

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Licensing and Regulatory Committee held at 9.30 am
on Tuesday, 23 January 2024

Present:

Members: Councillor F Abbott (Chair)
 Councillor G Hayre
 Councillor J Innes
 Councillor T Jandu
 Councillor S Keough
 Councillor R Lakha
 Councillor R Lancaster
 Councillor J Lepoidevin
 Councillor R Thay

Employees (by Service
Area):

Law and Governance S Ahmed, U Patel, T Robinson

Regulatory Services D Cahalin-Heath, M Coggins

In Attendance
(Observers): S Manhertz (Trainee Solicitor)
 E McKindley (Trainee Solicitor)

In Attendance: Taxi Driver Representatives

Apologies: Councillor A Hopkins, L Kelly, A Masih and CE Thomas

Public Business

51. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

52. Minutes

The Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 21 November 2023 and the Sub Committee Hearing held on 11 December 2023 were agreed and signed as a true record.

53. Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Fee Review 2024

The Licensing and Regulatory Committee considered a report of the Chief Legal Officer regarding the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Fee Review 2024. The report informed members of a review of the current fees in relation to the licensing of Taxis and Private hire drivers, vehicles and operators and following the required consultation process, sought approval to adopt the proposed new fees and charges.

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. In relation to drivers licence fees, Section 53(2) states; A district council may demand and recover for the grant to any person of a licence to drive a hackney carriage, or a private hire vehicle, as the case may be, such a fee as they consider reasonable with a view to recovering the costs of issue and administration.

A fee review was undertaken on the 5th of December 2022, to address proposed charges made for the processing and issuing of licences to drivers and operators to reflect the changes and associated costs. These charges were implemented on the 8th of February 2023. Fees should be reviewed on a regular basis, and a such a cost analysis was completed looking at current fees and overall costs. Consequently, it was recommended that fees for the coming year be adjusted to accurately reflect the cost of the service. Before the fees could be set, the local authority must publish in a newspaper circulating in the area, details of the proposed variation and set a period of not less than 28 days for the receipt of any objections to the proposal.

Two taxi driver representatives attended the meeting and spoke regarding their concerns to increasing fees and the impact this would have on drivers. The Chair thanked the representatives for sharing their concerns and encouraged them to submit their concerns and issues as part of the 28-day consultation process. In addition, it was agreed that officers from the taxi licensing office would meet with the representatives to discuss some of their concerns further.

RESOLVED that, the Licensing and Regulatory Committee:

- 1) Approves, subject to consideration of any comments received, the proposed fee changes detailed in Appendix A.**
- 2) Authorises the Chief Legal Officer to make the necessary arrangements to advertise the applicable proposed fee variations.**
- 3) Notes that if any formal objections are received in response to the statutory notice that a further report will be presented on the 12th of March 2024.**

54. Outstanding Issues Report

There were no outstanding issues.

55. 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.

(Meeting closed at 10.10 am)