

Minutes of	Licensing and Public Safety Committee
Meeting date	Wednesday, 5 January 2022
Committee members present:	Councillors James Flannery (Chair), Renee Blow (Vice-Chair), Keith Martin, Jacqui Mort, Peter Mullineaux, Alan Ogilvie, John Rainsbury and Paul Wharton-Hardman
Committee members attended virtually (non-voting):	Councillor Julie Buttery
Officers present:	Tasneem Safdar (Shared Legal Services Team Leader), Chris Ward (Interim Licensing Team Leader), Coral Astbury (Democratic and Member Services Officer) and Stephanie Newby (Licensing Officer)
Other attendees:	Councillors Bill Evans, Jon Hesketh, Phil Smith, Mick Titherington, Karen Walton and Barrie Yates
Public:	17

9 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Jacky Alty, Jane Bell and Derek Forrest.

Councillor Colin Sharples attended as a substitute for Councillor Forrest.

10 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations.

11 Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 7 December 2021 of Licensing and Public Safety Committee

Resolved: (Unanimously):

That the minutes of the last meeting held Tuesday, 7 December 2021 were approved as a correct record for signing by the Chair.

12 Request For Taxi Tariff Increase

The committee received a report of the Director of Planning and Development which sought to inform members about a request from the Taxi Drivers of South Ribble for a tariff increase. Members were asked to consider the proposed request for an increase in the taxi tariff set by the licensing authority and to agree the licensing section to undertake a consultation exercise with stakeholders.

The Interim Licensing Team Leader explained that a request had been received from the South Ribble Taxi Driver's Association asking for fares to be reviewed and increased to the following:

- Flag Drop increase by £0.50p across tariffs T1 to T3
- Soiling Charge to be increased from £40 to £100 to take into consideration time off road until the vehicle is cleaned
- Waiting time to increase from £0.10p every 30 seconds to £0.10p every 20 seconds, enabling drivers to keep the running mile at £2 after the first mile and the flag drop to a 50p increase

The Interim Licensing Team Leader explained that fares had not been increased since 2015 and recent factors such as, cost of living, cost of recent fuel increases and second-hand vehicle cost increases meant that it was an appropriate time to review fare charges.

In response to a member enquiry, it was confirmed that the consultation would be advertised in the local newspaper as part of the consultation period, on the website for members of the public and all members of the trade would be consulted on the proposed increases.

Members noted the proposed increases and agreed that it was the right time to review fares. Members considered and discussed several factors affecting the trade such as, the increase in inflation and the cost of living, there had been no increase since 2015 and the impact of the COVID19 pandemic on the trade.

Members also noted the need to protect vulnerable residents to ensure that increasing fares would not cause a detrimental effect.

Several members of the trade addressed the committee and explained the reasons behind requesting an increase of fares. The cost of living had increased along with the increase in cost to renew plates, but drivers had not seen any increase in wages since 2015 and due to COVID work was continually becoming less each week. The trade advised that several drivers had left the profession to work for food delivery services such as Uber as they were paid better.

The trade explained that they requested the soiling charge to be raised to £100 to take into consideration the time they are kept off the road. If a vehicle was soiled in an evening the driver would have to stop work and return home and wait until morning till the vehicle could be cleaned. The £100 was a figure which had been considered carefully and drivers had tried to keep the increase to a minimum.

The trade were mindful of the fee increases on the vulnerable groups and the impact of COVID on the community and advised they had taken this into consideration when requesting the fare increases.

Members thanked the trade for attended and expressed appreciation for the work that the trade do and advised that they could contact Officers should they have any further questions.

Resolved: (Unanimously)

1. The committee note the contents of the report.
2. The committee considered the proposed request for an increase in the taxi tariff set by the licensing authority.
3. The committee agree that the licensing section undertake a consultation exercise with stakeholders on the proposed changes to the Hackney Carriage Table of Fares.
4. To receive a report on the outcome of the consultation exercise at a future meeting.

Chair

Date