

# Licensing Committee (Hackney Carriage)

Thursday 17 November 2011

## PRESENT:

Councillor Reynolds, in the Chair.  
Councillor Delbridge, Vice Chair.  
Councillors Bowie, Churchill, Haydon, Mrs Nicholson and Rennie.

Apologies for absence: None.

Also in attendance: Ann Gillbanks (Senior Lawyer) and Andy Netherton (Manager Health, Safety and Licensing).

The meeting started at 10 am and finished at 10.15 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.*

## 82. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Delbridge declared a personal interest as his sister's husband was a private hire driver.

## 83. CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of Chair's urgent business.

## 84. PROPOSAL FOR A HACKNEY CARRIAGE TARIFF INCREASE

The Director for Community Services submitted a report on the proposal for a hackney carriage tariff increase, which outlined the following –

- (a) negotiations had been held with the Plymouth Licensed Taxi Association (PLTA) concerning the proposal put forward by the Association to increase the hackney carriage tariff;
- (b) at its meeting held on 2 September 2011, the committee agreed a proposed tariff table which was then advertised through a public notice (in accordance with the Plymouth City Council Act, 1975);
- (c) three objections had been received regarding the proposed tariff changes, which related to –
  - the need for a fare increase;

- the implications of the tariff increase on the ability of hackney carriage drivers to compete with private hire companies;
  - the need for extras and the potential for the mis-use of extras leading to overcharging;
- (d) the tariffs including the extras set by the Council were the maximum fares that could be charged; drivers were able to request lower amounts and negotiate fares for travel outside of the City boundaries;
- (e) extras could be added at the discretion of the driver which could lead to mis-use; however very few complaints were received regarding charging for extras;
- (f) the tariff table had to be displayed within all hackney carriage vehicles to allow passengers to calculate the approximate cost of the journey;
- (g) that the representations received represent less than one percent of the number of hackney carriage drivers.

The following responses were provided to questions raised by the committee –

- (h) following the proposal put forward at the Plymouth Licensed Taxi Association's annual general meeting on 7 June 2011, the proposal had been formulated and circulated to the whole of the trade; the proposal had been advertised under the statutory requirements and independent drivers would have been able to access this information;
- (i) in the league table of hackney carriage tariffs for local authorities, Plymouth City Council was 214 out of 384 (at two miles);
- (j) Plymouth City Council had a policy of providing a fleet which was 100 per cent wheelchair accessible which made the running cost of the fleet higher.

The committee agreed that having considered the representations received, Members considered that it is proportionate to increase the fare as outlined in appendix I of the report and to implement the fare increase on 1 December 2011.

## 85. EXEMPT INFORMATION

There were no exempt items.