

Thursday 26 June 2008  
at 6.00pm



# General Licensing Sub-Committee

**MEMBERS:** Councillor THOMPSON (Chairman); and Councillor BELSEY.

(An apology for absence was reported from Councillor Woodall)  
Members were advised that the meeting was quorate in accordance with council procedure rule 8).

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## **1 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 March 2008 were submitted and approved and the Chairman was authorised to sign them as a correct record.

## **2 Declarations of Interest.**

None were received.

## **3 Hackney Carriage Trade – Interim Fuel Surcharge.**

The Committee considered the report of the Licensing Manager regarding an application from the hackney carriage trade for a variation to the current table of fares to allow for an interim fuel surcharge.

A review of the current fare card and the associated maximum fare set by the Council had been requested by the trade. All taxi proprietors had been consulted on a number of options including the levying of a fuel surcharge to take into account the increase in fuel costs.

It was proposed that based on the responses received, a fuel surcharge should be set at 30p plus the metered fare for the journey.

The Sub-Committee was advised that if a fuel surcharge was approved, it was not compulsory for drivers to make the charge. It was proposed that individual drivers wishing to levy the charge be required to display in a prominent position a Council issued notice to advise the travelling public of the amount which will be added to the metered fare at the end of the journey.

A notice detailing the decision would be advertised in the local press, displayed for inspection at Council offices and published on the Council's website. Any objections to the fare variation would be required within 14 days from the date of the notice.

Mr B Morris (Eastbourne and Country) addressed the Sub-Committee in support of a fuel surcharge. He referred to the impact on drivers of the price of fuel which had risen by 35% over the past 16 months. A fuel

surcharge was being sought as a temporary measure which could be implemented quickly. A review of the current fare structure was not supported at this time owing to the timescale involved and the associated cost to drivers of recalibrating taximeters.

Mr M Reeves addressed the Sub-Committee in objection to the proposal and stated that a surcharge would cause confusion to the public as not all drivers would choose to levy the charge. He supported a yearly rise in taxi fares.

Mr P Smith reported that a request for a review of the current fare card had been submitted in February and expressed disappointment regarding the length of time taken for the request to be considered. A fuel surcharge was supported as a temporary measures but a fare increase should be considered as soon as possible to address the overall rise in the cost of living. He stated that the day trade would benefit more from the fuel surcharge as journeys were normally shorter during the day than those carried out by the evening trade.

The Licensing Manager advised the Sub-Committee that the trade had not sought to differentiate between day and night rates in respect of the fuel surcharge during the consultation process.

**RESOLVED** (1) That a variation to the current table of fares be approved to allow an additional charge of thirty pence per journey as a fuel surcharge.

(2) That hackney carriage vehicles charging a fuel surcharge are required to display a Council issued notice in the form as set out in paragraph 4.4 of the report.

#### **4 Exclusion of the Public.**

**RESOLVED:** That the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting as otherwise there was a likelihood of disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. The relevant paragraphs of Schedule 12A are shown beneath the item.

#### **5 Confidential Minutes of the Meeting held on 17 March 2008.**

The confidential minutes of the meeting held on 17 March 2008 were submitted and approved and the Chairman was authorised to sign them as a correct record.

(Exempt information reasons 1 and 2 – Information relating to an individual or likely to reveal the identity of an individual).

The meeting closed at 6.30p.m.

**M Thompson  
Chairman**