

9 MARCH 2012

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

GENERAL PURPOSES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the General Purposes and Licensing Committee held at Appletree Court, Lyndhurst on Friday, 9 March 2012.

- p Cllr G C Beck (Chairman)
- p Cllr M H Thierry (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors:

- p S J Clarke
- p W H Dow
- p J D Heron
- p Miss A J Hickman
- p Mrs M McLean
- p L R Puttock
- p A W Rice TD

Councillors:

- p W S Rippon-Swaine
- ap R F Scrivens
- p S S Wade
- p Mrs C V Ward
- p P R Woods
- p Mrs P A Wyeth

Officers Attending:

Mrs R Rutins, S Stone and P Weston.

Also in attendance:

Mr D Shearing, Secretary, New Forest Taxi Association

27. MINUTES.

The Chairman referred to a letter received from Mr Prout who had made representations to the last meeting of the Committee for a change in the Council's policy that required annual driver medical examinations to be undertaken by a doctor from the applicant's surgery. All members present confirmed that they had received a copy of the letter and that they did not wish to discuss the issue further.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2012 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

28. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

No declarations of interest were made by members in connection with an agenda item.

29. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr Shearing of the New Forest Taxi Association addressed the Committee under minute no. 30.

30. APPLICATION TO INCREASE HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARES IN THE DISTRICT (REPORT A).

Mr D Shearing, Secretary of the New Forest Taxi Association, addressed the Committee to request the increase set out as Option 4 in Appendix 1 to Report A to the Committee. This represented a 10% increase in the overall tariff. The Association felt it necessary to request this level of increase in view of the significant rises in motoring costs, and in order to be able to continue to provide a good service to residents of the district.

Members noted that the last tariff change had come into effect on 16 November 2010. It was the Committee's policy to review tariffs a maximum of every two years and to take account of variations in the Government's monthly digest of statistics for motoring expenditure. This showed that from June 2010 to July 2011 fuel and other motoring costs had increased by 11.28%.

Members were generally sympathetic to the request for a fare increase, because of the significant rises in fuel, insurance and other motoring costs. They were, however, concerned at the effect of a steep rise in fares on passengers, who often had no alternative means of transport and many of whom had not seen their incomes rise for some time. Some members also highlighted that no other businesses were subject to control over pricing by the District Council.

The Committee noted the various options for fare increases and the way in which fares were calculated. It was noted that the "flag" (the initial price paid on entering a taxi) was lower in New Forest District than others in the area, but that the "running mile" (the fare paid for actual miles travelled, arrived at by "flag drops" over certain distances) was comparatively high. Members considered that the fare structure was not transparent. The public often had no indication of the likely cost of their journey until the journey was completed and the fare was displayed on the meter. It was noted that passengers could ask for an estimate or a fixed price, but drivers were not obliged to provide them with these.

Mr Shearing responded to some of the points made by members. He explained that the average taxi journey was 5 miles, and that, because of the rural nature of the area, there was a lot of "dead mileage" as it was unusual for drivers to pick up return fares. Fuel costs continued to rise and were likely to be higher by the time any increase in fares was implemented.

In all the circumstances, while appreciating that an increase in fares was justified, members considered that the requested 10% increase was too high. Various proposals were made, after which it was

RESOLVED:

That Option 3 – an overall increase to the tariff of approximately 5%, as set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes, be agreed.

Action: Paul Weston

31. NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS IN HEALTH AND SAFETY REGULATIONS (REPORT B).

The Committee considered progress on the implementation of recommendations arising from the report prepared by Lord Young 'Common Sense, Common Safety', and subsequent recommendations by Professor Lofstedt in his report 'Reclaiming Health and Safety for All'.

RESOLVED:

That the summary of Professor Lofstedt's report "Reclaiming Health & Safety for All" be noted and that members be advised of further appropriate developments.

Action: Stephen Stone

CHAIRMAN

Attachment: Minute No. 30 – Appendix 1

(GPL090312)



New Forest
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Taxi Fares

Maximum charges from 16.11.2010 (inclusive of VAT where appropriate)

Period applicable	7.00am to 11.00pm	11.00pm to 7.00am and on all Public Holidays with the exception of those covered by Tariff 3	Between 6.00pm on 24 th December and 7.00am on 27 December and between 6.00pm on 31 st December and 7.00am on 2 January
Tariff Rate	1	2	3
First 850 yards (or 777.24 metres) or part thereof	£2.30	£2.85	£3.80
Each subsequent 143 yards (or 137.16 metres) or part thereof	20p	30p	40p
Waiting time	20p for each 50 seconds	30p for each 75 seconds	40p for each 100 seconds
Equivalent cost of the first mile (or 1609 metres) with no waiting time or extras added	£3.57	£4.76	£6.35

Extra charges

(a) For each article of luggage or wheeled article **20p**

(b) For each animal not otherwise carried in a suitable and secure container – guide, hearing and assistance dogs exempted **40p**

(c) For each person over two persons conveyed **20p**

(d) Soiling charge – where the taxi or seating is soiled or defecated by any passenger or animal, which necessitates cleaning before the vehicle can be used again for public hire **£20**

Licensing Services, New Forest District Council, Appletree Court, Beauieu Road, Lyndhurst, SO43 7PA Telephone 023 8028 5505