

REPORT OF GENERAL PURPOSES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

(Meetings held 24 November and 1 December 2000)

1. APPLICATION TO INCREASE THE GENERAL TARIFF FOR HACKNEY CARRIAGES IN THE DISTRICT (REPORT D – 24 NOVEMBER 2000) (MINUTE NO. 10)

The Committee has considered a request from several Hackney Carriage owners to increase the tariff for maximum Hackney Carriage fares. The District Council sets maximum rates to be charged by Hackney Carriages within the District.

All Hackney Carriage owners were consulted and asked to give their views on whether they thought the Council should consider raising the current tariffs and, if so, the level they would like to see set.

The survey resulted only in a 34% response rate, and out of the 12 responses received, there were 10 different sets of tariffs suggested. These ranged from an average increase of approximately 20% to no increase at all.

Members recognised that the costs of running taxis had continued to rise since the last increase in the general tariff, and the Committee felt that, in the circumstances, a general rise of 6% was warranted. If the Committee's recommendation is approved, the proposed increase will be advertised and any objections reported back to the Committee on 26 January 2001.

RECOMMENDED:

That current Hackney Carriage tariffs in force in the District be increased by 6% with effect from 1 April 2001.

2. CARAVAN SITES AND CONTROL OF DEVELOPMENT ACT 1960 – WESTWOODS AND GLENDENE MOBILE HOME SITE (REPORT C – 1 DECEMBER 2000) (MINUTE NO. 14)

Following a site visit, the Committee considered an application from the mobile home site owners to increase the number of caravans on Westwoods and Glendene Mobile Home Park from 144 to 149.

The Committee heard a presentation from a representative of the residents of the Mobile Home Park, who spoke against the application.

The Council's position was outlined to the Committee. Some 44 replies (out of a total of 144 mobile homes on the site) had been received to a circular letter from the Council with reference to the owner's proposal to place an additional 5 caravans on the site. Two of the letters had expressed no objection to the proposal. The remainder made the following main comments:-

- (a) Loss of amenity land, particularly in respect of recreational usage;
- (b) The general reduction in available open space;
- (c) Loss of visual amenity;

- (d) The existing foul and storm water drains were under severe pressure with the existing number of mobile homes on site and additional caravans would inevitably increase such problems;
- (f) The adequacy of the existing water supply;
- (g) Loss of trees, including several mature poplars which were already subject to Tree Preservation Orders;
- (h) Increase in traffic on site;
- (i) Additional traffic at the Bashley Road border; and
- (j) The caravan park lies within the New Forest Heritage Area.

The site owners, Haulfryn, had pointed out that, since they purchased the site in 1997, they had improved the electricity supply; installed street lighting; installed a new sewage plant; provided new fire equipment; and had stated their intention to improve the existing Forest Walk and supply liquid petroleum gas via mains to all residents. Further landscaping works were also due to be completed by the owners and although an increase in traffic could be acknowledged, there was no safety issue involved. The fire equipment complied with the Model Standards.

The Committee noted that the Council had to “have regard to” the Model Standards, and could adjust them in accordance with individual site conditions. Further, it was noted that the site density formula in the Model Standards would allow the additional five units to be sited at Westwoods and Glendene. Members were advised that officers were of the view that there were no safety or health and safety issues which would be infringed by housing an additional five units on the site.

Members debated the issue and generally felt that the Model Standards were intended for guidance only and allowed local authorities flexibility in their application. They felt that losing recreation and open space on the mobile home park would be extremely detrimental to the general health and amenity of the residents. The Committee has therefore refused the application for an increase in numbers of the caravans from 144 to 149, on the grounds that the amenity space for residents needs to be safeguarded and their quality of life maintained.

3. CARAVAN SITES AND CONTROL OF DEVELOPMENT ACT 1960 – WESTWOODS AND GLENDENE MOBILE HOME SITE (REPORT B – 1 DECEMBER 2000) (MINUTE NO. 15)

The Committee has also considered a proposal to amend the licence conditions relating to the provision of recreational space at the above caravan site in accordance with the Model Standards.

The relevant licence condition currently provides that ‘where children stay on the site, space equivalent to 1/10 of the total area shall be allocated for children’s games and/or other recreational purposes.....’

The Model Standards applicable to a Permanent Residential Mobile Home Site, provide for the provision of recreational space where children live on the site. The Committee is of the view that the Model Condition in this regard should apply to the Westwoods and Glendene site and has therefore resolved that the condition be amended to read:-

'Where children live on the site, space equivalent to about one-tenth of the total area shall be allocated for children's games and/or other recreational purposes. This provision will normally be necessary because of the limited space available round the caravans, but may be omitted where there are suitable alternative publicly provided recreational facilities which are readily accessible'.

Cllr John M Hoy
CHAIRMAN

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