

ITEM 4

Time commenced – 6.21pm
Time finished – 6.47 pm

TAXI LICENSING AND APPEALS COMMITTEE WEDNESDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2009

Present: Councillor Redfern (Chair)
Councillors Baxter, Berry, Hussain, Lowe, Rawson, Skelton,
Williams

20/08 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Banwait, Hird, Leeming, Poulter and Winter.

21/08 Late items introduced by the Chair

There were no late items.

22/08 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

23/08 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 December 2008 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

24/08 Calculating Private Hire Operators Licence Fees

The Committee considered a report from the Director of Environmental Services on Calculating Private Hire Operators Licence Fees. Each year, Committee is asked to approve the fees and charges for taxi related licences. The taxi licensing fees and charges were based on a 'cost accounting' exercise and this had identified that £19,872 was recoverable from Operators licence fees in 2009/10. In the past, Committee has considered a number of different ways of recovering this amount from Operators.

Members raised concerns that if an operator added an additional car throughout the yearly period they would still be charged the flat rate for the year.

It was noted by the Committee that the calculation was arguably the fairest method for all operators dependant upon the number of vehicles they operated. The two elements of the charge will be re-assessed each year to ensure they take account of annual changes in the relevant figures. The officer informed the

Committee that during a recent trade meeting where this issue was raised there had been support for the proposal.

Resolved:

- 1. To approve the 'flat rate plus per vehicle charge' as the method for calculating private hire operator licence fees.**
- 2. To agree the method chosen to calculate Operators Licence fees be used each subsequent year.**

25/08 Taxi Licensing Fees and Charges 2009/2010

The Committee considered a report from the Director of Environmental Services on Taxi Licensing Fees and Charges 2009/2010. These licensing functions are self-financing and non-profit making. The fees and charges are set at a level to recover the total costs incurred in providing the service. If a trading surplus occurs in any financial year, this is transferred into a taxi licensing holding account. Currently the account holds £32,000. Usually any amount over £20,000 in this account is then used to either offset fees and charges in the following financial year or fund developments within taxi licensing. The £20,000 limit is retained in the account to offset possible deficits in the taxi licensing budget and is set on advice from the Council's financial officers. It was proposed this year to retain an extra £7,000 in addition to the £20,000, this would be put aside for updating IT systems and the remaining £5,000 would offset the fees and charges for the coming year.

Members noted that the proposed charges were not to be increased from this financial year. The Chair reported that this would, of course be welcomed by the trade during these difficult financial times.

Resolved:

- 1. To approve, subject to the consideration of objections /representations, the proposed licence fees and charges for driver, vehicle and operator licences and other charges for 2009/10.**
- 2. To request the Corporate Director of Environmental Services to advertise the proposed variation of fees.**
- 3. To authorise the Corporate Director of Environmental Services, in consultation with the Chair of Taxi Licensing and Appeals Committee, to consider any objections received within the objection period and take appropriate action if required.**

- 4. To approve the new licence fees to become effective from 1 April 2009 if no objections are received during the objection period.**

MINUTES END