

# Minutes

<b>Meeting name</b>	<b>Licensing Committee</b>
<b>Date</b>	<b>Thursday, 17 June 2021</b>
<b>Start time</b>	<b>6.30 pm</b>
<b>Venue</b>	<b>Parkside, Station Approach, Burton Street, Melton Mowbray, Leics, LE13 1GH</b>

## Present:

**Chair** Councillor J. Douglas (Chair)

**Councillors** P. Chandler (Vice-Chair) S. Carter  
C. Fisher P. Posnett MBE  
D. Pritchett J. Wilkinson  
R. de Burle (Substitute)

**Officers** Regulatory Services Manager  
Licensing and Compliance Officer (Business Advisor: Licensing) (SF)  
Licensing and Compliance Officer (Business Advisor: Licensing) (SG)  
Senior Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer  
Democratic Services Officer (HA)

<b>Minute No.</b>	<b>Minute</b>
L1	<p><b>Apologies for Absence</b> Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Cumbers and Glancy. Councillor de Burle was in attendance as Councillor Glancy's substitute.</p>
L2	<p><b>Declarations of Interest</b> Councillor Posnett declared a standing personal interest in any matters relating to the Leicestershire County Council due to her role as a County Councillor.</p>
L3	<p><b>Minutes</b> The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2019 were confirmed and authorised to be signed by the Chair.</p>
L4	<p><b>Minutes to be noted from Licensing Sub-Committees</b> The Committee noted the Minutes and decision notices of the Licensing Sub-Committee meetings held on 8 July 2019, 30 October 2019, 24 January 2020 and 8 October 2020.</p>
L5	<p><b>Taxi Fare Review</b> The Taxi Fare Review was presented to the Committee. In introducing the report, the Regulatory Services Manager outlined to Members the addendum which was as a result of a late representation. The Committee was informed that the representation had raised concerns regarding the methodology used in calculating the fare increase and that the addendum highlights the new proposal resulting from the concern raised.</p> <p>A query was raised regarding the specifics of the tariff charges; however Members were informed that the process involves taxi drivers proposing tariff charges with the role of the Committee considering the proposed tariff charges.</p> <p>Following a question on why some tariffs had vastly different waiting times, it was confirmed that each tariff relates to a different scenario depending on the time of day, number of passengers or whether it is a bank holiday. In referencing tariff 5, the Regulatory Services Manager stated that this particular tariff is a response to a problem that had been identified by taxi drivers during consultation.</p> <p>In response to the question on whether the late proposal was proposed by someone who could have responded to the original consultation, it was confirmed that each taxi driver had an opportunity to respond to the original consultation and that the late proposal was proposed by someone who had the opportunity to respond at an earlier stage. The Committee was informed that the proposal was received a day after the Committee papers were published. In those papers, the formula that had been used to calculate the tariff fares was also published, whereas it had not been for the original consultation as there is no requirement to do so, and that the proposer stated that if they had sight of the formula beforehand then their contribution to the consultation would have been different.</p>

A query was raised regarding how and when the fuel prices were calculated, however in response the Committee was informed that Officers had used RAC calculations in order to calculate the fuel prices to be used within the formula for the calculation of tariff fares.

A Member commented that the original proposal should be considered first as it had already been through the consultation process. However, although fellow Committee Members were sympathetic to that position, it was agreed that the late proposal was as a result of information that the proposer was not aware of at the time of the original consultation. A comment was also made that the fares not only need to be at a level where taxi drivers can make a living wage, but that they need to be at a level that drivers have enough income to replace their vehicles, if required.

It was noted that if the Committee accepted the revised proposal, then the Council would have to go out to consultation for a second time. Despite this, Members expressed support for the revised proposal and recognised that it had been a number of years since the last increase and that to support taxi drivers within the town then an increase is required.

### **RESOLVED**

1. The Committee accepted the alternative proposal as valid and approved further consultation based on the new proposed fee amounts and therefore agreed, in principle, that the fare table be varied.
2. The Committee agreed that authority be delegated to the Regulatory Services Manager, in consultation with the Chair of the Licensing Committee, to resolve any objections received before deciding to implement the new fee table.

L6

### **Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Licensing Policy Review 2021**

The Licensing and Compliance Officer introduced the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy Review 2021. The Committee was informed that the policy is reviewed every five years and was last reviewed in 2018, however in July 2020 the Department for Transport issued the new Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle standards. This therefore means that the policy had to be reviewed in order to align with the new standards. Members were then appraised of the changes that had been made.

A concern was raised regarding maximum age of a vehicle adapted to carry a wheelchair from 7 to 15 years and that there is a potential that there could be vehicles on the road with older technology. In response it was explained that there are a lack of taxis in Melton that can carry a wheelchair and that by increasing the maximum age of the vehicle would mean that they didn't have to be replaced as often. The Committee was informed that it is hoped that this

approach would encourage more vehicles that could carry a wheelchair.

Further discussion ensued regarding how to encourage more vehicles that can carry a wheelchair. The Committee was informed that the Council are encouraging more such vehicles via the increase in the maximum age and reducing the fee to zero.

In addition, it will also be a requirement for taxi companies with five or more vehicles to have a vehicle that can carry a wheelchair, whereas currently no such provision exists. Members had concerns over the requirement and that further discussion on transport for disabled people is required.

In response to a question regarding checking vehicles to ensure their safety, Members were informed that the policy states that the vehicle shall be maintained in a safe mechanical and structural condition. Also vehicles over eight years of age are required to undertake a compliance test every six months in addition to an annual MOT.

Following a comment it was confirmed that the policy is Melton Borough Council's rules on the required standard of the vehicles and service that operate throughout the Borough whilst also incorporating statutory obligations.

The Committee welcomed the policy being reviewed, especially in light of the new Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle standards that was issued by the Department for Transport in 2020.

**RESOLVED**

1. The Committee approved the revised Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Vehicle Policy which will take effect from 1 August 2021.
2. The Committee delegated authority to the Regulatory Services Manager to make minor amendments and those required by changes in legislation and guidance in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.

L7

**Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business for discussion.

The meeting closed at: 7.34 pm

Chair