

Licensing Committee – Meeting held on Thursday, 24th March, 2022.

Present:- Councillors Cheema (Chair), Anderson, Bains, Dhaliwal, Gill, S. Malik, S. Parmar and Strutton (from 6.43pm)

Apologies for Absence:- Councillor R. Davis and Brooker

PART 1

11. Declarations of Interest

None declared.

12. Guidance on Predetermination/ Predisposition - To Note

Members confirmed that they had read and understood the guidance on predetermination and predisposition.

13. Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 14th October 2021

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 14th October 2021 be approved as a correct record.

14. Proposed Hackney Carriage Vehicle Tariff Increase

The Committee considered details of the report which set out a proposed increase in the hackney carriage vehicle tariff increase. The Principal Licensing Officer reminded Members that the current tariff scale was set and approved by the Licensing Committee in 2013.

In January 2022, the Slough Taxi Federation (STF) submitted a written request for an increase in the current tariff. Following discussions with the Trading Standards and Licensing Manager an amended tariff chart was agreed upon and submitted by the STF. It was highlighted that currently there were 103 licensed hackney vehicles and that STF represented over 90% of these drivers, therefore this was considered a fair representative sample of drivers and no pre-consultation had taken place. Any other persons with an interest in the new fare chart would be consulted with when signed off by the committee and duly advertised in accordance with the law.

The Chair invited Mr Badial, Chair of STF and Mr Ghotra, STF Secretary to address the Committee. It was submitted that the proposed tariff rates were essential given that there had not been an increase in prices since 2013. In addition, cost of living expenses and significant increase in fuel prices had contributed to the request being made.

In the ensuing discussion, Members commented that whilst they were supportive of the proposed tariff, the rates should be reviewed on a more regular basis and not reliant on a request being made by the trade. It was requested that future reports include comparative tariff rates from

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neighbouring local authorities which would allow for benchmarking and decisions to be made based on data. A Member also suggested that the Committee receive a report in six months' time which outlined a process for reviewing and tracking tariff rates and associated costs; which would allow for tariff rates to be monitored on a regular basis.

Resolved –

- (a) That the new tariff chart as attached at Appendix C to the report be approved; and
- (b) If following the public notice relating to the new tariff any objections are received and not withdrawn the objections shall be determined by the Trading Standards and Licensing Manager in consultation with the Licensing Committee Chair, who shall determine whether or not to modify the approved new tariff chart and in the event that objections are materially significant the matter be referred back to the Committee for consideration.
- (c) That the Committee receive a report in six months' time with proposals outlining the process for considering/reviewing HC Vehicle Tariffs in the future (tracking tariff rates, adjustment of rates in relation to inflation) and data relating to benchmarking of tariff rates with neighbouring local authorities.

15. Members Attendance Record 2021/22

Resolved – That details of the Members Attendance Record be noted.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.30 pm and closed at 6.53 pm)