

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE LICENSING AND REGULATORY COMMITTEE -
25 FEBRUARY 2019

SUBMITTED TO THE COUNCIL MEETING – 19 MARCH 2019

(To be read in conjunction with the Agenda for the Meeting)

Present

Cllr Simon Inchbald (Chairman)
Cllr Bob Upton (Vice Chairman)
Cllr Maurice Byham
Cllr Patricia Ellis
Cllr John Fraser

Cllr Tony Gordon-Smith
Cllr Carole King
Cllr Robert Knowles
Cllr Libby Piper

Apologies

Cllr Michael Goodridge, Cllr Peter Isherwood and Cllr Anna James

LIC27/18 MINUTES (Agenda item 1.)

The minutes of the meeting which took place on 14 January were confirmed and signed.

LIC28/18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS (Agenda item 2.)

There were apologies from Councillors Michael Goodridge, Peter Isherwood and Anna James.

LIC29/18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Agenda item 3.)

There were no declarations of interest.

LIC30/18 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (Agenda item 4.)

There were no questions from members of the public.

LIC31/18 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS (Agenda item 5.)

There were no questions from Councillors.

LIC32/18 ACTION AUTHORISED (Agenda item 6.)

There were none.

LICENSING ACT 2003 ITEMS

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COUNCIL

There were none.

PART II - MATTERS OF REPORT

LIC33/18 MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE LICENSING ACT 2003 SUB-COMMITTEES (Agenda item 7.)

The minutes of meetings of the Licensing Act 2003 Sub-Committees which had taken place on 14 January 2010 and 24 January 2019 were confirmed and signed.

LIC34/18 HACKNEY CARRIAGE / PRIVATE HIRE FEES 2019/20 - OUTCOME OF ADVERTISEMENT (Agenda item 8.)

The Committee received a report outlining representations received from operators and drivers following the advertisement of proposed fees for hackney carriage/private hire vehicles. The proposed fees were advertised on 18 January 2019 in accordance with the requirements of Section 70 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2076 and the closing date for representations had been 15 February 2019.

The Committee was advised that the resource implications were chiefly the recovery of the cost of administering the licensing service for the coming year. The Government did not provide financial support as the licensing service was deemed to be self financing, therefore the net cost had to be met from Council Tax. Members noted that The overall costs of the service including hackney carriage and private hire licensing had been budgeted at £376,400 for 2019/20. The rate of cost recovery for the Hackney Carriage element was:

- 2017/18 91% (Actual)
- 2018/19 91% (Predicted)
- 2019/20 91% (Estimate, based on no increase in fees and charges)
- 2019/20 93% (Estimate, based on increased fees and charges)

The Committee noted that there were 5 letters of objection from operators/taxi drivers raising concern about the level of increase. Members were surprised that there were not more letters of representation as there were 370 licensed drivers in the Borough.

Paul Hughes, the Licensing Manager, provided a breakdown of fees charged by other Local Authorities in the County and advised of a recent appeal made by drivers working in Guildford Borough Council relating to its proposals to reduce fares, which was dismissed by the High Court. It was felt that Waverley's fees as proposed were reasonable compared to the others.

Councillors were sympathetic to the trade, and recognised that fares enabled drivers to recover their costs. However, the Committee also needed to provide a service at a reasonable cost to the public and it was vital that they set the right rates to ensure this balance and to protect users from being overcharged.

The Committee, therefore, considered the proposals and agreed that the fees should remain as originally proposed and that they should come into effect without modification on 1 April 2019

RESOLVED that

1. The amendments to the fees as provisionally agreed by Council on 12 February 2019 be confirmed without amendment; and
2. The new fees as proposed be put into place on 1 April 2019.

The meeting commenced at 10.02 am and concluded at 10.20 am

Chairman