

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
LICENSING AND APPEALS COMMITTEE  
HELD ON MONDAY 14 JANUARY 2013 FROM 7:00PM TO 7:38PM**

*Present:- Barrie Patman (Chairman), Michael Firmager, Mike Gore, Mike Haines, Philip Houldsworth, Abdul Loyes, Ken Miall, Sam Rahmouni, Malcolm Richards, Wayne Smith and Dee Tomlin.*

*Also present:*

*Susan Coulter, Senior Democratic Services Officer;  
Yvonne Jones, Enforcement Officer, Licensing Service; and  
Julia O'Brien, Principal Environmental Health Officer (Licensing).*

## **PART I**

### **16. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 5 November 2012 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to an addition to Minute 14, Home Boarding of Dogs – Additional Consideration to say that the fees will be reviewed in one year's time.

### **17. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were submitted from Chris Bowring, Chris Singleton and Sue Smith.

### **18. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were submitted.

### **19. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no Public questions.

### **20. MEMBER QUESTION TIME**

There were no Member questions.

### **21. HACKNEY CARRIAGE TARIFF REVIEW**

The Committee considered a report, set out in Agenda pages 4 to 12, which set out the outcomes of an initial consultation with existing drivers of Hackney Carriage Vehicles and some of the larger Operators for a review of taxi tariffs.

Members were reminded that 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:

- Bracknell Forest Council, who has a similar surcharge to Wokingham Borough Council, was currently consulting to remove the additional charge;
- If changes are made to the tariff, then the drivers have to pay the cost of changing their taxi meters;
- It is up to the drivers to decide what size vehicle they operate;

- It was difficult to justify an increase in tariff, given the current economic climate;
- The focus should be on the surcharge and whether it should be removed or amended;
- It was noted that Slough had added a 20 pence surcharge per additional person;
- It was generally felt that a 50% surcharge was too high;
- It was noted that Guildford Borough Council had the highest surcharge at 50 pence per additional person;
- Members were concerned that if the surcharge was too expensive, then the taxi companies would suffer as people would not use taxis late at night;
- It was noted that whatever decision was made regarding the surcharge, the Council would have to consult on them with the taxi drivers;
- A percentage increase would be unpopular as any increase needed to be open and transparent and easily understood; and
- It was noted that the Law Society was in the process of reviewing taxi charges nationally and members may well see national rates proposed by the Government.

Members agreed that there should be no change to the Hackney Carriage tariff for the next twelve months.

It was proposed and duly seconded that the 50% surcharge where a vehicle is carrying more than four passengers – tariff 4 – 6 be removed and replaced with a surcharge of 50 pence per additional person where a vehicle is carrying more than four passengers, regardless of the time of day. This was proposed and unanimously agreed.

**RESOLVED** That

- 1) the 50% surcharge where a vehicle is carrying more than four passengers – tariff 4 – 6 be removed and replaced with a surcharge of 50 pence per additional person where a vehicle is carrying more than four passengers, regardless of the time of day; and
- 2) There be no change to the Hackney Carriage tariff for the next twelve months.

**22. HEARINGS UPDATE AND UPDATE ON DECISIONS MADE BY OFFICERS**

The Committee received a verbal update on the outcome of Sub-Committees or Appeal Hearings held under the Licensing Act 2003, which had been held since the last report had been presented to the Committee.

**RESOLVED** That the Hearings Update be noted.

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

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