EASTBOURNE
Borough Council

Working in partnership with **Eastbourne Homes**

General Licensing Committee

Minutes of meeting held in Court Room at Eastbourne Town Hall, Grove Road, BN21 4UG on 11 March 2019 at 6.00 pm

Present:

Councillor Troy Tester (Chair)

Councillors Pat Rodohan (Deputy-Chair), Colin Belsey, Sammy Choudhury, Janet Coles, Tony Freebody, Colin Murdoch, Robert Smart, Pat Hearn and Steve Wallis

Officers in attendance:

Danielle Ball (Specialist Advisor - Licensing, Service Delivery), Ed Hele (Functional Lead (Quality Environment)) and Michele Wilkinson (Lawyer (Housing & Regulatory)) and Emily Horne (Committee Officer)

7   Minutes of the meeting held on 7 January 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 January 2019 were submitted and approved and the Chair was authorised to sign them as an accurate record.

8   Apologies for absence.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Robinson. Absence was noted for Councillor Murray.

9   Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs) by members as required under Section 31 of the Localism Act and of other interests as required by the Code of Conduct.

There were none.

10   Questions by members of the public.

There were none.

11   Urgent items of business.

There were none.

12   Right to address the meeting/order of business.

There were none.

13   Hackney Carriage Fares

The Committee considered the report of the Interim Director of Service Delivery regarding the request for a new fare structure as proposed by the Hackney Carriage proprietors.

Members were advised that the current fares had been in place for ten years. There were currently 114 licensed hackney carriages that were allowed to apply for hire in Eastbourne.

Following informal requests made by some hackney carriage proprietors and discussions at the Taxi Forum, all hackney carriage proprietors were contacted on 1 February 2018 and were asked to contact the Licensing team to advise if they were in favour of a fare increase. They were informed that should more than 50% of the trade feel an increase was appropriate then a report would be presented to the General Licensing Committee. The letter also requested proposals for a new fare structure. A copy of this letter was included at appendix 1 of the report.

The Licensing team received 86 responses indicating that they wanted an increase in fares from hackney carriage proprietors which equated to 76% of their total number.

On 1st October 2018 a fare increase proposal was presented to the General Licensing Committee. It was unknown if the proposal had the support of the majority of the trade or if members of the public would be disadvantage by the increase. The proposal was rejected and Officers were asked to re-consult with the trade and develop a further proposal that would be favourable to the trade, Councillors and general public.

Members of the trade returned a new proposal that had the backing from the wider trade for consideration by the General Licensing Committee.
74 Hackney Carriage Proprietors returned a signed copy of the new proposed increase as outlined in Table 2 of the report, this is 84% of their total number.

The Committee discussed the options and it was considered that whilst the proposed increase would be of significant benefit to the hackney carriage

trade, the least affluent would be disadvantaged. However, it was also acknowledged that whilst the fees had not increased in 10 years, the proposal to increase the fares had been put forward by the trade and would be consistent with other local authorities in the area. Members noted that drivers needed to pay for rising fuel and running costs etc. and had to compete with the private hire sector.

Councillor Smart proposed a motion to accept the proposal. This was seconded by Councillor Rodohan.

Resolved: (By 7 votes to 3 against) That the Leader of the Council be given delegated authority to comply with the statutory process for publishing the proposal on increasing hackney carriage fares.

The meeting ended at 6.30 pm

Councillor Troy Tester (Chair)

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