



REGULATORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Regulatory Committee held on Thursday 26 June 2025 at 7.00 pm in Council Chamber, Third Floor, Southwater One, Telford, TF3 4JG

Present: Councillors G H Cook (Vice-Chair), C Chikandamina, J Jones, N Page, R Tyrrell and P J Scott

In Attendance: J Clarke (Senior Democracy Officer (Democracy)), S Hardwick (Lead Lawyer: Litigation & Regulatory) and R Phillips (Registrars, Public Protection, Legal & Democracy Service Delivery Manager)

Apologies: Councillor I Preece, H Rhodes and K L Tomlinson

1 Declarations of Interest

None.

2 Terms of Reference

The Service Delivery Manager: Registrars, Public Protection, Legal & Democracy presented the Terms of Reference for the Licensing Committee for the 2025/26 Municipal Year.

The Council's Constitution required that Full Council should agree at its Annual Meeting the Terms of Reference for each of its committees to enable the Council to efficiently conduct its business.

At the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 15 May 2025, Full Council delegated authority to each Committee to review its own Terms of Reference. Also, at this meeting the Licensing Committee had been split into two Committees to have the effect that (1) the Licensing Committee would consider business as this related to the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005, and (2) the Regulatory Committee would consider business as this related to other legislation to include, but not limited to, that relating to taxis, street trading and animal boarding. There were no other changes to the Terms of Reference.

Upon being put to the vote it was, unanimously:

RESOLVED – that the Terms of Reference for the 2025/26 Municipal Year be approved.

3 Taxi Licensing Update



The Service Delivery Manager: Registrars, Public Protection, Legal & Democracy gave an update on the work of the Licensing Team in relation to the work in the remit of the Regulatory Committee.

In relation to taxis, the Council would grant a licence to a fit and proper person and could create conditions for taxi licence holders and operators. A driver was permitted to work anywhere if the private hire operator and driver were the same. The Council was committed to ensuring and maintaining high standards whilst doing what it could to bolster the numbers of drivers.

There were currently 390 drivers and 41 operators within the borough and the team was in conversation with operators to consider how to grow the fleet. This would benefit residents with more readily available taxis, but this needed to be balanced against high standards and safety.

Those Members that sat on the Committee during the previous municipal year would be aware of the approval of the restricted private hire licences and changes to the tint requirements, which reflected the efforts in relation to efficiency, safety and meeting the community needs in areas such as home to school transport.

Hackney Carriage licences had a distinct difference where they could be flagged down whereas private hire vehicles were restricted to pre-bookings only which was a key difference. Luckily, plying for hire did not happen very often but the Council was as tough as it could be when it occurred.

In terms of forthcoming work, the Council's Taxi Licensing Policy, which was approved on 1 April 2023, was due to be reviewed by 2026 and during the current municipal year Members would be asked to feed into and approve the revised Taxi Licensing Policy. The Licensing Team, together with Legal Services, would look at best practice guidance from the Department for Transport (DFT) and ensure that the Policy would align or diverge in order to meet safety requirements.

The Team was currently working to a five-day turnaround to issue a licence, once all of the relevant documents had been received, which was significantly more effective than other local authorities. It was hoped to get the message out to any drivers who were considering being licenced with the Council that their licence would be received in a timely manner.

In relation to ongoing enforcement, the Team had delegated authority to effect decisions about current drivers and during the last 12-month period, two licences had been revoked, one new application refused, and two drivers required as part of their review to attend a driver training course. Where there was a need to revoke, the Council would take action at the first opportunity.



There were currently two drivers appealing against the decision to revoke their licences within the Court system and the Committee would be kept updated.

The Council had successfully introduced a voluntary CCTV programme with CCTV initially being installed within 16 vehicles. Community Safety Partnership funding had been received, which enabled further installation of CCTV and once this had been completed there would be 46 vehicles containing CCTV active in the borough. The CCTV protected not only passengers but the drivers themselves. Where drivers were licensed within the borough they may qualify for CCTV being installed.

There was active partnership working taking place with the neighbouring authorities of South Staffordshire, Shropshire and Wolverhampton and work was taking place to agree taxi licensing protocols/best practice across the region. Public safety was at the heart of decision-making and information sharing took place to ensure confidence that the appropriate action was taken where necessary.

The Council had a dedicated Nighttime and Economy and Enforcement Team which undertook a number of operations across the year and included plying for hire operations. These operations were carried out in partnership with the Police who undertook checks on roadworthiness and driving licences. No Telford drivers had failed those tests, which demonstrated good compliance and adherence to the law. Those drivers who were stopped by the Police showed a good knowledge of what was and was not acceptable. There had been 57 complaints in relation to taxis, which covered a whole range of reasons and the two revocations had come from those investigations. A taxi marshal scheme was in place in various locations across the borough, which ensured the public were kept safe when licenced premises closed with taxi marshals being on hand to answer questions and ensure people got home safely.

In relation to scrap material, the Police undertook roadside checks in various locations across the borough. Where an unlicensed vehicle was found, a range of actions could be applied and enforcement powers could be utilised. It was asked that if Members or the public were aware of scrap vehicles collecting and there were concerns they were not licenced that a registration number was taken and reported to the Licensing Team. The Team would then investigate compliance and share any relevant information with the team and, where necessary, had the power to prosecute and to issue significant fines.

There were currently 52 street trading licences, which included burger vans and ice cream vans across the borough. Some traders had permission to work in more than one area and on more than one day. Work took place to



ensure that street traders did not cause a nuisance and ensure resident safety.

Within the borough, there were nine residential home sites and two touring sites. Annual inspections took place to ensure these sites fully complied with the conditions of licence. Where a referral was received, the Council engaged with the licence holders to ensure issues with residents could be resolved and were as proactive as possible in investigating referrals.

The focus for the 2025/26 Municipal Year was to continue promoting a mix of pre-planned activity including work around plying for hire and scrap metal operations and where there was non-compliance or any prosecutions the relevant communications would take place. Work would also continue to ensure that licenced vehicles and street traders were adhering to conditions and there was a balance of welcoming licence holders to the borough against public safety. Ongoing collaboration with neighbouring authorities would continue during the year and any consequences or benefits of the joined-up working would be reported to the Committee.

During the debate, some Members asked in relation to scrap metal collectors if they were allowed to shout out or make a noise and whether this was an offence. It was also asked for the best way to contact the team to report any issues with scrap metal collectors and if this could be conveyed to the public. Other Members asked if the issues with fly tipping could be related to unlicensed scrap metal dealers and what could be done to ensure people could find legitimate operators and what was the viability of an app to book collections with licensed scrap metal dealers. Where complaints had been reported to taxi companies, how did the Council know the complaints had been dealt with, and was there anything in the Policy to prevent drivers working when tired? In relation to Uber Taxis, how many Uber drivers were seeking a licence and were there any patterns of work?.

The Service Delivery Manager: Registrars, Public Protection, Legal & Democracy confirmed that a piece of work could be undertaken to ensure that the public knew who to contact should they wish to make a complaint. Where a registration number was provided, investigations would take place. In relation to fly tipping and licenced scrap dealers being made more prominent, he would take this away and look at what could be done.

In relation to issues with taxi drivers, it was asked that these were reported to the Council as well as the operators. If a driver was choosing to drive whilst tired, they were putting public safety at risk and it could be questioned whether they were a fit and proper person to hold a licence. Operators had a role to play and some of the larger companies blocked or limited drivers to access jobs when they had completed long hours. Uber drivers increased the number of drivers nationally significantly and allowed for people to pick up



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shifts, which was a positive. Uber was not currently licenced with the Council but there was a demand for better quality drivers across the country and in the borough. The Council would like to see more private hire drivers particularly in areas such as Southwater and The Gorge.

The report was for noting.

The meeting ended at 7.17 pm

Chairman: _____

Date: Monday 20 October 2025