

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Licensing and Regulatory Committee held at 2.00 pm
on Wednesday, 12 January 2022

Present:

Members: Councillor C Thomas (Chair)
Councillor F Abbott
Councillor J Birdi
Councillor J Clifford
Councillor B Gittins
Councillor G Hayre
Councillor R Lakha
Councillor R Thay

Employees (by Directorate):

M Coggins, Streetscene and Regulatory Services
C Coyle, Streetscene and Regulatory Services
R Hammond, Law and Governance
A Khan, Streetscene and Regulatory Services
C Sinclair, Law and Governance

Apologies: Councillor L Bigham, J Innes, S Keough, G Ridley and
S Walsh

Public Business

37. Joe Burns

Following the recent death of former colleague from Facilities Management, Joe Burns, the Committee paid tribute to Joe and a minute silence was observed.

38. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

39. Minutes

The minutes of the Committee meeting held on 9 November 2021 and the Sub-Committee hearing held on 15 November 2021 were signed as true records.

40. Exclusion of Press and Public

RESOLVED that, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the items of business indicated below on the grounds that those items involve the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in Schedule 12A of that Act, in particular those paragraphs of Part 1 of the Schedule as indicated:

Minute No.	Subject	Relevant paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
44	Review of Hackney Carriage Driver's Licence	1 & 3

41. Outstanding Issues Report

There were no outstanding issues.

42. Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Fee Review 2021 - Taxi Licensing Mini Review - Objections

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Streetscene and Regulatory Services which set out details of a Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Fee Review and associated objections.

The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 provides that the City Council may charge as fees the reasonable cost of administering and enforcing the hackney carriage and private hire licensing function. The fees charged by the Taxi Licensing Office are intended to enable the service to operate on a self-financing basis.

A review of fees was carried out in 2019 and before that in 2015, which involved assessing the resources used for each activity represented by a fee. Any increased costs to taxi licensing since 2019 had been managed within available resources.

The Licensing & Regulatory Committee on the 9 November 2021 approved the proposed fee increases subject to objections. The advertisement publicising the fee changes ran for 28 days together with a consultation sent to all the licensed drivers (1337); hackney carriage vehicle proprietors (536); private hire vehicle proprietors (240) and 28 private hire operators. Many vehicle proprietors will also be licensed drivers.

There were 50 (approx. 2.3%) objections received which could be seen at Appendix B of the report. Most responses received objected to the increased costs based on affordability due to a general decrease in business across the City, increased fuel costs and Covid-19.

Under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, the City Council could only charge a level of fees sufficient to cover the reasonable cost of administering and enforcing the hackney carriage and private hire licensing function. The proposed increases were intended to enable the service to operate on a self-financing basis based on the costs of providing the function. The increases had been calculated to ensure that the taxi licensing reserve account could be retained without deficit.

Having considered the objections detailed in the report, the Committee clarified that the Cabinet Member had been made aware of the proposals and instructed officers to ensure that further such reports include confirmation that the Cabinet Member has been apprised.

RESOLVED that, having considered objections at Appendix B of the report, the proposed fee changes detailed in Appendix A of the report be approved to commence on 22 January 2022.

43. Any other items of public business which the Chair decides to take as matters of urgency because of the special circumstances involved

There were no other items of public business.

44. Review of Hackney Carriage Driver's Licence

RESOLVED that, having considered the circumstances set out in the report of the Director of Street Scene and Regulatory Services now submitted, the Hackney Carriage Driver's License continue with a written warning.

(Note: The applicant and his representative attended the meeting in support of the application).

45. Any other items of private business which the Chair decides to take as matters of urgency because of the special circumstances involved

There were no other items of private business.

(Meeting closed at 4.45 pm)