

Minutes of a meeting of the General Purposes Licensing Committee on Monday 7 February 2022

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Committee members present:

Councillor Clarkson (Chair)	Councillor Cook
Councillor Corais	Councillor Coyne
Councillor Dunne	Councillor Jarvis
Councillor Miles	Councillor Mundy
Councillor Rehman	Councillor Upton
Councillor Wade	

Officers present for all or part of the meeting:

Alison Daly, Lawyer
Emma Thompson, Senior Licensing Compliance Officer
Katie Thorp, Licensing Compliance Officer
David Stevens, Business Regulation Team Manager
Alice Courtney, Committee and Member Services Officer

Apologies:

Councillor(s) Humberstone, Gant and Thomas sent apologies.

11. Declarations of interest

None.

12. Commercial Events, Hackney Carriage and Private Hire, Road Closure Orders, Scrap Metal Dealers, Sex Establishments and Street Parties: Licence Fees and Charges for the 2022/23 Financial Year

The Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety had submitted a report to seek agreement of the licence fees for 2022/23 where the Council had discretion over the level of fee charged.

The Senior Licensing Compliance Officer introduced the report. It was proposed that no substantial variation to the current fees and charges was made in 2022/23 in order to provide financial stability to licence holders in the present economic climate. It was added that the Taxi Licensing Fees may be revisited later in the year, but this was not confirmed and the fees would be brought to the Committee for consideration in the event they were revised.

In response to questions, the Senior Licensing Compliance Officer confirmed:

- That she had been asked to mention the possibility of the Taxi Licensing Fees being revisited because they had not been revised for some time, but there was no immediate intention to revise them.
- That one-year licences were only issued in special circumstances by the Licensing Team Leader (e.g. the economic climate due to COVID-19 or driver retirement).
- That the fees were set to reflect the Council's costs (e.g. sex entertainment premises were more expensive, but this reflected the work that went into conducting more inspections to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and regulations).

The Committee resolved to:

- **Agree** the licence fees and charges for 2022/23 as set out in Appendix 1 and recommend them to Council.

13. Miscellaneous Licensing: Fees and Charges for the 2022/23 Financial Year

The Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety had submitted a report to seek agreement of the licence fees for 2022/23 where the Council had discretion over the level of fee charged.

The Business Regulation Team Manager introduced the report. It was proposed that no inflationary increase was made to the 2022/23 fees and charges for Street Trading in order to promote and support local businesses, but small changes to application fees in line with general increases were outlined in the report.

The Business Regulation Team Manager drew the Committee's attention to the Pavement Licence provisions, which were meant to be a temporary measure to enable businesses to trade outdoors in accordance with previous COVID-19 regulations. He advised that this was a lifeline for many businesses and Oxford City currently had around 100 Pavement Licences.

The current Pavement Licence provisions implemented by the Government would last through to September 2022, but there was no indication of whether the provisions would be extended beyond then. If the provisions were not extended then there would be a requirement to use the Café Licence provisions, but the difference was that planning permission was required alongside a Café Licence and it was a longer drawn out process. In the event that the Pavement Licence provisions were not extended, it was proposed that the Council would offer Café Licences at three prices, taking into account the proposed footprint of the outdoor area. The Business Regulation Team Manager confirmed that the provisions only applied to tables and chairs on a Public Highway and not in a private garden.

In response to a question, the Business Regulation Team Manager advised that the team had not consulted with businesses on the costs and whether they were reflective of the likely income businesses would get from the use of that seating. Members of the Committee were satisfied that the maximum annual charge of £250 outlined in Appendix 1 was not prohibitive to businesses.

The Committee resolved to:

- **Agree** the licence fees and charges for 2022/23 as set out in Appendix 1 and recommend them to Council.

14. Minutes of the previous meeting

The Committee agreed to **approve** the minutes of the meeting held on 02 December 2021 as a true and accurate record.

15. Dates and times of meetings

The Committee was advised that an additional meeting was required in order to agree the Policy on the Relevance of Warnings, Offences, Cautions and Convictions. The proposed date for this meeting was Thursday 17 March 2022, 6.15pm.

The Committee resolved to:

- **Agree** the proposed date for the additional meeting to consider the Policy on the Relevance of Warnings, Offences, Cautions and Convictions.

The Committee noted the dates and times of future meetings.

The meeting started at 6.15 pm and ended at 6.30 pm

Chair

Date: Thursday 17 March 2022

When decisions take effect:

Cabinet: after the call-in and review period has expired

Planning Committees: after the call-in and review period has expired and the formal decision notice is issued

All other committees: immediately.

Details are in the Council's Constitution.