

LICENSING & PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 20th August, 2019
Time of Commencement: 7.00 pm

Present:- Councillor Mark Olszewski – in the Chair

Councillors Miss J Cooper, S. Dymond, T. Kearon, A. Parker, K. Robinson, S. Sweeney, G White and R. Wright

Officers Nesta Barker - Head of Environmental Health Services,
Matthew Burton - Licensing Administration Team Manager,
Geoff Durham - Mayor's Secretary / Member Support Officer and
Anne-Marie Pollard - Solicitor

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors' G Heesom, J Walklate, J Waring, G Williams and J Williams.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN RELATION TO LICENSING MATTERS

There were no declarations of interest stated.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 11 June, 2019 be agreed as a correct record.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN RELATION TO PUBLIC PROTECTION MATTERS

There were no declarations of interest stated.

5. TAXI TARIFFS - PROPOSED INCREASE

Consideration was given to a report asking Members to consider The Hackney Carriage Trade Association's request to increase the council set maximum metered tariffs and to amend the times for the proposed tariffs.

The Council's Licensing Administration Team Manager, Matt Burton drew Members' attention to the three appendices which outlined current fares, an extract from the Minutes of this meeting held on 3 November, 2015 and a new proposed table of fares. Members were also referred to paragraph 2.3 showing comparisons with neighbouring authorities.

Councillor Stephen Sweeney asked if the new fares request could be tied in with the meters not being put on for journeys which drivers have stated was standard practice. Councillor Sweeney proposed that the increase be given but the meters had to be on for journeys.

Mr Burton advised that if a Hackney Carriage picked up a fare in Newcastle and dropped off in Newcastle, the meter reading or below must be charged. However, if a fare is picked up in Newcastle and the drop off was outside of the Borough, the meter does not have to be used but a pre-agreed price must be honoured. To ensure that the fare isn't less than this, the meter would have to be on.

Councillor Kyle Robinson asked what consultation had taken place with the Hackney Carriage Trade and whether they were in support?

The Council's Licensing Administration Team Manager, Matt Burton advised that the Trade had requested the increase and meetings had taken place to reach an agreement.

Councillor Robinson suggested that this needed to be reviewed on a regular basis as it had not been looked at since 2008. Mr Burton advised that the Council had to await a request from the Trade before they could be increased.

Councillor Robinson stated that if the fares were agreed by this Committee, residents would need to be informed of the price increases and taxi drivers given a letter which they could show to anyone who queried the prices.

Councillor Tony Kearon made reference to the table on page 39 comparing the new tariffs with other areas showing that the current were comparable but the proposed fares would be higher than other authorities. Mr Burton explained that this was the flag fare (starting distance) where Stoke on Trent travels a longer distance before the initial fee of £3 begins.

Members requested that the public be made aware, through communication, of when meters are/are not used and that the drivers receive a letter to show to their passengers.

Members debated the changing of the time of commencement of tariff 2 to 10pm instead of the current time of midnight. Members suggested 11pm or keeping it at midnight but were against changing it to 10pm. Members took a vote and agreed to keep this at midnight.

- Resolved:**
- (i) That the proposed table of metered fares, outlined in Appendix C be approved.
 - (ii) That the proposed table of metered fares, outlined in Appendix C be advertised and implemented in line with statutory provisions.
 - (iii) That the commencement time of tariff 2 remain at midnight.

6. TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY

Consideration was given to a report presenting the final policy document to Members for approval and to agree upon a date for implementation.

At its meeting held on 11 June, 2019, this Committee determined the final content to be included within the Council's Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policy. A copy of the redrafted document was attached at Appendix 1.

Members' attention was drawn to paragraph's 2.3 to 2.5 of the report outlining two areas that required completion.

- Resolved:
- (i) That the final policy document be approved.
 - (ii) That the policy be partially implemented on 1 November, 2019 and the remaining sections, (the in-house Knowledge Test and Disability Equality Training) implemented on 1 January, 2020.

7. PUBLIC PROTECTION SUB-COMMITTEE ARRANGEMENTS

Consideration was given to a report seeking approval of the Public Protection Sub-Committee arrangements.

Members' attention was drawn to the revised table at paragraph 2.4 and a revision to a date - from the first week in December to the 27 November due to a clash of committees.

Members were asked if the table could be sent to all Members to make them aware of the dates.

Councillor Gary White asked if calendar invites could also be sent out. This was confirmed by Mrs Barker.

- Resolved:**
- (i) That the report be received and the dates and times of Members' required attendance at Sub-Committees, be noted.
 - (ii) That, should Members be unable to attend a sub-Committee meeting, they notify Democratic Services of a substitute.

8. ENVIRONMENT ACT 1995 - PART IV - LOCAL AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT - ANNUAL STATUS REPORT 2019

Consideration was given to a report advising Members of the findings of the statutory Annual Status Report for 2019 covering the 2018 calendar in respect of air quality within the Borough.

Members' attention was drawn to paragraph 2.2 of the report which gave an overall summary for 2018. Maps were appended to the report showing the four Air Quality Management Areas.

Mrs Barker advised that Nitrogen Dioxide came from vehicles and the annual concentration was due to traffic flow and congestion. The Weather conditions could also affect the readings. As the older vehicles were replaced with newer ones, pollution would fall.

- Resolved:** That the report be received.

9. DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION

- Resolved:-** That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration if the following matter because it is likely that there will be disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1,2 and 7 contained within Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972

10. **MINUTES OF LICENSING SUB COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 30 July, 2019 be received.

11. **MINUTES OF PUBLIC PROTECTION SUB-COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meetings held on 12 June, 19 June, 3 July and , 31 July, 2019 be received.

12. **APPEAL OUTCOMES**

Resolved: That the appeal outcomes be received and noted.

13. **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business.

COUNCILLOR MARK OLSZEWSKI
Chair

Meeting concluded at 7.50 pm