



LICENSING AND ENFORCEMENT COMMITTEE

MEETING : Tuesday, 8th April 2014

PRESENT : Cllrs. Noakes (Chair), Porter (Vice-Chair), Brown, Tracey, Durrant, C. Witts, Lugg, Ravenhill, Hanman, Randle and Gilson

Officers in Attendance

Steve Isaac, Solicitor

Lisa Jones, Food, Licensing and Markets Manager

Gill Ragon, Head of Public Protection

Andrew Cummings, Financial Services

APOLOGIES : Cllrs. Mozol and Toleman

42. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

43. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2014 were approved as a correct record subject to minute 40 'Request to consider adopting Driving Standard Assessment for all new Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers' being revised to read:-

*The Food Licensing and Markets Manager briefed Members on a request received from some of the Hackney Carriage drivers for the City Council to introduce a Driving Standards Agency test for all new Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Driver applicants to ensure that high driving standards were maintained. It was explained that currently drivers only took the test on referral by a Licensing and Enforcement Sub-Committee, potentially to be carried out and passed during a period when their driver's licence had been suspended. The Food Licensing and Markets Manager commented that if Members were minded to look at the introduction of such a measure that a ~~draft~~-report and **draft** policy would be brought back to a future Committee. Members welcomed the proposal.*

RESOLVED: That a ~~draft~~ report and **draft** policy for the adoption of Driving Standard Assessment testing for all new hackney carriage and private hire drivers be presented to a future meeting of the Committee

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44. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)

There were no questions from members of the public.

45. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES, MAXIMUM 3 MINUTES PER PERSON)

There were no petitions or depositions.

46. FEES FOR VEHICLES, OPERATORS AND DRIVERS' LICENCES 2014/15

The Food, Licensing and Markets Manager introduced a report which asked Members to determine the level of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licence fees for 2014/15.

The Committee was informed that following publication on 24 January 2014 of proposed fees to take effect from 1 April 2014 and consultation with the trade, that three representations had been received which had necessitated referral of the matter to Members for decision. One of the objections had challenged the accuracy of the proposed published fees and this had led to further analysis of income and expenditure. The audit had resulted in a revised journal being produced at Appendix 6 to the report highlighting the financial outcome for 2012/13. Members were also provided with projected figures for future years.

The Food, Licensing and Markets Manager explained that the proposed published fees incorporated a new charge for the work involved with an application for an exemption for private hire vehicles from displaying plates and signage where they were conducting executive or chauffeur work. The proposed fee for this type of application was £50 to take effect from 1 May 2014. Members were further advised that in the case where an operator had multiple applications at the same time for executive vehicle exemptions they could consider an alternative method of charging by setting a reduced fee of £20 as the bulk of the administrative work would have been undertaken with the first vehicle application for exemption. Members noted that it was currently estimated that there were only 3 vehicles that were likely to incur a fee. The Food, Licensing and Markets Manager confirmed that all other fees for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licences would remain the same.

The Chair summarised the decisions that needed to be taken by Members:-

1. To decide whether to introduce a £50 fee for applications to exempt private hire vehicles from the requirement to display plates and signage where they were conducting executive work.
2. Should Members introduce the £50 fee for exemptions they needed to decide if they wished to reduce the fee to £20 for any subsequent exemption applications from an operator at the same time.
3. To decide whether all other fees should stay the same for 2014/15.

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4. To confirm that once the proposed published fees for hackney Carriage and Private Hire licences had been agreed that they should take effect from 1 May 2014.

The Committee debated the proposal to introduce the new fee for applications for exemptions and concurred that it was unfair to ask operators to pay the extra fee at this time. In reaching this decision, Members were mindful of the small number of vehicles which would be eligible to apply for the exemption and the revenue implications of introducing the charge. Members considered that the matter should be reviewed in twelve months' time when the opportunity could be taken to charge retrospectively for any surge in applications for exemptions in order that the Council could recover its costs.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That there should be no introduction of an Operator Exemption Fee to Display Vehicle Licence Plates and Signage at this time.
- (2) That all the other proposed published fees for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licences as set out in Appendix 1 of the report be approved to take effect from 1 May 2014.
- (3) That the level of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licence fees be reviewed in 12 months' time.

47. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 15 July 2014 at 18.30 hours.

Time of commencement: 18:00 hours

Time of conclusion: 18:35 hours

Chair