

Licensing Committee

Monday, 4th March, 2024

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Karen Ashley (Chair), Councillor Timothy Pearman (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Salman Akbar, Juma Begum, Sharon Harvey, Chris Holz, Emma Marshall, Monica Stringfellow and Sid Khan

Officers:

Vanessa Brown and Dave Etheridge

Democratic Services Officers:

Gavin Day

26. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Joe Baker with Councillor Sid Khan in attendance as substitute.

Apologies were also received from Councillor Anthony Lovell.

27. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

28. PUBLIC SPEAKING

There was no public speaking.

29. ANNUAL REVIEW OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE TABLE OF FARES

The Principal Licensing Officer, Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS), presented the report to Members. The purpose of the report was an annual review of the hackney carriage tables of fares.

Officers drew Members attention to the current table of fares which took effect from 7th May 2022, detailed on page 11 of the Public Reports Pack.

Chair

Fuel Prices had fallen sharply since a high in 2022 when an emergency table of fares review had been called. Officers detailed that although far from the high in 2022, prices were slowly raising in line with other factors such as inflation and the general cost of living.

Although fuel prices had seen a small increase, due to the competition from other providers and the desire to keep prices competitive, the trade did not wish to amend the table of fares.

Officers detailed that the table of fares would be reviewed again in March 2025, unless Members or the trade request to do so sooner. Officers further detailed the time constraints in terms of notice periods and meeting scheduling if an emergency change was required, the Redditch Taxi Association (RTA) were aware of the procedure and the requirement to inform Officers as soon as any problems arose.

After queries from Members, Officers detailed some statistics regarding how Redditch performs when compared to other authorities, in that:

- A league table was regularly updated which detailed the cost a member of the public would pay for a similar journey.
- The fare was measured as a weekday daytime journey of two miles. This was £6.25 for Redditch.
- RBC tabled at 277 of 344 Authorities, with higher numbers indicated a cheaper fare for the traveling public.
- The highest Fare, London (Heathrow) was 1st at £14.20.
- The other Authorities which WRS covered were rated as
 - Wyre Forest - £6.14 (289)
 - Wychavon - £6.20 (287)
 - Malvern - £6.72 (217)
 - Worcester City - £6.90 (183)
 - Bromsgrove - £7.00 (164)

RESOLVED that

the Hackney Carriage Table of Fares be noted.

30. **REVIEW OF STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY UNDER LICENSING ACT 2003 - CONSIDERATION OF RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION ON REVISED STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY**

The Principal Licensing Officer, Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS), presented the report to Members. The purpose of the report was to consider the responses to the consultation regarding the statement of licencing policy.

Officers detailed that during the Licencing Committee held on the 5th October 2023, Members directed Officers to begin the consultation process for the renewed statement of licencing policy, this was detailed on pages 27 to 74 of the Public Reports Pack.

The consultation was advertised using a variety of outlets which included the Council's website, social media and letters sent to consultees. The consultation period was between 11th October 2023 to 15th December 2023.

Two responses were received by Officers, detailed on pages 23 to 25 of the Public Reports pack.

1. West Mercia Police, who supported the policy without amendment.
2. The Wine/Spirit trade who did not raise any objection but provided further information to Officers regarding some suggested guidance in relation to rapid delivery services.

Officers asked Members to resolve to recommend to Council that the revised Statement of Licensing Policy shown at Appendix 3 be approved and published to take effect on 1st June 2024.

Members enquired about the "ask Angela" initiative and bleed kits and if WRS provided training on those initiatives. Officers replied that there was no direct training provided, however, WRS would direct new applicants to guidance which included the areas in question, it would also encouraged licence holders to adopt those initiatives.

Members enquired about government progress regarding Martin's Law and Counter Terrorism policy. Officers detailed that the legislation was under review at a central government level and that once it was finalised, WRS would be able to signpost licence holders to appropriate guidance. Officers further detailed that it was not known what role local Authorities would take, as draft legislation mentioned "regulators", however, no information was available on

who those regulators would be. The Bill was likely to be introduced in late 2024.

On being put to a vote it was

Recommended to Council that

the revised Statement of Licensing Policy shown at Appendix 3 on pages 27 to 74 of the Public Reports pack be approved and published to take effect on 1st June 2024

31. REVIEW OF STREET TRADING POLICY

The Principal Licensing Officer, Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS), presented the report to Members. The purpose of the report was to approve the DRAFT revised street trading policy for the purpose of going out for consultation.

Officers detailed that on 29th January 2024, following a recommendation from the Licensing Committee, Redditch Borough Council passed a resolution in relation to the designation of streets for the purposes of controlling street trading. The Council resolved and the new designations would take effect on 1st September 2024

Officers further detailed that as the street designations had been reviewed, The Street trading policy also needed to be reviewed with the intent of both the designations and new policy going live together on 1st September 2024.

During questions from Members, it was detailed that the boundary image shown in page 82 of the Public Reports pack, would be out of date when the new policy came into effect due to the Boundary review which had taken place. Officers detailed that as the image was not integral to the document it would be removed from the DRAFT street trading policy which went out for consultation.

On being put to a vote it was

RESOLVED that

the draft revised Street Trading Policy at Appendix 1 detailed on pages 79 to 101 of the Public Reports pack be approved for the purpose of consultation with relevant stakeholders.

32. WORK PROGRAMME

Officers detailed that the Work programme had a number of items which needed to be discussed with the Chair of the Licencing Committee for the next municipal year after the elections in May.

The responses from the consultation in regard to the Public Realm improvements on Unicorn Hill was being reviewed, the report would come before the Licencing Committee when ready.

Following questions from Members, Officers detailed that there were currently no plans for a licencing regime regarding the sale and regulation of Vapes, and the sale of vapes/cigarettes was not a licensable activity.

33. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED that

Under S100 A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, the public were excluded on the grounds of the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 of the said act, as amended.

34. MINUTES

Restricted.

35. OFFICER UPDATE(S) - ENFORCEMENT AND APPEAL MATTERS

Restricted.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 8.04 pm