

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor David Munro (Chair), and Councillors Juliet Barker Smith, Matthew Dormer, Sid Khan, Gary Slim and Jen Snape

Officers:

Vanessa Brown and Hazel Powell

Democratic Services Officers:

Gavin Day

28. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Juma Begum with Councillor Monica Stringfellow in attendance as substitute.

Apologies were also received from Councillors, Paul Wren, Brandon Clayton and Sachin Mathur.

29. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

30. MINUTES

The minutes of the Licensing Committee meeting of 9th March 2026 were presented to Members.

RESOLVED that

The minutes of the Licensing Committee meeting held on 9th March 2026 be approved as true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.

31. PUBLIC SPEAKING

There was no public speaking.

32. HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE FEES AND CHARGES - CONSIDERATION OF OBJECTIONS RECEIVED.

The Principal Licensing Officer, Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS), presented the report to Members. The purpose of the report was to consider representations received in objection to the increase in licence fees associated with Hackney Carriage personal Licences and Operator Licences.

Officers clarified that Members would need to consider the representations raised and then Recommend to council for determination.

On 14th January 2026, a statutory 28-day consultation commenced detailing proposed increases to Licence fees, detailed on page 10 of the Public Reports pack. During the consultation period which lasted until 10th February 2026, two objections were received.

The objections detailed on pages 15 to 20 in the Public Reports pack, were from the Taxi Association and A2B taxis. Both objections sited that the increase in fees did not reflect the impact that drivers were facing in a number of areas which included the current level of administrative service, increased cost of living or illegal parking on ranks effecting business.

Officers further detailed that any fees much an authority charge can only be on a cost recovery basis so as not to run the service at a financial loss and the fees were calculated to take into account the increase in supplying the service.

After questions from Members the following was clarified by Officers

- That fees are set and collected by Redditch borough Council.
- A reduction in fees may cause the council to be providing the service at a loss.
- The fees were only raised in line with inflation.

Members commented that with the increasing cost and the financial breakdown supplied by objectors on page 18 of the Public Reports pack, the current cost to drivers was significantly higher than some other authorities might be able to offer, who are able to offer lower fares due to the number of Licenced drivers that they have. This could cause drivers to go elsewhere for their licences. Members further expressed a desire to support the Taxi trade and investigate what could be done.

In answering questions from Members, Officers present were not able to answer detailed questions on the projected cost and implications to Redditch Borough Council if there was no (or a lesser) increase. To answer such questions, more information must

be sought from the Finance team, who would need guide Members on the implications and cost. Members expressed a desire for an Officer from the finance team to be present to allow Members to discuss the matter in more detail.

Subject to the preamble detailed above, Councillor Matt Dormer proposed an Alternative Recommendation to Defer the decision to a future meeting of the Licencing Committee pending further information on the financial impact to the Council. The Alternative Recommendation was Seconded by Councillor Juliet Barker Smith.

On being put to the vote it was

RESOLVED that

Determination be deferred to a future meeting of the Licencing Committee, pending additional information on the financial impact of the fee increase.

33. VERBAL UPDATE ON THE HACKNEY CARRIAGE TABLE OF FARES

The Principal Licensing Officer, Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS), presented the report to Members. The purpose of the report was to inform Members of the ongoing work with Redditch taxi drivers regarding a proposed increase to the hackney table of fares.

At the previous Licencing Committee hearing on 9th March 2026, Members requested that an update be added to the work programme to review the Trade's stance on not wanting an increase to the Hackney Table of Fares due to the economic impact of other competitors and cost of living crisis.

Officers detailed that since that last meeting they had been in contact with the trade who had recently indicated that they would like an increase to the Table of Fares.

The trade requested the following raise:

| | Current | Proposed | Increase |
|-----------------|---------|----------|----------|
| Standing charge | £4.40 | £4.90 | +7% |
| Distance charge | 15p | 25p | +66% |

The increase to the standing charge would be in line with inflation, however, some concerns were raised in distance increase and WRS were currently in discussion with the trade as to their rational and justification for this value.

Officers assured Members that they would remain in contact with the trade to finalise any requested increase in fares and would bring any proposals which were formally raised to Committee.

34. WORK PROGRAMME

There were no additions or amendments to the work programme.

35. 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 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 of the said act, as amended.

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

Officers detailed that an appeal had been lodged with the Magistrates Court against a decision made by the Licencing Sub-Committee, however no court date had been identified.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 7.45 pm