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ENVIRONMENT AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

18 MARCH 2021

Present: Councillors Bishop (Chair), Cox (Vice Chair), Bacon, Marlow-Eastwood.

146. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies received from Councillor Roberts.

147. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

148. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 13th August 2020 be approved as a true record.

149. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ADDITIONAL URGENT ITEMS

None received.

150. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

Councillor Marlow-Eastwood proposed a motion to exclude the public, seconded by Councillor Cox.

RESOLVED – That the public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the items of business listed below because it is likely that, if members of the public were present, there would be disclosure to them of ‘exempt’ information as defined in the paragraphs of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

151. LICENSED DRIVER WITH EXCESS PENALTY POINTS. "FIT AND PROPER" TEST

The Licensing Lead Officer submitted a report to consider if the driver is a “fit and proper” person to continue holding a Hastings Borough Council Hackney Carriage/Private Hire dual driver’s licence as a result of getting 12 penalty points on his current licence.

In line with Hastings Borough Council’s disciplinary code, this meeting of the Environment and Safety Committee was called to determine if the applicant is a “Fit and Proper” person to hold a Hastings Borough Council Hackney Carriage/Private Hire driver’s licence.

The Licensing Lead Officer gave an overview of his report and answered questions from Committee members. The Committee were shown video evidence of the incident which resulted in 12 penalty points.

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The driver made a submission to the Committee and answered questions from Councillors and the Licensing Lead Officer.

RESOLVED (Unanimously):

The Environment and Safety Committee for and on behalf of Hastings Borough Council has considered the report of the licensing officer and the submissions made by the driver and decided the driver is not a “Fit and Proper person” to hold a Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Vehicle Driver’s Licence and instruct the Environmental Health and Licensing Manager to suspend his licence for up to three months or until he has completed an equalities training course to the satisfaction of the Licensing Officer, whichever is sooner.

Reasons for the decision:

While the Committee understood that the driver’s job was important to him and he had a young family to support he had used an unacceptable obscenity and an unacceptable joke which was discriminatory and targeted a minority group. While the Committee believed the driver’s apology was sincere, it was believed that training was needed for the driver to fully understand what was wrong with what he had said and why it was offensive. The Committee believed the training would support the driver to continue with his profession as a taxi driver.

(The Chair closed the meeting at 6:40 PM)