

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

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.