

JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

3 MARCH 2016

Present: Councillor (Chairperson)
Councillors Ahmed, Carter, Clark, Gavin Hill-John, Keith Jones,
Lomax, Magill, McGarry, Mitchell, Sanders and Darren Williams

22 : ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON

Councillor Mary McGarry was nominated as Chairperson of the Joint Committee.

23 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ralph Cook, Chris Davis, Susan White and Councillor John Spanswick

24 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

25 : SHARED REGULATORY SERVICES - IMPLEMENTATION AND FUTURE PROPOSALS

JP's opening statement - I would like to echo Dan's comments on the new shared service. As you will be aware, I have the responsibility for the Licensing function in the City. Dealing with taxis, licensed premises and issues around the night time economy is a challenging role.

I have to say that the creation of the Shared Service in this context was always going to be a difficult task, but, so far, the officers have managed to continue to deliver our Licensing service to an extremely high standard.

You will have seen a lot of media attention around taxis in recent months. During the lead up to Christmas, the Shared Service in partnership with the Police and Crime Commissioner produced publicity material to promote the safe use of taxis in the City. The team identified a need for the campaign following the receipt of an unprecedented number of complaints during the Rugby World Cup where it became evident that members of the public did not know the difference between Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles. The capacity to draw in additional expertise from the Regional Service ensured citizens received vital advice and support, and a greater pool of expert enforcers allowed a more robust response that would have been possible prior to the collaboration. We are seeing the results of those efforts now, with a number of drivers having their licences suspended.

The Shared Service has been instrumental in the revision and reissue of the Councils Statement of Licensing policy; a key document in making the City safer at night through controlling the sale of alcohol.

The Shared Service continues to support me, and the Licensing Chairs in Bridgend and the Vale of Glamorgan, to ensure high levels of public protection prevail and that our residents, and the visitors to our region, are protected from any unfair practices.

Cllr Chris Williams - Chairman –Scrutiny Committee Housing and Public Protection

I understand from the Chairman of the SRS Board, the Vale Council's Director of Environment and Visible Services, that he is working on proposals for improved Scrutiny arrangement for the SRS between our three Authorities. He is enabled to do this under section 5.5 of the Joint Working Agreement (JWA) and he aims to table a report to the next Board meeting and Joint Committee for consideration. If new scrutiny arrangements are endorsed by the Joint Committee then I understand that they will have to be considered by our respective Executives and then by our full Councils, if changes to the JWA to reflect such new arrangements, are required. I recall that there were similar parallels to the early years of the Prosiect Gwyrdd project where Scrutiny was very much a late starter and I believe, as the Chair of that Scrutiny Panel, that the project did not run as smoothly as it could have. For those officers and Members from Cardiff who were involved in that scheme, I believe that lessons learned from that project are applicable to our SRS. I'm sure that we can overcome these 'teething troubles' and swiftly move on to a process which is satisfactory to all Members and officers and fits in with the requirement of us all to properly scrutinise the service. Can I ask that officers come up with a workable solution involving Members from all Authorities as soon as is practically possible.

Councillor Norah Clarke – Chairperson - Community Safety & Governance Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Pleased to see the outcomes of the joint working that is taking place regarding the Shared Regulatory Service. Not having read all the papers I would like to ask the following questions:

- With regards to food safety. Have all premises that are part of the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme been visited in a timely manner or are there some still to be visited?
- I was pleased to see that a "Paid for advice" service is in operation for those who have a low number on the rating scheme. I note that 11 businesses have availed themselves of this service but it doesn't mention in which authority the businesses were. It would be good to know if any were from Bridgend.