

Licensing Committee – Meeting held on Wednesday, 29th May, 2013.

Present:- Councillors Davis (Chair), Aujla, Dhillon, Malik, Mittal (Vice-Chair), Munawar, Plimmer, Rasib, Shah, Sohal and Wright

PART I

1. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Aujla declared a personal and prejudicial interest in respect of Agenda item 4, Proposed increase in Hackney Carriage Fares in that her Father was a Hackney Carriage Driver. She left the meeting whilst this item was considered and did not vote on the item.

Councillors Davis and Munawar declared that two weeks earlier they had attended a meeting with the Licensing Manager and Taxi Trade Representatives, with regard to Hackney Carriage tariff fares. Both Members stated that they would have an open mind when considering the agenda item and vote.

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 1st November 2012

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 1st November 2012 be approved as a correct record.

3. Appointment of Licensing Sub-Committee and Designated Chairs

The Committee was reminded that in May 2006 the Licensing Committee established a Licensing Sub-Committee in order to consider and assess matters relating to the Licensing Act 2003, the Gambling Act 2005 and taxi licensing. At that meeting, the Committee had also agreed to the appointment of designated chairs of the Sub-Committee and that these members would chair meetings on a rota basis.

Members were advised that the Sub-Committee would consist of three members to be drawn on a rota basis from members of the Committee on a politically proportionate basis. The Committee was reminded that as the Labour group had an overall majority on the Council, the Sub-Committee would comprise 2 Labour Group Members and 1 Conservative Group Member. It was noted that as Councillor Plimmer was not a member of a Group on the Council, he would not be entitled to a place on the Sub-Committee.

In order to ensure that deadlines were met and to assist in convening meetings of the Sub-Committee, Members were requested to consider whether they wished to adopt the same arrangement as in the previous year whereby the Conservative Group position on the Sub-Committee would rotate between the Conservative and Liberal Democrat Member on the Committee. In the event that neither the Conservative nor Liberal Democrat Member of the Committee was able to serve on a particular meeting of the Sub-

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Committee, Members were requested to agree in principle that a Sub-Committee be convened with 3 Labour Members. It was moved and seconded that Councillors Malik, Mittal and Sohal be appointed as Designated Chairs of the Licensing Sub-Committee.

Resolved –

- (a) That a Licensing Sub-Committee be established on a proportional basis (2 Labour, 1 Conservative) with terms of reference as set out the appendix to the report.
- (b) That Councillors Malik, Mittal and Sohal be appointed as designated Chairs of the Licensing Sub-Committee for the 2013/2014 municipal year.
- (c) That the Sub-Committee confirms the membership/convening arrangements for the Sub Committee agreed by the Committee last year, as set out in paragraph 5.5 of the report.

4. Proposed increase in Hackney Carriage Fares

The Licensing Officer outlined a report, in which the Committee was requested to consider a request submitted by Slough Taxi Federation, to increase the approved Hackney Carriage fares. Details of the proposed changes were highlighted and members were reminded that should the fares increase be approved, the Council had a legal obligation to publish details in the local newspaper. The Committee noted that in January 2007, the Licensing Committee had resolved that the costs of advertising the fare charges in a local newspaper were to be met by the Hackney Vehicle Proprietors from the next submission of proposed fare increases. Members were informed that the Slough Taxi Federation had confirmed that the cost of the advertisement for this increase would be divided by the 107 Proprietors and payable at the next renewal of their licence.

In the ensuing discussion, Members questioned whether information relating to fares in neighbouring local authorities was available as a comparative indicator. The Licensing Officer advised that there had been a 76.92% increase to national Hackney Carriage fares over the last 13 years. Slough had an increase of 72.22% over the same period and was 124th place in the country.

The Committee debated the reasons why the increase had been requested.

Resolved –

- (a) That the proposed table of fares as set out in Appendix C of the report be approved.

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- (b) That the change on Rate 1 from 'Daily 6am to 10pm', to 'Daily 5am to 10pm', and Rate 2 from 'Daily Midnight to 6.am', to 'Daily Midnight to 5am' be approved.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.30 pm and closed at 7.00 pm)