

Medway Council
Meeting of Licensing and Safety Committee
Thursday, 20 February 2025
6.01pm to 6.53pm

Record of the meeting

Subject to approval as an accurate record at the next meeting of this committee

Present: Councillors: McDonald (Chairperson), Browne (Vice-Chairperson), Brake, Fearn, Field and Kemp

In Attendance: Nicola Couchman, Democratic Services Officer
Nigel Jackson, Chairperson, Medway Licensed Taxi Drivers Association
Emily Lane-Blackwell, Assistant Licensing Manager
Mark Lees, Regulatory Services Manager, Gravesham Borough Council, Gravesham and Medway Shared Licensing Service

701 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Filmer, Howcroft-Scott, Peake and Sands.

702 Record of meeting

The record of the meeting held on 10 December 2024 was agreed and signed by the Chairperson as correct.

703 Urgent matters by reason of special circumstances

There were none.

704 Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests and other interests

Disclosable pecuniary interests

There were none.

Other significant interests (OSIs)

There were none.

Other interests

There were none.

705 Hackney Carriage Tariff Review Policy

Discussion:

The Assistant Licensing Manager summarised the consultation process that had been undertaken and the responses that had been received from taxi drivers and the Medway Licensed Taxi Drivers Association (MLTDA).

Mr Jackson was invited to address the Committee as Chairperson of MLTDA. The Committee were informed that MLTDA's view was that a mechanism for drivers to be able to request annual reviews of the taxi tariff was necessary rather than bi-annual reviews due to financial pressures. Mr Jackson also stated that it would be possible to add an inflationary uplift to the tariff and the report had been misleading stating that this would not be possible.

Officers explained the onerous process involved in reviewing tariffs annually and that this would impact on service delivery in other areas.

Members and officers discussed how engagement with taxi drivers could be improved and what other Local Authorities do with regards to annual and bi-annual reviews. Officers informed the Committee that it was not impossible to apply inflationary increases but was impractical to do so.

Mr Jackson informed the Committee that he was concerned that the Policy differed from the initial discussions he had with the Licensing Team and it was important to ensure it was fit for purpose and enabled taxi drivers to earn minimum wage.

Officers explained the complexities of consulting on a combination of tariffs and informed the Committee that any consultation undertaken needed to be kept simple to enable it to be responded to and evaluated effectively.

Members discussed deferring a decision on the Policy so that officers could engage further with taxi drivers and MLTDA to ensure that the Policy and processes that supported it were clear to all parties.

Decision:

The Committee agreed to defer a decision on the Hackney Carriage Tariff Review Policy until a later date and requested that further engagement takes place with the MLTDA and taxi drivers in Medway.

Licensing and Safety Committee, 20 February 2025

Chairperson

Date:

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