

27 MAY 2022

**NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**GENERAL PURPOSES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE**

Minutes of a meeting of the General Purposes and Licensing Committee held on Friday, 27 May 2022

\* Cllr Steve Clarke (Chairman)

\* Cllr Neil Tungate (Vice-Chairman)

**Councillors:**

Keith Craze  
\* Arthur Davis  
\* Sandra Delemare  
\* Barry Dunning  
\* Allan Glass  
\* David Harrison  
\* David Hawkins

**Councillors:**

\* Maureen Holding  
Mahmoud Kangarani  
\* Alvin Reid  
\* Joe Reilly  
Barry Rickman  
\* John Ward

\*Present

**In attendance:**

**Councillors:**

Geoffrey Blunden

**Councillors:**

**Officers Attending:**

Christa Ferguson, Peter Donelan, Rebecca Drummond, Joanne McClay and Andy Rogers

**Apologies**

Cllr Keith Craze and Cllr Barry Rickman

**4 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meetings held on 14 January 2022 and 16 May 2022 be signed by the Chairman as correct records.

**5 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No Declarations of Interest were made by any Members in connection with any Agenda Item.

**6 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

No issues were raised during the Public Participation period.

**7 REVIEW OF NFDC TAXI TABLE OF FARES (TAXI TARIFF)**

The Committee considered a review of taxi tariffs and received a related presentation, the slides from which are included with the agenda pack.

The Licensing Manager explained that the rates had not been increased for 10 years, as the last review was undertaken in 2012. A further consultation with the trade was undertaken in 2019, but at that time, there were insufficient responses to justify any change.

The January 2022 consultation among taxi drivers was done in the context of a number of financial pressures and cost of living rises, including significantly higher fuel prices.

This latest consultation had revealed clear support for a rise in tariffs from the trade and interested parties. The proposed new tariffs had accordingly been formulated following research and benchmarking with other authorities locally and nationally, which was not always straightforward as charging structures varied considerably.

The proposed new tariffs reflected responses to the consultation and were intended to strike a balance between supporting the trade in having a viable livelihood, and the needs of travelling customers. It was further noted that there was currently a national taxi driver shortage.

It was noted that any such statutory reviews always included public consultation. Subject to the Committee's agreement to the recommended proposals, there would follow a 14-day public consultation period. Any objections would be heard by the Committee before the new rates were finally agreed. If there were no objections within this 14-day period, the proposed rates would be implemented.

Whilst members were mindful of cost-of-living pressures, and the effect of tariff rises on poorer customers, it was noted that the proposed rates were maximums, allowing scope for taxi drivers to negotiate lower rates with regular travellers, as appropriate.

In response to a question on whether the rates should in future be reviewed more frequently, the Licensing Manager advised that it is preferable not to have fixed review intervals, as this allowed greater flexibility and could best reflect and respond to financial changes when required.

**RESOLVED:**

That the changes to tariffs as proposed in Appendix 3 of the report be approved.

**8 RETURNING OFFICERS FEES AND EXPENSES**

The Committee considered proposed Returning Officers' fees and expenses for 2022/23.

**RESOLVED:**

That the 2022/23 fees and expenses for Returning Officers, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

**9 ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT**

CHAIRMAN