

Minutes of	Licensing and Public Safety Committee
Meeting date	Tuesday, 6 September 2022
Committee members present:	Councillors Jacky Alty (Chair), Julie Buttery, Chris Lomax, Keith Martin, Jacqui Mort, Peter Mullineaux, Paul Wharton-Hardman, Margaret Smith and Gareth Watson
Officers present:	Chris Ward (Licensing Manager), Elizabeth Walsh (Senior Solicitor), Coral Astbury (Democratic and Member Services Officer), Justin Abbotts (Licensing Officer) and Stephanie Newby (Licensing Officer)
Other attendees:	Councillors and Matt Campbell and Karen Walton (attended virtually)
Public:	0

A video recording of the public session of this meeting is available to view on [YouTube here](#)

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Jane Bell, Renee Blow, Alan Ogilvie and John Rainsbury.

Councillors Margaret Smith and Gareth Watson were in attendance as substitutes for Councillors Alan Ogilvie and John Rainsbury.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of absence.

3 Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 7 June 2022 of Licensing and Public Safety Committee

Resolved: (Unanimously)

The minutes of the last meeting held Tuesday, 7 June 2022 of the Licensing and Public Safety Committee were agreed as a correct record for signing by the Chair.

4 Minutes of meeting Thursday, 26 May 2022 of General Licensing Sub-Committee

Resolved: (Unanimously)

The minutes of the last meeting held Thursday, 26 May 2022 of the General Licensing Sub-Committee were agreed as a correct record for signing by the Chair.

5 Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 5 July 2022 of General Licensing Sub-Committee

Resolved: (Unanimously)

The minutes of the last meeting held Tuesday, 5 July 2022 of the General Licensing Sub-Committee were agreed as a correct record for signing by the Chair.

6 Request For Taxi Tariff Increase

The committee considered a report of the Director of Planning and Development that sought to inform members about a request from the taxi drivers of South Ribble for a tariff increase.

The Licensing Manager explained that a written request had been received from the Hackney Drivers Association Ltd for an increase in the tariff of charges set by this authority. The request proposed the following changes to the current tariff charges:

- **Tariff 1**
For the first two tenths of a mile - £3
For each succeeding tenth of a mile - £0.25
- **Tariff 2**
For the first two tenths of a mile - £3.50
For each succeeding tenth of a mile - £0.30
- **Tariff 3**
For the first two tenths of a mile £4.50
For each succeeding tenth of a mile - £0.40

The Licensing Manager explained that the authority currently sat at 198 least expensive out of 359 Councils recorded nationally. Within the local area South Ribble was the third most expensive with a starting fare of £6.30. Drivers would not be able to charge more than the tariff but could charge less if they wished.

Mr Charles Oakes from the Hackney Drivers Association Ltd addressed the committee and explained that Drivers had just gone through a period of COVID and were still in a recovery phase. The impact of COVID had affected both sides of the trade and drivers were struggling. Mr Oakes advised that he had been asked to put the fare increase in to the authority, taking into consideration the price of fuel, cost of living and the price of parts for vehicles.

Mr Oakes explained that Drivers needed to make a profit as they were a business, he had also submitted request to increase fares at other authorities.

In response to a member enquiry, Mr Oakes confirmed that he had around 30-40 Drivers licenced by South Ribble.

Members empathised with the trade but also expressed concern on how the increase would effect residents, especially the elderly and vulnerable.

Members noted that all members of the public were feeling the impact of cost of living and were concerned about the disproportionality of the proposed rise between Tariff 1 and Tariff 3. Some members explained they would like to see a level rise, or see a rise where those using Tariff 1 for shorter journeys would not be impacted as heavily as those using Tariff 3 for longer or special journeys.

Members also noted that the cost of fuel had reduced significantly over the last month, in some locations it had dropped by 20p a litre.

Councillor Chris Lomax proposed, seconded by Councillor Paul Wharton-Hardman to refuse the taxi tariff increase but to invite the Hackney Drivers Association to put forward an amended request for a taxi tariff increase.

This proposal was withdrawn following procedural advice from the committee's Senior Solicitor and Democratic Services Officer.

The Chair announced a short adjournment and the YouTube stream was ended.

Following the adjournment, the Chair re-opened the meeting and the YouTube Stream recommenced. Licensing Officers had been permitted to stay in the meeting room during their location to provide their knowledge and expertise to members. Officers had no influence or involvement in any decision making.

The Chair explained that a lot of consideration had been given to the issue of tariff increases and it was her view that it was worth examining in more detail in order to allow the best outcome for all parties.

Resolved: (Unanimously)

It was proposed by Councillor Chris Lomax, and seconded by Councillor Paul Wharton-Hardman that the request for a taxi tariff increase be rejected.

Members invited the representative from the Hackney Drivers Association to bring a new proposal back to members at a later date, preferably with two or three alternative increases.

7 Extension to Cafe Pavement Licenses

The committee received a report from the Director of Planning and Development that sought approval to extend the current Café pavement licensing scheme for a further year, until 30 September 2023 in line with the Business and Planning Act 2020 (Pavement Licences) (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2022.

The Licensing Manager explained that legislation had been introduced to support local businesses with their economic recovery post COVID. The legislation introduced fast track processes for approval for pavement licences for furniture and tables on the highway. Any business selling food or drink were permitted to apply for a pavement licence. The current fee for pavement licences was set at £100 and it was recommended that the council retains the same fee.

Members commented that the café pavement licences had been beneficial to businesses and had succeeded in creating a nice atmosphere and environment on the high street.

Resolved: (Unanimously)

1. Members note the changes to the Business and Planning Act 2020 introduced by the Business and Planning Act 2020 (Pavement Licences) (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2022.
2. Members agreed to extend the proposed duration of granting pavement licences until 30 September 2023 as per the Business and Planning Act 2020 (Pavement Licences) (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2022.
3. To confirm the level of fee charged in respect of applications for pavement licences issued under the Business and Planning Act 2020.
4. To extend delegated authority to Officers as described at Paragraph 22 of the report.

8 CCTV Policy

The Licensing Manager presented a report of the Director of Planning and Development that advised members of the process for introducing CCTV in taxis and private hire vehicles as a mandatory condition of both Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licences.

The Licensing Manager explained that Officers had received requests asking for the policy to be re-considered with the possibility of a mandatory policy investigated. The policy was last considered in 2008 and 2018 where it had not been possible to evidence the need for mandatory CCTV.

In July 2022 the DFT Statutory Standards was published with a strong focus on protecting drivers and travelling members of the public. The statutory guidance suggested that CCTV should be mandatory and the report made clear that the recommendations should be applied.

A member of the public addressed members and explained they were of the view that CCTV should be mandatory. All parties would benefit from the CCTV and it would give the licensing authority evidence of incidents that occur within vehicles.

Members welcomed the report and agreed that mandatory CCTV would protect all parties.

Resolved: (Unanimously)

1. Members note the content of the report,
2. Members agree to proceed to consultation on the proposal to introduce CCTV in all taxis and private hire vehicles,
3. Members agree to receive a report advising of the results of that consultation at a future meeting.

9 Exclusion of the Press and Public

Resolved: (Unanimously)

That the press and public be excluded for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

By Virtue of Paragraph 1: Information relating to any individual.

10 Use of Standing Order 35

Members considered a confidential report of the Director of Planning and Development that sought to provide members with an update on the recent use of Standing Order 35.

Members thanked Officers for a comprehensive report.

Resolved: (Unanimously)

That the report be noted.

Chair

Date