

LICENSING COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 27 March 2013 commencing at 6.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Pett (Chairman)

Cllrs. Abraham, Mrs. Ayres, Ayres, Clark, Davison, Orridge, Mrs. Parkin, Piper, Raikes and Walshe

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Mrs. Dawson and Fittock

22. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 30 January 2013 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

23. Declarations of interest

No declarations of interest were made.

24. Actions from the previous meeting

There were no actions from the previous meeting.

25. Hackney Carriage And Private Hire Licensing - License Fees 2013/14

The Committee had previously considered the proposed fees and associated costs for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licences for 2013/14 at its meeting on 30 January 2013. The Committee had approved the changes in fees and associated costs subject to the responses received following consultation with the trade. On 11 February 2013 all proprietors, drivers and operators were written to. Consultee responses and Officer comments on any adverse responses were included in the report.

The taxi licensing service was required to be self-financing and the recommended fare increases would ensure this.

The Licensing Partnership Manager informed the Committee that all references to the Criminal Records Bureau should be amended to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Taking on board comments from consultees the Licensing Partnership would fold letters where possible to fit into smaller envelopes, to reduce costs, though licences would not be folded when sent out. From next year the Licensing Partnership in Sevenoaks intended only to put up a public notice in the newspaper and on the Council's website rather than write to each licensee individually. Renewal reminders were now being sent second rather than first class and were also sent out earlier meaning that they were returned sooner.

The Licensing Partnership Manager confirmed to Members that no requests had been received for an increase in the maximum fares in the last 18 months though enquiries had recently been made. There were Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Associations to represent licensees and the Partnership kept in touch with licensees through its emailing list and regular meetings with the trade. Recent meetings had included representatives

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from Southeastern Rail and Meteor Parking and she felt the meetings were an effective forum.

In the next six months the Council would be introducing online forms for licence applications and renewals. The aim was again to reduce costs. There would be an initial capital outlay for the system but maintenance costs would be lower. Officers would consider differential costs for online and paper applications but no decision has been made. In the near future Officers intended to carry out a full cost analysis of the fees charged across the Partnership.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that there were no adverse equality impacts arising from the report.

Resolved: That from 1 April 2013 the list of fees and associated costs for licences in respect of hackney carriage drivers and vehicles and private hire drivers, vehicles and operators be varied as per the report.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 6.23 pm

Chairman