

LICENSING COMMITTEE

29 January 2024
10.00 - 11.30 am

Present: Councillors McPherson (Chair), Bird (Vice-Chair), Bennett, Carling, Griffin, Levien, Moore, Pounds and Wade

Officers

Environmental Health Manager: Yvonne O'Donnell

Environmental Health and Licensing Support Team Leader: Luke Catchpole

Committee Manager: Sarah Steed

Meeting Producer: James Goddard

Present virtually:

Legal Advisor: Elizabeth Lanlehin

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

24/1/Lic Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Nethsingha.

24/2/Lic Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

24/3/Lic Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

24/4/Lic Public Questions

It was noted that the rules around public speaking had changed and there was now a requirement to provide the text of any public question 2 days in advance of the meeting. The Chair exercised their discretion to permit members of the public to ask their questions despite not providing the text in advance of the meeting but reminded the members of the public about the new requirements for any future meeting that they would attend.

Question 1 (from the Vice-Chair of Cambridge Licensed Taxis which represented about 162 licensed drivers in Cambridge)

- i. In relation to the proposed charges (agenda item 5 - Annual Review of Licensing Fees and Charges 2024-25), did not have an issue with charges being increased by 11% as taxi meters had been increased by this value last year. Queried why some increases in charges were higher than this percentage value increase. The one-year Hackney Carriage licence charge increase stood out as this had been increased by 200-300%. Queried this level of increase.

The Environmental Health Manager responded:

- i. Increases to fees were made to reflect the true cost of running the taxi licencing service. Some fees had increased more than others. Noted that following a consultation with the Chair of the Committee that the Annual Driver's Licence fee had been reduced. This service was run on a cost recovery basis, the fees were adjusted to ensure that the Council recovered costs for running the service.

Supplementary Question

- i. Asked that the charges were made publicly available.
- ii. Asked if the extension of hybrid vehicle licensing was going to be discussed today. The trade welcomed the extension.

The Environmental Health Manager responded:

- i. Noted that the fee structure for taxi licence had been published within the Committee report: [Agenda for Licensing Committee on Monday, 29th January, 2024, 10.30 am - Cambridge Council](#)
- ii. A report regarding hybrid taxi vehicles would be considered by the Committee and was item 6 within the agenda.

24/5/Lic Annual Review of Licensing Fees and Charges 2024-25

The Committee received a report from the Environmental Health Manager.

The report set out the revised fees and charges for licences and associated items, which were proposed to be made with effect from 1st April 2024. The approved charges would be submitted to Full Council to note on 15th February 2024.

In response to Members' questions the Environmental Health Manager said the following:

- i. Advised that fees were set on a cost recovery basis. Fee levels were not set to make a profit.
- ii. Agreed to discuss with the Chair how information could be provided to the taxi trade which set out the average cost increases for fees.

The Committee:

Resolved (unanimously):

- i. To approve the level of the fees and charges with effect from 1 April 2024, as set out in Appendix E of the officer's report.
- ii. To request officers to communicate changes with members of the public, businesses and taxi trade.

24/6/Lic Environmental Consideration for Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policy

The Committee received a report from the Environmental Health Manager.

The purpose of the report was to consider the Environmental Considerations Vehicles Policy within the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle fleet and review the decision effective from June 2022 to allow saloon vehicles standard hybrids with emission levels of 120g/km of CO₂ to be licensed until June 2024, when the situation would be reviewed.

The Committee:

Resolved (unanimously):

- i. To remove the inclusion of standard hybrid saloon vehicles within the policy with emissions levels of less than 120g/km of CO₂ with effect from June 2024.

24/7/Lic Cumulative Impact Assessment

The Committee received a report from the Environmental Health and Licensing Support Team Leader.

The report advised that the Cumulative Impact Assessment was published in March 2021 as a stand-alone document and needed to be reviewed every 3 years.

Members were advised that the recommendation would be a recommendation to Council to approve the Cumulative Impact Assessment as set out in Appendix C of the officer's report.

The Committee:

Resolved (unanimously) to recommend to Council:

- i. To approve the draft Cumulative Impact Assessment attached to the officer's report as Appendix C taking into consideration the results of the public consultation exercise as summarised in Appendix D of the officer's report and the information provided by Cambridge Constabulary and Public Health as attached in Appendix E of the officer's report.

The meeting ended at 11.30 am

CHAIR