

## Taxi Licensing Committee

Thursday 1 September 2022

### PRESENT:

Councillor Churchill, in the Chair.

Councillor Tofan, Vice Chair.

Councillors Haydon, Partridge, Mrs Pengelly (substitute for Councillor Finn), Rennie and Tuffin.

Apologies for absence: Councillor Finn.

Also in attendance: Ann Gillbanks (Senior Lawyer), Sharon Day (Lawyer), Jake Metcalfe (Democratic Advisor) and Hannah Whiting (Democratic Advisor).

The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 12.00 pm.

*Note: At a future meeting, the committee will consider the accuracy of these draft minutes, so they may be subject to change. Please check the minutes of that meeting to confirm whether these minutes have been amended.*

### 18. Change of Vice Chair

Member's noted the appointment of Councillor Chip Tofan as Vice Chair for the municipal year 2022/23 who replaced Councillor Salmon.

### 19. Declarations of Interest

The following declarations of interest were made by Members in accordance with the code of conduct:

Councillor	Minute No.	Reason	Interest
Councillor Partridge	Minute 24 Review of Taxi Table of Fares (Taxi Tariff)	The PLTA representative is known to him.	Personal
Councillor Tofan	Minute 24 Review of Taxi Table of Fares (Taxi Tariff)	The PLTA representative is known to him.	Personal

### 20. Minutes

The Committee agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 7 July 2022 are confirmed as a correct record.

### 21. Chair's Urgent Business

There were no items of Chair's Urgent Business.

22. **Appeal Cases**

There had been no appeal cases since the last Committee Meeting.

23. **Number of Certificates of Good Conduct Exemptions Granted**

The Committee were informed that 3 certificates of good conduct exemptions were granted.

24. **Review of Taxi Table of Fares (Taxi Tariff)**

The Committee having considered –

- a) The report from the Director of Public Health presented by Graham Hooper.
- b) Heard representations from interested parties from the taxi trade and PLTA which included the following main points –
  - If a 4<sup>th</sup> Tariff was added from 2200 to 0600 on Friday to Saturday and Saturday to Sunday, as well as Sunday to Monday when Monday is a Bank Holiday, for the flag fall to be enhanced by 50p it could;
    - Increase the number of taxi drivers who want to work unsociable hours by increasing their pay from other times during the week.
    - Therefore, increase the number of taxi's available on Friday and Saturday nights, which is currently an issue.
    - Provide a better rate for drivers who are dealing with sometimes intoxicated and violent customers who cause damage to taxis.
    - Attract younger drivers, who are more willing to work unsociable hours.
    - Customers are so keen for more taxi's to be available on Friday/Saturday nights, that the PLTA believe customers would be happy to pay a higher premium.

The Committee raised the following key areas which included –

- c) The PLTA, who have proposed the amendment, represents approximately 16% of drivers.
- d) Licensing Officers do acknowledge that there is a driver shortage in Plymouth, particularly when it comes to supporting the night time economy, this is a nationwide issue.
- e) The demographic of the taxi trade is older, but younger drivers are being encouraged into the trade, as they might be more willing to work as part of the night time economy.
- f) Licensing Officers explained that they were looking into ways of encouraging more taxi drivers into the trade, for example, looking at removing the knowledge test.
- g) The proposed increase in tariff would enable drivers to earn more money.
- h) The proposed tariff is a 16-22% increase, with the PLTA proposal, this would be a 31-38% increase.

- i) Political groups are due to meet with officers soon to discuss the issue of the lack of drivers at night.
- j) Hackney carriages are now cheaper than Private Hire vehicles.
- k) Drivers can refuse to take anti-social customers with just cause.
- l) There would be a 12 month review of tariffs that officers would begin looking at in early 2023.

The Committee agreed to –

- Approve the Taxi Table of Fares as advertised.
- Set the date of 19 September 2022 for the new Taxi Table of Fares to come into force.

25. **Exempt Information**

The Committee agreed that under Section 1004A) of the Local Government Act, 1972 to exclude the press and the public from the meeting for the following items of business, on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in Taxi Licensing Committee Thursday 9 June 2022 paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended by the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

26. **Application for the Grant of a Private Hire Vehicle Driver Licence**

The Committee having:

- considered the report from the Director of Public Health;
- heard from the applicant and heard the responses to questions raised;
- taken the following into account:
  - the law, policy and factual information contained in the report;
  - all that was said by the applicant;
- asked itself whether it would want a person they cared for or a vulnerable person to be driven in a vehicle driven by the applicant. The answer to that question was no.

Agreed to refuse to renew the licence as the applicant was not considered to be a fit and proper person to hold a licence.

(Councillor Haydon was only in attendance for this item).