007 levels of Criminal Damage were 13% up on the base year. Area focussed action planning had supported a 14% reduction in Criminal Damage over the last 12 months.

Details of interventions that had supported the reduction in crime were outlined and include the following:-

- Operation Milkshake
- Eden Hill Criminal Damage Plan
- Youth Issues Forum
- Supporting Young People Programme

Executive – 10 JUNE 2008

Streetsafe Boards & Tasking & Co-ordinating meetings
Arson Reduction
Re-deployable CCTV
Parenting Programme
Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA)
Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)
Youth Outreach

The following priorities had been agreed by the Partnership for the 3 years 2008/11 and would be reviewed annually as part of the Strategic Assessment process.

- Tackling Anti Social Behaviour and Criminal Damage
- Reducing Drug, Substance and Alcohol Misuse
- Reducing Re-Offending
- Tackling Domestic Abuse

It was pointed out that targets had not yet been set as guidance was awaited from Government Office.

Details of the proposed interventions for 2008/09 for the four priorities were outlined in the report.

RESOLVED that the priorities outlined in the Strategic Assessment and the proposed interventions for 2008/09 be approved.

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