

COUNCILLORS' INFORMATION BULLETIN

Tuesday, 9 February 2021

Bulletin No: IB/1065

INFORMATION ITEM

Pages

1 Delegated Planning Decisions

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Delegated planning decisions for the week beginning 1 February 2021 are attached. Contact for enquiries: Jean McPherson, Group Manager: Development Management on jean.mcpherson@crawley.gov.uk.

2 Road Closure for Carriageway Patching: Stagelands, Langley Green

Please be advised that the below roads are due to be closed on the dates and times specified for Carriageway Patching. An alternative route for traffic will be signed on site. Please note that these works are weather dependant, we will endeavour to inform you should there be significant changes to the programme.

This road closure is covered by the bulk 14.1 order made in September 2020

Road Name	Town	Date (from and to)	Timing of Closure (eg, 24hr, off peak 09:30 to 16:00, Night 08:00 to 06:00)
Stagelands	Langley Green, Crawley	17 th & 18 th February 2021	09:30 – 16:00

3 Action Taken Under Delegated Authority (Significant Operational Decision): Conservation Areas and Locally Listed Buildings Consultation

On 4 February 2021 the Head of Economy and Planning took the decision to authorise a 6-week consultation in relation to the following proposals, which arise from the recommendations of the Crawley Heritage Assets Review recently undertaken to support the review of the Local Plan:

- The creation of 2 new Conservation Areas at Queens Square and The Broadway, and at Gossops Green Neighbourhood Centre.



- Changes to the boundaries of the Brighton Road, High Street, and St Peter's Conservation Areas.
- The adoption of an updated Local Heritage List as a Supplementary Planning Document. This will supersede the council's Local Building List of 2010 as the document which identifies Crawley's Locally Listed Buildings.

The consultation will seek comments on the proposals and the supporting evidence.

The decision is considered to be necessary in order to implement the associated recommendations of the Heritage Assets Review.

The designation of Conservation Areas and amendments to Conservation Area boundaries are Cabinet functions and do not legally require consultation. However, consultation on the proposals is considered to be appropriate in order to allow interested stakeholders and the wider public to respond, so that Cabinet can take a properly informed decision.

Consultation is legally required as part of the process for adopting a Supplementary Planning Document, and is therefore necessary to give the Local Heritage List this status.

This approach to consultation is also consistent with the council's Statement of Community Involvement.

4

Decision Taken Under Urgency: Licensed Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles - Extend 11 Year Age Limit Due to COVID-19

A request was recently received from the Crawley Hackney Carriage Association to extend the life of vehicles for a further 12 months due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. The reasons cited for this request were that licensed vehicles had not been used to the same intensity during the Pandemic due to a reduction in available work for the Taxi Trade. Furthermore, as a direct result of the reduction in work and income as a result of the Pandemic, vehicle proprietors had been unable to raise the funds anticipated to pay for a suitable replacement vehicle.

The decision was deemed 'urgent' as it could not wait until the next relevant Licensing Committee meeting, and it was therefore taken under, and in accordance with, [General Committee Procedure Rule 18](#) (Urgent Action). The Chief Executive, who has authority under this provision to take urgent decisions, authorised the Head of Community Services to take the decision on her behalf.

Currently, the Council's Policy is such that a vehicle must cease operating as a licensed vehicle once it reaches 11 years old. Generally, the Taxi Licensing Team provide vehicle proprietors with one year's notice and reminders that their vehicle is coming to the 11 year old age limit. On occasion, the Taxi Licensing Team will receive requests to extend the life of the vehicle where, for example, the vehicle has low mileage, is in excellent condition, or where an individual has been unable to source an alternative vehicle. On those such occasions each case is considered on

its merits and vehicles are assessed on a case by case basis.

Prior to the COVID-19 Pandemic, Licensing Officers would inspect vehicles, and in some instances, require that a Certificate of Compliance be undertaken and issued by one of the Councils Nominated Garages to confirm mechanical fitness and compliance with licence conditions and/or bylaws. In the case of the above, vehicles are currently only permitted to remain for a further 3 months beyond the 11 year age limit. Both Private Hire and Hackney Carriage drivers and vehicles have not been precluded from carrying out work during the COVID-19 Pandemic, despite the various lockdowns.

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, despite being permitted to work, several drivers chose to SORN vehicles, keep them off road and therefore unused. Additionally, the availability of work has diminished as a result of the various lockdowns, resulting in less work and revenue for some drivers.

Further background information and context in relation to this decision can be found on the [Council's website](#).

The request to extend the term of use in respect of a licenced vehicle for 12 months is a significant operational change. However, it does impact a relatively small number, in summary:

- 9 vehicles between January 2021 and end of June 2021.
- 11 vehicles between July 2021 and December 2021.

Several vehicles have already been afforded a 3 month extension by the Team Leader, Health, Safety and Licensing which has allowed them to remain in the Trade beyond the 11 years. These vehicles have also had to undergo a further Certificate of Compliance Test via a Council Nominated Garage.

An extension of vehicles over 11 years old needs to be carefully managed, and is noted as exceptional due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Any such extension will need to be subject to the following:

1. 12 month extension to run 09/02/21 – 08/02/22 only.
2. Those vehicles already afforded a 3 month extension (or other period) shall be awarded a further 9 months only, to ensure equality and fairness and allowing a 12 month extension in total.
3. The above is applicable only for those vehicles identified, for the term identified and is not transferrable to another vehicle.
4. A Certificate of Compliance is required at the application for an extension, and every 6 months thereafter.
5. An extension will be refused and the vehicle removed as a licensed vehicle if it is found that it does not meet the standards required by the Certificate of Compliance, and/or where the nominated Garage identifies a matter that impacts upon the vehicles safety or where it is no longer considered roadworthy.
6. A Nominated Licensing Officer of the Council may also form the view that to extend the term that a vehicle is licensed is unsuitable or inappropriate. This will be reviewed by the Team Leader for Health, Safety and Licensing, who will give written reasons where an extension is refused.

The Head of Community Services therefore took an urgent decision on 9 February 2021 to extend 11 year age limit of licensed vehicles due to COVID-19 with any extension being subject to conditions 1-6 above.

5 **Change in Membership: Town Hall Project Working Group**

In accordance with Paragraph 2.1(o) of the Full Council's Procedure Rules contained within the Constitution and in concurrence with the wishes of the political group, the Democratic Services Manager (acting as Head of Legal, Democracy and HR) has made the following change to the membership of the Town Hall Project Working Group:

- Councillor B Smith to be replaced with Councillor Lamb.

This change takes immediate effect.

6 **Consideration Report: District Heat Network - Operation, Maintenance, Metering and Billing**

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Consideration report HPS/25 by the Head of Major Projects and Commercial Services is attached for Councillors only.

7 **Staff Changes: January 2021**

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Staff changes for January 2021 are attached for Councillors only.

8 **Press Releases**

Press releases are available at www.crawley.gov.uk/news