

Minutes of a meeting of the General Purposes Licensing Committee on Monday 25 September 2023

Committee members present:

Councillor Mundy (Chair)	Councillor Coyne
Councillor Humberstone	Councillor Miles
Councillor Rawle	Councillor Upton
Councillor Waite	

Officers present for all or part of the meeting:

Alison Daly, Legal Adviser
Jonathan Malton, Committee and Member Services Manager
Joshua Curnow, Supervising Senior Licensing Officer
Nicholas Cox, Business Regulations Team Manager

Apologies:

Councillor(s) Clarkson, Gant, Hunt and Muddiman sent apologies.

8. Declarations of interest

None.

9. Hackney Carriage Tariff Variation

The Supervising Senior Licensing Officer introduced the report and highlighted the proposed variation of the Hackney Carriage Tariff.

Mr Ahmed, on behalf of the City of Oxford Licensed Taxi-Cab Association spoke to the committee on their proposed tariff increase and explained it was in-line with other cities.

Councillor Upton asked Officers why there isn't an annual review of the charges. The Supervising Senior Licensing Officer commented that annual reviews were possible, but the Licencing Authority were trade lead and the trade had not requested an annual review or increase until this year.

Councillor Miles asked about carrying bicycles. Mr Ahmed responded that these proposals ensured that drivers would continue to carry bicycles since the charge to carry a bicycle would encourage drivers to do so despite the inconvenience that is sometimes involved. Councillor Miles asked a follow-up question regarding bike-racks to be added to the outside of the cabs. Mr Ahmed noted that this would not be feasible with older-style cabs.

Councillor Rawle commented that an increase of tariffs would force people to cycle instead of use a taxi. Mr Ahmed commented that people using hackney carriages do not usually transport bicycles.

Councillor Mundy asked about the necessity of increasing tariffs to bring it in line with private hire vehicles, and an additional charge for transporting other cargo such as animals. Mr Ahmed responded that animals outside of cages are charged.

The Committee voted in support of the three variations to the table of fares proposed in the report:

- a. Increasing the tariffs by an average of 5.6%
- b. Increasing the additional charges by an average of 70%, and
- c. Removing the restriction of the highest tariff, tariff three, to allow its usage every day between 02:00 and 06:00 hours.

The General Purposes Licensing Committee resolved to:

- **Instruct** the Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety in consultation with the Head of Law and Governance to carry out the statutory requirement of a public consultation on the proposed table of fares variation;
- **Delegate** to the Chair and the Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety to consider all responses to the public consultation on the proposed variation before recommending to Council such a change to the table of fares.

10. Miscellaneous Licensing Update Report

The Business Regulations Team Manager introduced the report and updated the Committee on the Council's statutory functions.

Councillor Miles queried the potential for bulk purchasing sustainable packaging to offer to traders, with the aim to lower costs for individual traders. The Business Regulations Team Manager acknowledged the idea, noting potential challenges. He advised that a written response would be provided outside of the meeting.

The General Purposes Licensing Committee resolved to:

- **Note** the current position and planned officer actions regarding the matters within the report.

11. Minutes of the previous meeting

The Committee agreed to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 18 May 2023 as a true and accurate record.

12. Dates and times of meetings

The Committee noted the dates and times of future meetings.

The meeting started at 6.15 pm and ended at 7.19 pm

Chair
2024

Date: Monday 5 February

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.

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