

Licensing Committee

Minutes

Monday, 15 February 2016 at 18:30

PRESENT :

Councillor Fairhead (in the Chair); Councillors M Coleman, Grant, Mavroudis, Stenhouse, H Wainwright and Wright.

Mrs J Beck (Director of Customer Services), Mrs Yvonne Blake (nplaw), Mr C Cawley (Advisor GYBC), Mrs S Wintle (Member Services Officers)

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

It was noted that there were no Declarations of interest at the meeting.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was noted that an apology for absence was received from Councillor Jermany.

3 MINUTES - PUBLIC

The public minutes of the meeting held 1 February 2016 were confirmed.

4 TAXI FEES

The Committee received and considered the report from the Licensing and Elections Manager.

The Director of Customer Services reported that the report informed members of the changes to taxi legislation following the Deregulation Act 2015. The Act is to introduce changes to taxi legislation which will include the requirement that drivers licences should last for 3 years and operators licences for 5 years.

It was reported that as a result of the change to licence durations it had been agreed that a review of the licensing fees for a Combined Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Drivers and Private Hire Operators would be undertaken to ensure that the cost of administration be reflective of the service provided. A breakdown of the fees and proposed costs were presented to the Committee.

The Director of Customer Services informed Members that the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 required Local authorities to consult upon

amendments to fees for 28 days. This consultation period expired on the 5 February 2016.

Mr Simon Bellas, taxi driver stated that he disagreed with the proposed fees and asked what would happen to the fees paid should the driver not continue for 3 years, the Director of Customer Services advised that legislation has stated that all drivers licences would be granted for 3 years a lesser term would only be given in exceptional circumstances and that the cost of the licence had been calculated to reflect actual service cost of issuing a licence.

Chris Cawley, advisor to GYBC stated that the Deregulation Act had been amended to extend the length of time for licences and that this change aimed to reduce the administrative burden placed upon the licensing department therefore this is a compulsory change for GYBC.

Anthony Paul, taxi driver asked in relation to age of drivers, he stated that he was close to retirement age and may not drive for 3 more years, Chris Cawley advised that the Council may grant a licence for a lesser period depending on circumstances for example drivers who require a medical annually, and that this would be an annual licence. The Director of Customer Services advised that the proposed fee for the annual licence would be £95.

The Director of Customer Services reminded the Committee that Taxi fees had not been changed since 2009.

Gail Bone, Taxi Driver questioned what checks the Council would enforce over the 3 years to ensure drivers are adhering to the rules of licensing for example driving convictions, Chris Cawley advised that Councils will be asking drivers to sign a mandate to allow authorities access to DVLA, Police Checks, DBS electronically, although it was advised that it is a responsibility of the taxi driver to make the Council aware should they receive a conviction.

A Member asked if taxi drivers would be able to pay in instalments, it was advised that the Council would consider a Direct Debit option although the fee would still be required up front before a licence could be issued.

The Chairman advised Members of the recommendations.

RESOLVED :

(i) That approval be given to the option of an annual licence in certain circumstances as detailed in paragraph 2.5.

(ii) That approval be given to the proposed fees in table 2 & 3 in order for them to be considered by council and take effect from 1 April 2016.

5 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman reported that there was no other business as being of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration.

6 MINUTES

The meeting ended at: 19:15