

Taxi Licensing Committee

Thursday 10 August 2023

PRESENT:

Councillor Tippetts, in the Chair.
Councillor Tuffin, Vice Chair.
Councillors Dr Cree, Finn, Gilmour, Moore and Tofan.

Apologies for absence: Councillors Rennie.

Also in attendance: Steve Forshaw (Senior Enforcement Officer), Andrea Gilbert (Lawyer), Graham Hooper (Senior Officer in Intelligence in Licensing), Nicola Horne (Environmental Health Manager), Hannah Whiting (Democratic Advisor).

The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 11.14 am.

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.

39. **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made.

40. **Minutes**

The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2023 as a correct record.

41. **Chair's Urgent Business**

There were no items of Chair's Urgent Business.

42. **Appeal Cases**

There were no appeal case outcomes to report, but there was an appeal case that the legal officer would provide an update on, later in the agenda.

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

There were no Certificates of Good Conduct Exemptions to report.

44. **Tariff Review**

Graham Hooper (Senior Officer, Intelligence and Licensing) introduced the report and highlighted the following points:

- a) The report laid out the statutory procedure and timeline for a change to taxi tariffs;
- b) The consultation would commence on Wednesday 16 August 2023 and would end of 31 August 2023;
- c) If objections were received they would be heard at the Taxi Licensing Committee meeting on 7 September 2023 and either the existing tariff would be retained, or the proposed, or further amended, tariff would commencing no more than 4 weeks after the meeting;
- d) The Taxi Licensing Committee resolved on 13 January 2022 that the officers review the tariff on an annual basis and furthermore the Secretary of the Plymouth Licensed Taxi Association submitted an email proposing a small increase in the tariff to reflect increase in the cost of living;
- e) The increase would be in line with the Consumer Price Index (CPI);
- f) With consideration of the increase in the cost of living and inflation it was proposed to apply an average uplift across the 3 tariff structure of 10% and to facilitate this, the mileage distance rate would be changed to the following:
 - i. Tariff 1, which could be considered the daytime rate was currently set at 1/7 of a mile, which would change to 1/8 of a mile;
 - ii. Tariff 2, which could be considered the night time rate was currently set at 1/8 of a mile and would change to 1/9 of a mile;
 - iii. Tariff 3, which could be considered the Christmas rate, and was always set as double tariff 1, would change to 1/8 of a mile;
- g) Appendix 4 showed how the proposed changes to mileage rates would affect the costs for representative journeys of 1 to 10 miles and that an average of 9-10% uplift was applied;
- h) There were no proposed changes to the tariff structure or any of the extra charges;
- i) Officers had considered the need to keep late night fares fair for both the drivers and the general public so it could remain affordable whilst high enough to encourage drivers to work at night;
- j) Officers had considered that the proposed uplift would assist taxi drivers licensed through the Council to face the significant cost of living rises and support them in making a viable living, therefore reducing the number of drivers leaving the trade for better remunerated work and encouraging consideration of investment in newer environmentally-friendly vehicles.

The following comments were made in response to the report and in response to questions:

- k) Wanted to acknowledge the hard work of officers and the important contributions from the taxi trade, and the importance of co-operative working;
- l) An increase based on inflation was preferable to a sudden, larger increase in following years;
- m) If approved the new tariffs would be implemented from late September/early October.

The Committee agreed to:

1. Approve the proposed tariff set out in Appendix 3;
2. Resolve to authorise the advertising and public consultation of the tariff set out in Appendix 3, as required by the Plymouth City Council Act 1975.

45. **Exempt Information**

The Committee agreed to pass a resolution under Section 100A(4) 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 involved the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended by the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

46. **Application for the grant of a Private Hire Vehicle Driver Licence**

The Committee agreed to grant the application for the grant of a private hire vehicle driver licence.

47. **Appeal against revocation of a Hackney Carriage Driver Licence**

The Committee agreed to continue with the appeal.

48. **Any Other Business**

The Committee returned to a Part 1 meeting following the conclusion of sensitive business.

Graham Hooper (Senior Officer in Intelligence and Licensing) informed the Committee that Mark Small (Former Enforcement Officer) had left the Council after more than 20 years' service.

The Committee expressed their thanks for Mark's work and many years' service and wished him all the best for the future.

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