

**LICENSING AND REGULATION COMMITTEE**

**4 October 2016**

Attendance:

Councillors:

Mather (Chairman) (P)

Bentote (P)

Berry (P)

Burns

Elks

Green (P)

Huxstep (P)

Izard (P)

Jeffs

Laming (P)

Tait (P)

Deputy Member:

Councillor Cook (Standing Deputy for Councillor Jeffs)

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1. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT**

The Chairman announced the sad news that former Councillor Ken Carter, a long standing Chairman of the Licensing and Regulation Committee until 2004 and Councillor for Boarhunt and Southwick, had recently passed away. In his memory, the Committee observed one minute's silence.

2. **APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Izard be appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the 2016/17 Municipal Year.

3. **FUTURE MEETINGS**

RESOLVED:

That the meetings of the Committee commence at 6.30pm in accordance with the published timetable of meetings for 2016/17, as set out on the agenda.

4. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee, held on 17 March 2016, be approved and adopted.

5. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mr John Boardman and Mr Steven Eckton (both representatives from the taxi trade) addressed the Committee during consideration of Report LR486 and their comments are summarised in the relevant item below. A summary of a statement submitted by Mr Stephen Green (a licensed Hackney Carriage driver) who was unable to attend the meeting was also referred to.

6. **REVIEW OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARES**

(Report LR486 refers)

The Committee considered the Report which outlined the previous increases made to Hackney Carriage fares by the Committee at its meeting on 9 June 2011. The current fares took effect on 4 July 2011, with the exclusion of a fouling charge, where no increase was made. It was noted that the maximum fares for Hackney Carriages were set by the Council and had regard to the underlying inflation rates, changes to costs incurred by Hackney Carriage owners and the consequences for its fare paying passengers.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr Boardman and Mr Eckton, addressed the Committee and answered Members' questions thereon.

In summary, Mr Boardman stated that he had worked as a licensed taxi driver in Winchester for many years and that he and a number of other drivers were strongly opposed to the increase in fares as set out in the Report. He considered that, despite there being no increases to fares during the previous five year period, there was no justification to impose any increase to fares at this time, particularly as the cost of fuel had not increased since the previous review in 2011.

In summary, Mr Eckton stated that he represented the Forum (former taxi association) and spoke in favour of the increase to fares, which was supported by other drivers. He considered that increases to insurance and maintenance costs, and also an annual increase to special permits required by South West Trains for those drivers that worked from the Railway Station made the proposed rise in fare rates viable. However, he stated that he could not support the introduction of a booking fee for Hackney Carriage drivers who carry customers that have pre-booked a vehicle via a Private Hire Operator. In addition, Mr Boardman reiterated that he also could not support the introduction of a booking fee.

The Licensing Manager outlined the statement received by Mr Green which stated that he was opposed to the fare increase for two reasons; that there had been no rise to fuel costs since the previous increase and that any increase to fares would potentially place young females travelling at night or

other vulnerable groups in danger should they consider the price of the taxi fare too costly and opt to walk to their destination alone.

In response, the Licensing Officer reported that, following further discussion with Mr Eckton on behalf of the trade, there had been a further revision to Option 1 to reflect that there should be a 20p increase to the current pull off charge of £2.80 rising to £3.00, and that a reduction should apply to the yardage distance from 170 to 160. This amendment would result in the following increases to the fare chart, as highlighted in bold with a 6.1% increase based on a 10 mile journey. The revised table below replaces Option 1, as set out in Appendix 2 to the Report:

<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Current</b>	<b>Option 1 (revised as above)</b>
Pull Off Charge	£2.80	<b>£3.00</b>
Pull Off Distance	660	660
<b>Yardage Distance</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>160</b>
Yardage Rate	£0.20	<b>£0.20</b>
1 mile fare	£4.20	<b>£4.40</b>
2 mile fare	£6.20	<b>£6.60</b>
3 mile fare	£8.40	<b>£8.80</b>
4 mile fare	£10.40	<b>£11.00</b>
5 mile fare	£12.40	<b>£13.20</b>
10 mile fare	£22.80	<b>£24.20</b>

In response to a Member's questions, Mr Eckton advised that the Forum was established by the Licensing Team, comprising of six Hackney Carriage and Private Hire drivers and Operators from all trades to act as representatives to feedback information between the Council's Licensing Team and drivers.

The Committee gave consideration to the costs, the comparisons with National Fares Tables between Hampshire Local Authorities, the possible options and the extra charges contained in the Report. In relation to the costs incurred by drivers, Members sought clarification on the range between the figures set out in paragraph 3.6 within the Report. In response, it was noted that these figures would largely vary depending on the individual drivers personal circumstances.

The Licensing Manager emphasised that, should the Committee be minded to vary the fares, a period of consultation would take place with the drivers and members of the public and an advert placed in the local press allowing 28 days for comments to be received.

During debate, several Members expressed the view that drivers could adapt their own costs by comparing prices with insurance companies and by increasing their income dependant on the volume of work they chose to carry out. As a result, having taken into consideration the extra charges and issues as set out paragraphs 5 and 6 in the Report, the Committee were largely opposed the increase in fares on this occasion and agreed that this matter should be reviewed in 12 months' time. .

RESOLVED:

That, the maximum fares of Hackney Carriage, should not be varied at this time. The Hackney Carriage fares should be reviewed in 12 months' time.

7. **MINUTES OF LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE HELD 14 APRIL 2016**  
(Report LR473 refers)

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Licensing Sub-Committee held 14 April 2016, be received (as attached as Appendix A to the minutes).

8. **MINUTES OF LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE HELD 25 APRIL 2016**  
(Report LR474 refers)

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Licensing Sub-Committee held 25 April 2016, be received (as attached as Appendix B to the minutes).

9. **MINUTES OF LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE HELD 10 JUNE 2016**  
(Report LR482 refers)

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Licensing Sub-Committee held 10 June 2016, be received (as attached as Appendix C to the minutes).

10. **MINUTES OF LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE HELD 14 JUNE 2016**  
(Report LR483 refers)

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Licensing Sub-Committee held 14 June 2016, be received (as attached as Appendix D to the minutes).

11. **MINUTES OF LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE HELD 28 JULY 2016 (LESS EXEMPT APPENDIX)**  
(Report LR484 refers)

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Licensing Sub-Committee (less exempt appendix) held 28 July 2016 be received and noted (attached as Appendix E to the minutes).

12. **MINUTES OF LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE HELD 1 AUGUST 2016 (LESS EXEMPT APPENDIX)**

(Report LR485 refers)

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Licensing Sub-Committee (less exempt appendix) held 1 August 2016 be received and noted (attached as Appendix F to the minutes).

13. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

RESOLVED:

1. That in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

2. That the public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business because it is likely that, if members of the public were present, there would be disclosure to them of 'exempt information' as defined by Section 100I and Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

<u>Minute Number</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Description of Exempt Information</u>
##	Exempt minutes of the Licensing Sub-Committee held 28 July 2016	) Information relating to any individual. (Para 1 Schedule 12A refers)
##	Exempt minutes of the Licensing Sub-Committee held 1 August 2016	) Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual (Para 2 Schedule 12A refers)
		) Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). (Para 3 Schedule 12A refers)

14. **EXEMPT MINUTES OF LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE HELD 28 JULY 2016**  
(Report LR484 refers)

RESOLVED:

That the exempt minutes of the Licensing Sub-Committee held 28 July 2016 be received and noted (attached as Appendix E to the minutes).

15. **EXEMPT MINUTES OF LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE HELD 1 AUGUST 2016**  
(Report LR485 refers)

RESOLVED:

That the exempt minutes of the Licensing Sub-Committee held 1 August 2016 be received and noted (attached as Appendix F to the minutes).

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and concluded at 7.25pm.

Chairman