

REGULATORY COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Regulatory Committee on Wednesday, 19 September 2012 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors K. Loftus (Chairman), Wallace (Vice-Chairman), Fraser, P. Hignett, Lea, A. Lowe, Nelson and G. Stockton

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Fry, Howard and McDermott

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: K. Cleary, G Ferguson and J. Tully

Also in attendance: 1 member of the public

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE COMMITTEE

REG2 MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 10th April and 29th June 2012 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

REG3 TAXI LICENSING - VARIATION OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE TABLE OF FARES

The Committee considered a report which outlined representations made in response of an application made by elements of the taxi trade to vary the Hackney Carriage table of fares. Following a meeting of the Taxi Consultative Group the Council received an application to vary the current Hackney Carriage Table of Fares. The application was advertised in a local newspaper for a minimum of 14 days in accordance with section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982. Subsequently an objection to the application was received from one member of the taxi trade and a counter proposal to the advertised application was received from another taxi driver.

The Committee also took into account information received from Mr R. Anderson on behalf of APEC Taxis who submitted the advertised fare increase. The information

Action

advised that of the 90 APEC Taxi members who attended a meeting 90% voted that an increase in the taxi fares was necessary. A further vote showed that 60% of the members wanted the APEC Taxi fare increase proposal.

In addition, Mr Anderson had advised that 30 taxi drivers were questioned at Runcorn Railway Station about the proposed fare increase and 29 drivers wished for an increase in the taxi fare and 23 signed to state that they backed the APEC Taxi proposal.

The Committee considered the special levels of inflation to which the taxi trade were subject and the general levels of fares locally and regionally. Although it was understood that there was no universal approval for any increase from the trade the Committee was satisfied that information acquired from the Taxi Consultative Group as well as from the ballot taken by APEC Taxi members that a majority of the trade was (in many cases reluctantly) in favour of an increase. This view was reinforced by the fact that only one representation against an increase had been received. Since all of the requested increases were considerably less than the inflation to which the trade was subject, the level of increase was not considered to be unreasonable, especially taking into account that the Halton Table of Fares represented a maximum level that could be charged.

The logistical requirements for implementing the revised Table of Fares would be undertaken via the Council's Licensing Section in the usual way.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the proposal submitted by APEC Taxis as advertised in the local press be the table of fares; and
- (2) the fare increase shall take effect from Monday 15 October 2012.

Strategic Director
Policy and
Resources

REG4 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

The Board considered:

- 1) Whether Members of the press and public should be excluded from the meeting of the Board during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Section

100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be considered, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972; and

- 2) Whether the disclosure of information was in the public interest, whether any relevant exemptions were applicable and whether, when applying the public interest test and exemptions, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information.

RESOLVED: That as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

REG5 TAXI LICENSING MATTER

The Committee met to consider if the applicant (Case no 687) was a fit and proper person to hold a SSD Licence.

Members took into account the information provided by the Licensing Section and the applicant.

RESOLVED: To allow the application to proceed and when completed to grant a Single Status Drivers Licence for three years. The Committee also stressed that if any other matters arose during the period when the SSD Licence was in force, the applicant would be brought back before the Committee when the matters dealt with at this hearing would also be taken into account.

Strategic Director
Policy and
Resources

Meeting ended at 7.45 p.m.