



Minutes of the meeting of the **General Licensing Committee** held in Committee Room 2, East Pallant House on Wednesday 12 October 2022 at 9.30 am

Members Present: Mr G McAra (Chairman), Mrs T Bangert, Miss H Barrie, Mr H Potter and Mr A Sutton

Members not present: Mr A Moss, Mr J Elliott, Mr G Evans, Mr C Page and Mrs S Taylor

In attendance by invitation:

Officers present: Mr N Bennett (Divisional Manager for Democratic Services), Miss K Davis (Democratic Services Officer) and Mr D Knowles-Ley (Licensing Manager)

64 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Evans, Cllr Moss, Cllr Page and Cllr Taylor.

65 **Minutes**

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the General Licensing Committee held on 8 June 2022 be approved and signed as a correct record.

66 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

67 **Declarations of Interests**

There were no declarations of interest.

68 **Public Question Time**

There were no public questions.

69 **Proposed increase to Hackney Carriage Table of Fares**

Mr Knowles-Ley introduced Ms Courtney, the team's new Licensing Technician. He then outlined the report.

Cllr Sutton asked for information relating to the cost to change a taxi meter and how many drivers it would affect. He also commented on the delay since the previous review. Mr Knowles-Ley explained that meters had previously cost around £15 each to update. He clarified the number of drivers as follows:

- 14 Hackney Carriage Drivers
- 468 Private Hire Drivers
- 31 Dual Drivers (Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers)

Mr Knowles-Ley explained that all hackney carriage vehicles have a meter installed and presently the Council licensed 34 such vehicles. Cllr Sutton asked whether private hire fares were comparable. Mr Knowles-Ley explained that the Hackney Carriage rates remained competitive. He commented that whilst those operating private hire vehicles were at liberty to agree the price of a fare with passengers when taking a booking, equally those operating hackney carriage vehicles could choose to charge less than the fare shown on the meter.

Mr Knowles-Ley was asked for further information on the outcome of the consultation with existing licence holders. Mr Knowles-Ley confirmed that two drivers had initially made contact with the Council requesting that the existing Table of Fares (tariff) be reviewed. In support of this a document signed by the majority of other licence holders was provided. No negative comments had been received from existing licence holders regarding the proposed changes to the tariff and all existing holders of a hackney carriage licence had been provided with a link to the Committee papers and invited to attend the meeting.

Cllr Barrie requested information on the arrangements for those who do not want to use pre-bookable apps such as Uber. Mr Knowles-Ley explained that in respect of the Chichester district, the private hire sector has clearly increased whilst the hackney carriage sector has decreased. He also confirmed that the Council charges the same for a single driver's licence or a dual driver's licence (this authorises an individual to drive both a hackney carriage and private hire vehicle).

Cllr Bangert, Cllr Barrie and Cllr Sutton raised concerns around accommodating the hire of vehicles outside the train station.

Cllr Potter asked whether the council uses electric charging vehicles. Mr Knowles-Ley explained that the Council's current Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy allows for electric vehicles to be licensed.

Cllr Bangert requested information on how soiling charges are recovered. Mr Knowles-Ley explained that this is ultimately a matter between the licence holder and passenger, however he understood that often the passenger is safely returned to their destination, the fee paid then or alternatively recovered afterwards. Cllr McAra invited Mr Bennett to comment. He provided examples of recent cases relating to recovering payment and handling of data.

Following a vote the Committee made the following resolution:

That the General Licensing Committee considers and approves the proposed increase in the local Table of Fares (the ‘tariff’) as shown at Appendix A. This will take effect unless objections are received in response to a public consultation.

70 **Revised Hackney Carriage (Taxi) and Private Hire Policy 2022**

Mr Knowles-Ley outlined the report.

Cllr Sutton wished to thank officers for their work.

Cllr McAra in relation to page 31, section 12 of the report whether there is a re-test every 12 months. Mr Knowles-Ley clarified that the proposal is that once an individual has passed the Council’s Knowledge Test, that this pass is valid for 12 months. During this period is expected that the individual will have applied for and had an application for a Driver’s Licence determined. Once licensed, there is no expectation that a licence holder has to retake and pass the Council’s knowledge test every 12 months.

Following a vote the Committee made the following resolution:

That the General Licensing Committee considers, approves, and adopts for immediate use the revised Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy 2022 as shown at Appendix 1.

71 **Consideration of any late items as follows:**

There were no late items.

The meeting ended at 10.05 am

CHAIRMAN

Date: