

Licensing and Regulatory Committee



Forest Heath
District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **Licensing and Regulatory Committee** held on **Monday 9 April 2018** at **6.00 pm** at the **Council Chamber, District Offices,** College Heath Road, Mildenhall IP28 7EY

Present: **Councillors**

Chairman Brian Harvey

Vice Chairman Michael Anderson

Chris Barker

Victor Lukaniuk

John Bloodworth

Carol Lynch

Simon Cole

Nigel Roman

89. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Reg Silvester.

Councillor Christine Mason was also unable to attend the meeting.

90. **Substitutes**

There were no substitutes present at the meeting.

91. **Public Participation**

There were no questions/statements from members of the public.

92. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 January 2018 were unanimously accepted as an accurate record and were signed by the Chairman.

93. **Hackney Carriage Fare Review 2018 (Report No: LIC/FH/18/002)**

The Committee received Report No: LIC/FH/18/002, which asked Members to consider proposed hackney carriage fare alignments.

Under the Council's Constitution, the Committee could set or refuse hackney fares and these were reviewed annually. However, on this occasion, the review was also anticipating the alignment of the fares in respect of the proposal for Forest Heath District and St Edmundsbury Borough to form a single West Suffolk Council in 2019.

The Committee was asked to consider the following two options (see below), which were aimed at staging the changes to fares in a way that the Council could achieve its goal of aligning fares for a single council without negatively affecting the trade:

Option 1: Approve the advertising of the proposed new Hackney Carriage fares for Forest Heath; or

Option 2: Approve the advertising of the proposed new Hackney Carriage fares devised for Forest Heath, and recommend which set of fares to be considered for Stage 2 to be in place for Single Council on 1 April 2019.

The Licensing Team Leader highlighted that the proposed fares (set out in Appendix 2) had been produced following extensive joint working between Officers and the Trade. The fares being proposed had also been scrutinised and overseen by the Councils' meter agents (Digitax and Panther Taxis), who calibrated all Hackney Meters for West Suffolk.

The Committee considered the report in detail and asked a number of questions, to which responses were provided. Disappointment at the number of responses to the consultation from the Trade were voiced.

The Chairman advised Members that in addition to the fares, ongoing discussions were taking place between Officers and the two Licensing and Regulatory Committee Chairmen in order to identify other areas of work which would need to be aligned in respect of single council.

Councillor Simon Cole proposed Option 2; in that the proposed new Hackney Carriage Fares for Forest Heath were advertised for implementation on 4 June 2018 and the St Edmundsbury set of fares be recommended for Stage 2 to be in place for West Suffolk Council in 2019. This was duly seconded by Councillor Michael Anderson.

Upon being put to the vote, and with the vote being unanimous it was

RESOLVED:

That:-

Option 2 be approved:

1. Stage 1: The proposed new Hackney Carriage fares devised for Forest Heath District Council (as set out in Appendix 2 to Report No LIC/FH/18/002) be advertised with the effective date of the implementation of the increase being 4 June 2018 (subject to statutory procedure relating to public objections); and
2. Stage 2: The proposed new Hackney Carriage fares devised for St Edmundsbury Borough Council (as set out in Appendix 2 to Report No LIC/FH/18/002) be recommended to be in place for West Suffolk Council in 2019.

94. **Cumulative Impact Policy for Newmarket (verbal)**

The Licensing Team Leader advised the Committee that the Council's current Statement of Licensing Policy was due to expire in January 2019. Accordingly, consultation on a revised version of the document was due to commence later in 2018.

The Committee was informed that the two policies were already very similar and in light of the planned (single) West Suffolk Council in 2019 Officers would be looking to align the two documents currently operated by Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury even further.

As Members were aware, Forest Heath's Statement of Licensing Policy contained the Cumulative Impact Policy (CIP) for Newmarket. The Officer reminded the Committee that the CIP was created in response to a 'saturation' situation within Newmarket High Street.

However, the night-time economy within the town had significantly reduced over recent years and the CIP was largely considered to have outlived its purpose.

The Chairman explained that without official crime/incident statistics demonstrating a need for the CIP it could no longer be justified.

The general consensus of the Committee was that the CIP could be allowed to expire in January 2019 on the basis that reimplementation could be considered by the Council at any time, if considered necessary.

The Officer encouraged local Ward Members to continue to monitor the situation and to ensure that any residents that raised concerns with them were advised to formally notify the Licensing Authority.

(Councillor Victor Lukaniuk left the meeting at 6.31pm during the discussion of this item.)

The meeting concluded at 6.40pm

Signed by:

Chairman
