

Tuesday 5 July 2005
at 6.00pm



General Licensing Sub-Committee

MEMBERS: Councillor Mrs MURRAY (Chairman); Councillors HARRIS and LACEY OBE.

3 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 May 2005 were submitted and approved and the Chairman was authorised to sign them as a correct record.

4 Proposed Fare Increases Received from the Trade.

The Committee considered the report of the Environmental Health Manager regarding proposals from the trade for an increase in hackney carriage fares. All taxi proprietors had been consulted via letter in March 2005 and asked to consider changes to the existing fare/tariff system and to provide details if changes were proposed.

89 drivers were consulted in total and of the 36 responses received, 89% had indicated support for an increase. The detailed results of the consultation were set out in the report and it was noted that 59% of drivers in support of an increase were in accordance with the fare proposals submitted by Mr B Morris.

A meeting had taken place to consider the options and as a consensus had not been reached on the proposals submitted, four options were put forward for consideration.

Details of the current and the four proposed tariffs were set out in the report.

Mr P Smith, Mr R Doxford, Mr B Morris (Eastbourne and Country) and Mr M Reeves (independent proprietor) addressed the Sub-Committee on the details of their individual proposals. Mr Bodle (Transport & General Workers' Union) also addressed the Committee on behalf of Members of the Eastbourne Branch.

The Chairman reported a letter received from Mr T Newman indicating support for Mr Morris's proposal.

All the applications sought to increase fares by various percentages and one proposal recommended changes to the times at which the various rates applied.

Support for an increase in fare charges related to increased fuel charges, insurance, vehicle maintenance costs and the general cost of living. With reference to increases in fuel charges, the Environmental Health Manager confirmed that the trade could seek a review of fares if prices increased significantly following the implementation of an agreed structure.

The Sub-Committee was advised that any agreed tariff/fare structure was constrained by technical implications related to the compatibility of the meters used. Members supported the future aim to simplify the tariff and for the General Licensing Committee to consider the future process for setting fares. The Sub-Committee agreed that any consultation with the trade in respect of future increases should start as early as possible to enable an implementation date to coincide with the beginning of the financial year.

RESOLVED (1) That subject to the following amendments, the application for hackney carriage fares submitted by Mr B Morris, as detailed in the report, be approved and implemented, subject to no objections being made in response to the public advertisement.

Vehicle Fouling – increase rate to £50
Rates 5-8 – amended to read "5-8 Passengers/small removal"

(2) That a report be submitted to the next meeting of the General Licensing Committee on options for future fare setting arrangements.

The meeting closed at 7.45 p.m.

**Mrs A Murray
Chairman**