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LICENSING, HEALTH AND SAFETY AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 27 January 2016

Present: Councillor WJ Davies (Chair)

Councillors S Niblock A Hodson
J Salter L Fraser
M Sullivan G Watt

Apologies: Councillors C Spriggs
P Williams

23 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Committee were requested to declare whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in the item on this agenda and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of such interest.

No such declarations were made.

24 MINUTES

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2015, be approved.

25 REVIEW OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARES

A report by the Assistant Chief Executive asked Members to consider representations received in respect of a proposed increase to the Hackney Carriage fare tariff advertised in accordance with the decision of the Committee taken on 25 November 2015.

Members heard, how following their decision taken on 25 November 2015 to agree the proposal submitted by the Unite Hackney Carriage trade representatives, this was subject to any objections being received as part of the consultation process. Members were informed that the proposed increase had been advertised in the Wirral Globe for a period of 14 days. Following this exercise, nine representations were received in respect of the proposed increase. Details of representations were outlined within the report. Furthermore, a petition against a tariff increase was submitted and made available to Members.

Mr D Cummins of Unite Union addressed the Committee and outlined his proposal to Members as outlined within the report.

Mr C Lydiate, Hackney Carriage Driver, addressed the Committee in objection to any proposal to increase Hackney Carriage Tarrifs as he felt it would be detrimental to the taxi trade.

Mr L Grochowicki then addressed the Committee also in objection to any proposal to increase Hackney Carriage Tarrifs.

On a motion by Councillor Salter and seconded by Councillor Hodson it was:

Resolved (6:0: with one abstention) – That no tariff increase be applied at this time.

26 **INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT OF THE SUPPLY AND DEMAND FOR HACKNEY CARRIAGE VEHICLES ON WIRRAL**

It was moved by Councillor J Salter and seconded by Councillor A Hodson that –

“The public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of this matter on the grounds that disclosure may involve providing personal financial information about individuals.”

Resolved - That, under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of this item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 1 of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act. The Public Interest test had been applied and favoured exclusion

A report by the Assistant Chief Executive asked members to appoint an independent consultant to undertake an assessment of the supply and demand for Hackney Carriage Vehicles in Wirral.

Members were reminded that on 28 September 2015, Members of this Committee had authorised officers to proceed with a tender for the independent investigation into the supply and demand for Hackney Carriage Vehicles in Wirral. Since this meeting, a request for quotation document had been completed to enable the tender to be advertised on ‘The Chest’, an internet portal for applying for advertised contracts for local authorities within the North West of England.

The Licensing Manager advised that the closing date for Tender Applications had been 21st January 2016 and due to time constraints, a further meeting of this Committee was required in order for the information to be considered appropriately.

Resolved – That consideration of this item be deferred to a future meeting of the Licensing, Health and Safety and General Purposes Committee.

27 **APPLICATIONS TO RENEW PRIVATE HIRE AND HACKNEY CARRIAGE DRIVER LICENCES**

A Report by the Assistant Chief Executive set out an amendment to the timeframe which an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate may be

accepted as part of a valid application for the renewal of a Private Hire or Hackney Carriage Driver Licence.

The amendment was set out in the report and read as follows:

“ Satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate issues in respect of a DBS application submitted to the DBS no more than two calendar months prior to the expiry date of the licence”

It was reported that at a meeting of this Committee on 30 June 2015 Members resolved that to renew a Private Hire or Hackney Carriage Driver Licence that is due for renewal from 1 October 2015, the following are required:

- Satisfactory enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate issued no more than 28 days prior to the renewal date
- Satisfactory medical report in accordance with the Council's Policy for Medicals.
- Satisfactory driving record.

Members heard how DBS application forms are being submitted to the DBS two months ahead of the renewal date of the Private Hire or Hackney Carriage Driver Licence. It was explained that the period of time taken by the DBS to process applications varies considerably and this could result in a number of certificates being issued by the DBS more than 28 days prior to the renewal date of the licence in contravention of the current requirement as outlined above.

Mr D Cummins of Unite Union addressed the Committee in support of the proposed amendment and requested that a similar timeframe be applied to applications for medicals.

In response to this request, the Licensing Manager informed the Committee that the onus is on the driver to ensure that medicals are up to date, however, the Licensing Authority do send a reminder letter out to drivers two months before their medical is due to expire. A Councillor suggested to Mr Cummins that the matter is taken to a meeting of the JCC for further discussion.

It was moved by Councillor Hodson and seconded Councillor Niblock and

Resolved(7:0) That Members approve the amendment, as outlined within the report, to the requirements for the renewal of a Private Hire or Hackney Carriage Driver Licence.

28 **WIRRAL AWARD 2015**

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services requested that the Committee agree that the Wirral Award 2015 be granted to the nominees recommended by the Wirral Award Working Party held on 10 December 2015. The Wirral Award was intended to confer civic recognition upon individuals or organisations resident or located in Wirral for an outstanding achievement within the previous twelve months, or for distinguished service to the Borough over a period of twenty years or more.

It was reported that once nominations were agreed, a presentation ceremony would be arranged which would be attended by The Mayor of Wirral, the Leader of the Council, Group Leaders, the Chair of the Licensing, Health and Safety and General Purposes Committee, the Chief Executive and the nominees plus one guest each.

Resolved (7:0) - That the Wirral Award 2015 be conferred on the recipients recommended by the Wirral Award Working Party, and that the suggested arrangements be agreed.