



**WOKINGHAM  
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**MEETING OF THE  
LICENSING AND APPEALS COMMITTEE**

**ON**

**MONDAY 5 MARCH 2012**

**AT**

**7PM**

**AGENDA**

**Civic Offices  
Shute End  
Wokingham  
Berkshire**

**Andy Couldrick  
Interim Chief Executive**



**WOKINGHAM  
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **THE COUNCIL'S VALUES**

**In making a difference to other people's lives we are ...**

- **ONE Wokingham, ONE Borough – working in partnership**
- **FOCUSED on Customers and Community**
- **BOLD – innovative and flexible**
- **OPEN – integrity, trust and transparency**

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# WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

To: The Chairman and Members of the Licensing and Appeals Committee

A Meeting of the **LICENSING AND APPEALS COMMITTEE** will be held at the Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham on **Monday 5 March 2012 at 7pm**

Andy Couldrick  
Interim Chief Executive  
24 February 2012

**Members:-** Barrie Patman (Chairman), Chris Bowring (Vice Chairman), Annette Drake, Michael Firmager, Lee Gordon-Walker, Mike Gore, Mike Haines, Philip Houldsworth, Abdul Loyes, Ken Miall, Sam Rahmouni, Chris Singleton, Dee Tomlin and Bob Wyatt

ITEM NO.	WARD	SUBJECT	PAGE NO.
34.00	None Specific	<b>MINUTES</b> To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 10 January 2012.	1-2
35.00	None Specific	<b>APOLOGIES</b> To receive any apologies for absence	
36.00		<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b> To receive any declarations of interest	
37.00		<b>PUBLIC QUESTION TIME</b> To answer any public questions	

The Council welcomes questions from members of the public about the work of this Committee

Subject to meeting certain timescales, questions can relate to general issues concerned with the work of the Committee or an item which is on the Agenda for this meeting. For full details of the procedure for submitting questions please contact Democratic Services on the numbers listed below or go to [www.wokingham.gov.uk/publicquestions](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/publicquestions)

Explanatory leaflets are also available in the Civic Offices and Libraries.

- 38.00** **MEMBER QUESTION TIME**  
To answer any member questions
- 39.00** None Specific **AMEND SCHOOL TRANSPORT APPEAL PROCESS** **3-9**  
To receive a report on amending the School Transport Appeal Process.
- 40.00** None Specific **HACKNEY CARRIAGE TARIFF REVIEW** **10-13**  
To consider a review of the Hackney Carriage tariff.
- 41.00** None Specific **HACKNEY CARRIAGE DISABLED ACCESS VEHICLE REVIEW** **14-18**  
To consider a review on Hackney Carriage Disabled Access Vehicles.
- 42.00** **ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT**  
A Supplementary Agenda will be issued by the Chief Executive if there are any other items to consider under this heading

This is an agenda for a meeting of the Licensing and Appeals Committee

If you need help in understanding this document or if you would like a copy of it in large print please contact one of our Team Support Officers.

#### CONTACT OFFICERS

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**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
LICENSING AND APPEALS COMMITTEE  
HELD ON TUESDAY 10 JANUARY 2012 FROM 7PM TO 7.30PM**

*Present:- Barrie Patman (Chairman), Chris Bowring (Vice Chairman), Annette Drake, Michael Firmager, Lee Gordon-Walker, Mike Haines, Philip Houldsworth, Abdul Loyes, Ken Miall, Sam Rahmouni, Chris Singleton and Dee Tomlin*

*Also present:-*

*Yvonne Jones, Enforcement Officer (Taxis)  
Julia O'Brien, Principal Environmental Health Officer (Licensing)  
Steve Richardson, Environmental Health and Licensing Manager  
Madeleine Shopland, Senior Democratic Services Officer*

**PART I**

**25. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 5 September 2011 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**26. APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was submitted from Mike Gore.

**27. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were submitted.

**28. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no Public questions.

**29. MEMBER QUESTION TIME**

There were no Member questions.

**30. HACKNEY CARRIAGE TARIFF REVIEW**

Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 allows the Council to fix the rates for fares and other related charges in connection with the hire of Hackney Carriages. The Committee had agreed in March 2005 to review the taxi tariffs annually.

During the discussion of this item the following points were made:

- The Committee had last resolved to increase the tariff in May 2010. Members had agreed to adopt the drivers' preferred option to increase the flag distance, decrease the increment distance and to add the time variation.
- All 103 hackney carriage drivers and the larger operators had been written to in November 2011. They were asked whether they wished for the tariff to remain unchanged with a view to consulting again next year or if they would like an amendment, what change they would wish to see. 80 responses were received with 78 drivers asking for a change and 2 asking that the tariff remain the same. Those who had requested a change had mainly asked that the Tariff 1 minimum fare be kept at £3.00 for a journey of up to 600 yards (currently 880 yards) or part thereof and for each subsequent 126 yards or 40 seconds (currently 176 yards or 40 seconds) or part

thereof, 20p. This would make all journeys more expensive and equated to a rise of approximately 20%.

- It was noted that currently Wokingham was ranked 65 out of 300 Councils in the Private Hire and Taxi Monthly National League Tables Averages (1 being the most expensive). Members were informed of the statistics for Slough, which had not been previously available. Slough was ranked 91 out of 300 and had a flag rate of £3, a one mile rate of £5, the highest in the country and a two mile rate of £5.80.
- The Principal Environmental Health Officer (Licensing) outlined the statutory consultation process which had to be followed once Members had made a decision regarding the increase or otherwise of the Hackney Carriage tariff.
- Whilst Members appreciated that vehicle running costs and the cost of fuel had increased, some had concerns that the increase requested by a number of drivers was too high and that drivers would lose business if prices were too high. The Chairman commented that the Committee had to consider both the livelihood and wellbeing of the drivers and the impact of any changes to the tariff on residents. A delicate balance had to be struck, particularly in the current economic climate.
- In response to a question from Councillor Gordon-Walker the Principal Environmental Health Officer (Licensing) commented that there were 103 Hackney Carriage Licences currently issued, that this number had stayed fairly consistent over recent years and that limiting the number of plates issued was not within the guidance.
- Councillor Loyes asked whether many complaints had been received from residents regarding the cost of taxi journeys. The Enforcement Officer (Taxis) indicated that officers had had to do little enforcement regarding overcharging and that many of the complaints received had arisen when passengers had not fully understood the different rates. In addition some passengers had made comment but not put in an official complaint. She went on to state that there was some flexibility regarding the tariff, in that drivers could agree a fee with passengers prior to undertaking their journey. However, the driver also had to put the meter on and if the meter showed a lower amount than agreed at the end of the meeting the driver had to charge the lower amount.
- Some of the Committee felt that the tariff should remain unchanged. However, the majority of Members felt that the tariff should be increased although not to the level requested. Councillor Miall suggested that initial yardage remain at 880 yards but that the subsequent yardage be reduced from 176 to 150 yards.

**RESOLVED That**

- 1) the initial yardage remain at 880 yards and that each subsequent yard be reduced from 176 to 150 yards, be agreed, subject to no objections being received during the public consultation period.

*These are the Minutes of a meeting of the Licensing and Appeals Committee*

*If you need help in understanding this document or if you would like a copy of it in large print please contact one of our Team Support Officers.*