

## LICENSING COMMITTEE

1.00 P.M.

4TH JANUARY 2024

**PRESENT:-** Councillors Sally Maddocks (Chair), Margaret Pattison (Vice-Chair), Gerry Blaikie, Phil Bradley, Claire Cozler, Andrew Gardiner, Erin Hall and Tim Hamilton-Cox

Officers in attendance:

Jennifer Curtis	Licensing Manager
Daniel Spencer	Lawyer
Sarah Moorghen	Democratic Support Officer

### 33 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held 16<sup>th</sup> November 2023 were signed as a correct record.

### 34 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR

There were no items of urgent business.

### 35 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

***With the agreement of the Committee the Chair brought forward Item 6 Vehicle Licensing – Exemption Request.***

### 36 VEHICLE LICENSING - EXEMPTION REQUEST

The Licensing Manager introduced a report to enable the Committee to consider a request from Mr David Bunford to issue his private hire vehicle with a s75(3) Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 exemption notice which would exempt Mr Bunford's private hire vehicle from displaying licence plates. The Committee was also requested to consider his request to waiver the licensing conditions in relation to door signs and stickers.

Mr Bunford attended the Committee alongside Mr Peter Hobart who has a contract with the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and refers work to Mr Bunford. Both answered questions.

The Committee was advised that the licenced vehicle would be used exclusively for escorting passengers for the Ministry of Defence (MOD). Much of the work would be transporting injured military personnel. Currently a number of military bases will not allow taxis with plates and identifying features onto the base.

The Committee inspected the vehicle that would be subject to the exemption and waiver. It was noted that this was a Volkswagen Caddy with disability access.

The Committee noted that the vehicle number plate had a union flag fixed to it. Due to security concerns mentioned by Mr Bunford the Committee recommended that this be removed.

***Mr Hobart and the Licensing Manager left the meeting whilst the Committee deliberated.***

It was proposed by Councillor Hall, seconded by Councillor Cozler:

“That Mr Hobart be issued with a s76(3) exemption notice and the request to waiver the vehicle licence conditions in relation to door signs and stickers be approved.”

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 19 – Voting, Councillors present requested that the vote be recorded.

Upon being put to the vote Councillors Maddocks, Cozler, Hall, Hamilton-Cox and Pattison voted in favour of the proposition, Councillors Bradley and Gardiner voted against and Councillor Blaikie abstained, whereupon the Chair declared the proposition carried.

*(Councillor Bradley asked it to be noted that he disputed the assertion that taxis were not allowed on MOD bases)*

***Resolved:***

That Mr Bunford be issued with a s76(3) exemption notice and the request to waiver the vehicle licence conditions in relation to door signs and stickers be approved.

***The meeting adjourned at 2.00pm and reconvened at 2.10pm***

***Councillor Blaikie left the meeting partway through the following item and did not participate in the decision.***

### **37 HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARE REVIEW 2024**

The Licensing Manager presented a report which updated members on proposals to introduce a new fare tariff in relation to licenced hackney carriages in the Lancaster district.

Members of the Licensing Committee were required to refer their findings for decision to the next Cabinet meeting.

The Committee was advised that Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 made provision for the Council to fix the rates of fares within the district for time, distance and all other charges in connection with the hire of a hackney carriage. The current table of fares, which took effect on the 19<sup>th</sup> April 2023, was appended to the report for consideration by the Committee.

The Committee was advised that the current position was that the Retail Price Index (RPI) would be applied annually across the tariff, including flag rate and rolling rate, rounding down to the nearest 5p.

The Committee was provided with 4 options;

1. Maintain current table of fares.
2. Apply RPI (6.1%) across the tariff and round to nearest 5p.
3. Deregulate Fare Setting (this would allow fares to be set by each individual proprietor)
4. In addition to option 1 or 2, apply an additional charge for fares taken after a set time. Eg 20.00, 21.00 or 22.00.

Councillor Hamilton-Cox had previously circulated a 5<sup>th</sup> option to Committee members which was;

5. Flag rate £3.20 for first half mile; rolling rate of 25p per 176 yards (1/10<sup>th</sup> mile) thereafter. 2 miles=£3.20+£3.75=£6.95 This would work out as a 5.3% increase for a 2-mile journey.

***Resolved:***

- (1) That the Trade be consulted on the 5 Options plus a supplementary question about applying an additional fare for journeys after 9pm.
- (2) That a report on the consultation findings be brought back to the next Committee meeting for consideration and to allow the Committee to make a referral to Cabinet for a decision.

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Chair

(The meeting ended at 2.40 p.m.)

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact  
Sarah Moorghen, Democratic Support - email [smoorghen@lancaster.gov.uk](mailto:smoorghen@lancaster.gov.uk)**