

LICENSING COMMITTEE

1.00 P.M.

16TH MARCH 2023

PRESENT:- Councillors Colin Hartley (Chair), Mike Greenall (Vice-Chair), Fabiha Askari, Roger Cleet, Andrew Gardiner, Tim Hamilton-Cox, Sally Maddocks and Margaret Pattison

Apologies for Absence

Councillor Gerry Blaikie

Officers in attendance:

Jennifer Curtis	Licensing Manager
Tom Mitchell	Civil Lawyer
Mark Woodhead	Community Health and Protection Officer
Jasmine Elkins	Licensing Officer
Sarah Jones	Licensing Officer
Claire Helme	Democratic Support Officer

59 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 January 2023 were signed by the Chair as a correct record

60 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR

There were no items of urgent business

61 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Roger Cleet, Andrew Greenall and Margaret Pattinson declared prejudicial interests in relation to Agenda Item 6, Existing Dual Driver's Licence Holder, in that they know the taxi driver. Councillors Cleet, Greenall and Pattinson advised that they would leave the meeting at this point.

WITH THE AGREEMENT OF THE COMMITTEE THE CHAIR REVERSED THE ORDER OF AGENDA ITEMS 6 AND 7

62 EXEMPT ITEMS

It was moved by Councillor Gardiner, seconded by Councillor Greenall and unanimously agreed:

Resolved:

That in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business, exempt items 63 and 64, on the grounds they could involve the possible disclosure of exempt information, as defined, in Paragraph 1 of Schedule 12A of that Act.

63 EXISTING DUAL DRIVERS LICENCE HOLDER (PAGES 5 - 7)

The Committee received the report of the Licensing Officer for the purpose of determining a dual driver's licence (Hackney Carriage and Private Hire) renewal application.

Details of the individual case and the Chair's summary of the decision are set out in Exempt Minute No.63 in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

Decision of the Committee:

The decision of the Committee is set out in Exempt Minute No 63.

64 EXISTING DUAL DRIVERS LICENCE HOLDER (PAGES 8 - 10)

The Committee received the report of the Licensing Officer for the purpose of determining a dual driver's licence (Hackney Carriage and Private Hire) renewal application.

Details of the individual case and the Chair's summary of the decision are set out in Exempt Minute No.64 in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

Decision of the Committee:

The decision of the Committee is set out in Exempt Minute No.64.

THE PRESS AND PUBLIC WERE RE-ADMITTED TO THE MEETING.**65 ANNUAL REPORT - LICENSING SERVICE**

The Licensing Manager introduced the Annual Report of the Licensing Service to provide members with a report on private hire/hackney carriage related matters, including volume of applications, complaints and enforcement activity. It was noted that there was a decrease in the numbers of licensed drivers particularly in the younger age group and members questioned how the shortfall in private hire vehicles might be addressed. The lack of licensed vehicles equipped for disability provision was also highlighted although members were pleased to hear from the Licensing Manager that the Licensing Service has received funding for 10 fully electric vehicles for use in the trade.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

66 LICENSING WORK PLAN 2023

The Licensing Manager introduced the proposed Licensing Work Plan for 2023 to be approved by the Committee with or without modification noting the indicated priorities given for each of the items it contains. Members noted the proposal to generate further income for the service by further promotion of paid service pre-application advice 'Licensing Direct' and personal licensing training courses.

It was proposed by Councillor Greenall and seconded by Councillor Pattinson to accept the contents of the report.

Resolved:

That the Committee accept the contents of the Licensing Work Plan 2023.

67 AREA DEMAND SURVEY 2022/23

The Licensing Manager reported on the contents of the Area Demand Survey 2022/23. Members were asked to consider the final report from the survey provider, LVSA (Licensed Vehicle Surveys and Analysis) to consider what action to take in light of the findings. The survey is valid for 3 years and it concludes that there is currently no significant unmet demand for licensed hackney carriages in the Lancaster area and therefore the continued provision of 108 hackney carriage licences adequately meets demand.

It was proposed by Councillor Hamilton-Cox and seconded by Councillor Hartley that the Licensing Service accept the findings of the report and continue to allocate 108 hackney carriage licences for the area.

Resolved:

That the Committee accept the findings of the Area Demand Survey 2022/23 and that the Licensing Service continue to allocate 108 hackney carriage licences for the area.

68 REVIEW OF LICENSING FEES FOR ANIMAL-RELATED LICENSING

The Community Health and Protection Officer outlined the contents of the report the purpose of which is to review the costs and licensing fees for animal-related licensing to enable members to approve the level of fee for 2023/24. New animal-licensing regulations have meant increased overheads of 44% for the service taking into account increased salary and administration costs and there has been no fee increase for 5 years. The Licensing Service recommends acceptance of the new fees which would fully recover all costs as detailed in the report.

It was proposed by Councillor Gardiner and seconded by Councillor Greenall to accept the contents of the review.

Resolved:

That the Committee approve the new Licensing Fees for Animal-related Licensing as detailed in the review.

69 REVIEW OF LICENSING FEES FOR TAXI/PRIVATE HIRE AND MISCELLANEOUS LICENSING

The Licensing Manager presented the review of Licensing Fees for Taxi/private hire and miscellaneous licensing which provides detailed budget information and proposed fee levels to enable members to consider fees for 2023/24. Licensing fees have been frozen since 2019/20 but costs have continued to rise consequently there is an average deficit of circa £80k over the period 2021/22 to 2022/23. The Licensing service aims to set fees to return to full cost recovery, but it is not proposed to seek to recover losses from previous years.

It was proposed by Councillor Hamilton-Cox, seconded by Councillor Gardiner and agreed by the majority:

“That fees increase, not by the recommended amount, but by 20% (to the nearest pound) now; and to effect a further increase in the following year with a view to achieving full cost recovery in 24/25, accepting that the fee increases may again be above inflation. The reason for the two-stage increase is to smooth the impact on the trade.”

Resolved:

That fees increase, not by the recommended amount, but by 20% (to the nearest pound) now; and to effect a further increase in the following year with a view to achieving full cost recovery in 24/25, accepting that the fee increases may again be above inflation. The reason for the two-stage increase is to smooth the impact on the trade.

Chair

(The meeting ended at 4.30 p.m.)

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
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By virtue of paragraph(s) 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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