

DRAFT MINUTES of the meeting of Licensing Committee held on 15 June 2011 at 7.00pm.

Present: Councillors Mike Stone (Chair), Tunde Ojetola (Vice-Chair), Wendy Curtis, Angie Gaywood, Robert Gledhill, Sue Gray, Victoria Holloway (from 7.08pm), Tom Kelly, Ben Maney, Gerard Rice, Pauline Tolson and Simon Wootton (substitute for Garry Hague)

Apologies: Councillor Garry Hague, Ian Harrison and John Purkiss

In attendance: Lucy Magill - Head of Public Protection
Paul Adams – Principal Licensing Officer
Elizabeth Cox – Licensing Officer
Jamie Hollis – Legal Services
Victoria Freeman – Senior Democratic Services Officer

1 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Licensing Committee held on 25 November 2010 and the 3 November 2010, were approved as a correct record.

2 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair advised that there were no items of urgent business.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no such declarations.

4 REVIEW OF LICENCE FEES

The Principal Licensing Officer presented a report on the revision of fees in respect of licence applications in relation to Hackney Carriage / Private Hire Drivers; Sex Establishments; Motor Salvage Operators and Animal Welfare Licences.

Members were requested to agree to recommend to Full Council the adoption of the licence fees as attached in Appendix A of the report and also to recommend to Full Council the amendment of all references within Thurrock Council's Hackney Carriage / Private Hire Driver Licence Conditions, of the licence duration of 3 years to 1 year.

Members attention was brought to Appendix A of the report, which provided the Committee with a comparison of licensing fees with other Essex Local Authorities and were advised that Thurrock's licensing fees had not been increased since 2006.

During discussion of the report, Members were concerned that the increase in licensing fees was too substantial and disproportionate, and it was suggested that a phased approach over a 3 year period should be considered.

Furthermore, Members were concerned that the increase in licensing fees for sex establishments were not substantial enough, but were advised that legislation provided only for Local Authority costs to be covered and not for further income to be generated and that £3,000 was a reasonable fee to deal with this type of application.

However, Members viewed that the cost of advertising, publishing notices and the wider consultation required with regards to sex establishment licensing applications, supported a higher fee than that suggested by officers. In response to this, Members were advised that Local Authorities in London had been judicially reviewed for setting sex establishment licensing fees too high.

Members proposed that the Committee recommend to Full Council that they adopt the following licence fees:

Private Hire Driver (New)	-	£80.00
Private Hire Driver (Renewal)	-	£80.00
Hackney Carriage Driver (New)	-	£80.00
Hackney Carriage Driver (Renewal)	-	£80.00
Combined Drivers Badge (New)	-	£100.00
Combined Drivers Badge (Renewal)	-	£100.00

It was suggested by Members that the increase in fees be phrased in over a 3 year period and it was explained that this would mean that for those drivers who have recently renewed their licences, they would be required to renew annually; for those drivers whose licences were required to be renewed in June 2012, a two year licence would be issued, and in 2014 thereafter, licences would be issued annually.

The Committee agreed that the report be brought back an Extraordinary meeting of the Committee providing a breakdown of administration costs in determining licensing applications.

RESOLVED:

That a breakdown of administration costs in determining licensing applications be presented at an Extraordinary meeting of the Licensing Committee.

5 REVIEW OF LICENCE FEES - CONSULTATION

The Principal Licensing Officer presented a report that requested Members agree to public consultation for the revision of fees for Hackney Carriage / Private Hire Vehicles and Private Hire Operators.

Members were advised that there was currently a set licensing fee for private hire operators that operated 5 or more vehicles, however the report proposed that higher fees be agreed for those with 6 – 10 vehicles, 11-20 vehicles and 20 + vehicles.

The Committee agreed that a report be brought back to an Extraordinary meeting of the Licensing Committee that provided comparative tables and justifiable figures using the proposed models.

RESOLVED:

That a report be brought back to an Extraordinary meeting of the Licensing Committee that provided comparative tables and justifiable figures using the proposed models.

6 REVIEW OF THE LIMITATION OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE PROPRIETORS LICENCES

The Principal Licensing Officer presented a report on the review of the limitation of hackney carriage proprietors licences, and requested that Members decide if Thurrock Council should retain the limit on the number of hackney carriage proprietor licences it issues.

During questioning, Members were advised that disability legislation provided for a percentage of vehicles in an area to have disabled access, and that 17 of the 90 hackney carriage vehicles in Thurrock had disabled access.

Members were in agreement with recommendation 1.1 and 1.3 contained in the report, however they did not agree that a report should be submitted to the Licensing Committee when the number of Hackney Carriage Proprietors Licences reached 130.

RESOLVED:

- i) That Full Council be recommended to remove the current limit on Hackney Carriages (delimitation)**
- ii) That the Licensing Department give consideration to the additional 6 recommendations of the survey as detailed in Section 7 of Appendix 1.**

The meeting finished at 8.47pm

Approved as a true and correct record

CHAIRMAN

DATE

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
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or alternatively e-mail VEFreeman@thurrock.gov.uk**