

LICENSING COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Licensing Committee held on Tuesday 13th March 2012 at 6.00 pm in the Reception Suite, Civic Offices, Telford

PRESENT

Councillors: C Mason (Chair), L Murray, R Picken, R Scammell, J Seymour and K Tomlinson.

Officers in attendance: Jonathan Eatough – Assistant Director: Law, Democracy & Public Protection, Ian Mercer – Public Protection Service Delivery Manager, Suzanne Fisher – Public Protection Team Leader, Tina Street – Solicitor and Wendy Buckley - Democratic Services Support Officer.

LC-16 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meetings of the Licensing Committee held on the 29th November 2011 and 12th December 2011 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

LC-17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors T Hope and J Thompson.

LC-18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor K Tomlinson declared a personal interest as being a neighbour to a Private Hire Operator licensed in the Borough.

LC-19 HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENCE FEES REVIEW

The Public Protection Team Leader presented a report of the Service Delivery Manager for Members to consider an increase in the level of Licence Fees and charges affecting the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire trades which were last reviewed in 2009/2010 and implemented on 1st March 2011.

Following Members request, Appendix C was clarified by the Public Protection Team Leader regarding the comparison of charges and fees to be implemented for the financial year 2012/13 for Telford & Wrekin in comparison with all other local Councils. It was also explained that loss of trade to Telford & Wrekin had led to an inevitable loss of income. If the increase would have been excessive there could have been a potential loss of licensing trade from Telford & Wrekin and the comparison against other local Councils would not have been favourable.

Members were further advised that once the notice of the fee increase was displayed in the local press there would be 28 days for representations to be made. If no representations were made, the change to the charging structure would be implemented from 1st April 2012.

The Chair stated that an excellent job had been achieved by Officers with regard to the potential increase in Licence Fees during this time of economic instability. The amounts were reasonable and effective for cost recovery.

Having considered the information in the report it was:

RESOLVED – that the proposed licence fees and charges for the financial year 2012/13, as shown at Column E of Appendix A, be approved with effect from a specified date not less than 28 days from the date on which a notice is published in the press.

LC – 20 LICENSING POLICY – PRIVATE HIRE CONDITION REVIEW

The Public Protection Team Leader presented the above report and stated that at the Licensing Committee meeting on 29th November 2011 Members resolved to introduce an ‘exceptional condition’ criteria for Hackney Carriages in relation to age limits on vehicles. For the purposes of consistency and following a Taxi Forum meeting on 25th January 2012, Members were asked to consider introducing a similar criteria for Private Hire Vehicles. A copy of the Council’s ‘exceptional condition’ criteria was appended to the report.

The Public Protection Team Leader advised that following consultation with the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Associations in relation to ‘exceptional condition’ criteria there had been no response.

Following a general discussion with regard to vehicle makes and the inspection standards made by the testing officers at Telford & Wrekin Services it was:

RESOLVED – by unanimous vote –

- (a) that following a consultation with the Trade on an amendment to condition 3.6 of the council’s condition of licence for Private Hire Vehicles, to state that the Council may waive the age restriction where an ‘exceptional condition’ criteria is met so that a vehicle continues to be licensed over the 7 year age limit of the vehicle with 6 monthly compliance tests, a further report be brought back to the Committee.
- (b) that the contents of the ‘exceptional condition’ criteria for Hackney Carriages is also included in the consultation proposed as in (a) above.

Meeting closed at 6.50 pm.

Chairman:

Date:

