

PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE

27 JULY 2022

Present: Councillor Michael(Chairperson)
Councillors Kaaba, Driscoll, Ferguson-Thorne, Gunter and
Jenkins

17 : APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRPERSON AND COMMITTEE

The Committee RESOLVED to note the appointment of the Chair and Members of the Committee for the municipal year 2022 – 2023 approved by Council at its Annual meeting on 26 May 2022.

18 : TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee RESOLVED to note the Committee's Terms of Reference as approved by Council at its Annual meeting on 26 May 2022.

19 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Andrea Gibson, Jackie Jones, Abdul Sattar and Ashley Wood.

20 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received in accordance with the Members Code of Conduct.

21 : MINUTES

The minutes of the following meetings were confirmed as being an accurate record and signed by the Chairperson:

Public Protection Committee: 8 February 2022

Public Protection Sub Committee: 6 July, 10 August, 7 September, 5 October 2021 and 1 March, 5 April and 7 July 2022

22 : HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENCE FEES

The Committee received a report seeking approval for the new Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Vehicle Licences. The Committee authorised the current fees and charges on the following dates:

- Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Vehicle Licence – July 2018
- Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Vehicle Licence – July 2018
- Private Hire Operator Licences – July 2018

The report contained a summary of the existing and proposed fees, showing any differences in cost.

During the financial year 2020/2021 the government placed restrictions on the public including the taxi trade and local authority due to the Covid 19 pandemic. Consequence to this, the Licensing Department operated at a reduced capacity in some areas for example, enforcement.

In calculating the proposed new fees, the full surpluses from the year 2020/2021 have been taken into account.

Officers also highlighted changes to additional charges for driver knowledge tests, which have increased due to an increase in overheads.

The proposed fees were calculated using a toolkit developed by the Wales Licensing Expert Panel, which is used by all Welsh local authorities. The method used to calculate the fees and details of the figures were provided in Appendix B. Members of the Committee had no comments, and approved the proposed recommendations

The Committee noted that there was one written object had been received, which had been circulated. The objection was not deemed relevant within the Act.

Members were invited to raise questions or seek clarification on the issues raised:

- Members discussed the reasoning behind the current moratorium on the issue of granting Hackney Carriage licences and the fact that there is no legal mechanism to cap the issue of Public Hire licences. Welsh Government are still considering whether a change in the requirements is necessary.
- Members queried whether all authorities increased their fees and charges by the same amount. Officers advised that all authorities calculate the proposed fees using a toolkit developed by the Wales Licensing Expert Panel, the increase or decrease in fees would depend on the information input by the authority itself. It was noted that this was the first increase since 2018.
- Members sought information about the obtaining of licences in different authority area and were advised that unlike Hackney Carriages, Private Hire Licences can be obtained through a different authority area, although the company which any fare is booked through should operate within the authority area. Officers have seen that there has been an increase in Private Hire Licenses and a decrease in Hackney Carriage Licences.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Committee approve the proposed licence fees outlined in the report with an implementation date of 12 September 2022;
- (2) That the Committee authorise the Head of Shared Regulatory Services to carry out the necessary public notice procedure; and
- (3) If objections are received within 28 days of the publication of the notice of the proposed changes to the fees, the matter come back before the next appropriate Committee meeting so that any objections can be considered,

modifications be considered, and a new date for the introduction of the variations can be set.

23 : URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)

No urgent items were received.

The meeting terminated at 10.20 am