

## **DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL**

At a Meeting of **General Licensing and Registration Committee** held in Committee Room 2 - County Hall, Durham on **Thursday 19 January 2012 at 10.00 am**

### **Present:**

**Councillor C Carr (Chair)**

### **Members of the Committee:**

Councillors B Arthur (Vice-Chair), B Alderson, J Bailey, E Bell, J Blakey, D Bowman, D Boyes, D Brown, J Gray, D Marshall, P May, J Shiell, L Thomson, R Todd and J Wilkinson

### **Apologies:**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P Charlton, P Gittins, B Graham, K Holroyd, A Hopgood, J Hunter, J Lee, C Marshall, D Stoker, A Wright and M Williams

### **1 Declarations of Interest (if any)**

Councillor P May declared a personal but not prejudicial interest as he held a Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers Licence.

### **2 The Minutes of the Meeting held on 28 April 2011**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 28 April 2011 were agreed as a correct record and were signed by the Chair.

### **3 Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011**

Consideration was given to the joint report of Resources Corporate Management Team, Corporate Director, Resources and The Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Strategic Environment and Leisure in relation to the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 (for copy see file of Minutes).

The purpose of the report was to inform Members of the implications of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. Part 2 of the Act paved the way for a number of reforms to the Licensing Act 2003, under which Durham County Council had powers and duties as a licensing authority.

Members were advised that since the report had been circulated advice had been received that the timeframe for implementation of measures relating to Late Night Levy's and Early Morning Restriction Orders was expected to be Autumn 2012.

Details of the elements of the licensing regime which were affected as a result of the Act were set out in the report for information and Members discussed the impact of the proposed changes in detail.

## **RESOLVED**

That the contents of the report, be noted.

- 4 Such other business as, in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration.**

### **Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Drivers**

A Member referred to the standards required of hackney carriage/private hire drivers, particularly in relation to their knowledge of local areas.

De-regulation and the removal of zoning meant that taxi drivers could now operate across the County and applicants were often from outside the area which further emphasised the importance of local knowledge. Members were advised that all applicants were required to undertake a locality test which tested their knowledge of key areas and landmarks but it would be unreasonable to expect an extensive knowledge of all locations.

Whilst Members appreciated this they considered that the test should be stringent and asked that it be reviewed to ensure that applicants' knowledge was tested to a level where they should be able to identify key landmarks and areas within the County.

Following discussion it was **RESOLVED**

That Members be provided with a copy of the locality test and be invited to make any suggestions for improvement.