



Regulatory Panel

Date: Wednesday, 27 October 2021

Time: 14:00

Venue: Cathedral Room

Present: Councillor Mrs Marilyn Bowman, Councillor Keith Meller, Councillor David Morton, Councillor Paul Nedved, Councillor David Shepherd, Councillor Miss Lee Sherriff, Councillor Peter Sunter, Councillor Dr Les Tickner, Councillor Raymond Tinnion
Councillor Ms Jo Ellis-Williams (for Councillor Miss Jeanette Whalen)

Officers: Legal Services Manager
Regulatory Services Manager
Regulatory Compliance Officer (Apprentice)

RP.20/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Miss Jeanette Whalen and Councillor Dr Helen Davison.

RP.21/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest submitted.

RP.22/21 PUBLIC AND PRESS

It was agreed that the items of business in Part A be dealt with in public and the items of business in Part B be dealt with when the public and press were excluded.

RP.23/21 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED - The minutes of the meeting held on 22 September 2021 were agreed.

RP.24/21 REQUEST TO LIMIT THE NUMBER OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE VEHICLE LICENCES

The Regulatory Services Manager presented a request from a member of the Taxi Trade for Carlisle City Council to limit the number of Hackney Carriage Vehicle licences.(GD.74/21)

The Regulatory Services Manager reported that a request had made from the local Taxi Trade to consider adopting a Limitation Policy, the request was supported by 31 signatures from licensed drivers. The reason for the request had been that the demand for Hackney Carriages had reduced and this had resulted in drivers earning less than the minimum wage. The request also detailed several consequences of this, however, it should be noted

that drivers and vehicle proprietors had a responsibility to ensure that they did not work too many hours, kept up their vehicle maintenance and did not 'cherry pick' at the Taxi Rank.

The City Council was duty bound to accept applications for Hackney Carriage licences, a licence could be refused under a Limitation Policy if one was adopted. If there was an intention to limit the numbers of Hackney Carriage vehicles it was a legal requirement that the Council commissioned an Unmet Demand Survey, the cost of which would be met by the Hackney Carriage proprietors.

Following the receipt of the request a survey of proprietors was undertaken to evaluate the support for the request in the knowledge that the costs would be cascaded to the licence fee. 132 invitations to complete the questionnaire were sent out in hard copy. 28 responses were received, full details of the responses were included in the report.

The Regulatory Services Manager highlighted the Council Policy which prevented the issue of Hackney Carriage licences to non-wheelchair accessible taxis. A limiting of numbers could prevent the increase of wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAV) within the local taxi fleet unless an additional policy was considered alongside to phase out saloon Hackney Carriages and replace with WAVs. This would have cost implications for existing proprietors.

The Regulatory Services Manager summed up by outlining the relevant legislation and guidance for the Panel.

The Panel discussed the report in some detail. Members noted the low number of responses received; they reported on their experiences and those reported through social media regarding the difficulty in accessing taxis in the city. They felt that the pandemic had negatively impacted the industry and it was not the appropriate time to undertake a survey which would have cost implications on the cost of licences. Members also highlighted that a number of Hackney Carriage drivers had undertaken private contracts which had reduced the number of vehicles on the ranks.

During the discussion the Regulatory Services Manager commented that authorities who had implemented a restriction policy on Hackney Carriage Vehicle licences had seen an increase in private Hire Vehicle licences. The Council currently had Hackney Carriage Vehicle licences, this had been a slight reduction since 2019, however, there had been approximately 240 Hackney Carriage Drivers licences issued.

RESOLVED - The Regulatory Panel noted the request and agreed to take no further action and continue to have no limit on the numbers of Hackney Carriage Vehicles.

RP.25/21 REVIEW OF CHARGES 2022/23 - LICENSING

The Regulatory Services Manager submitted report GD.67/21 setting out the proposed fees and charges for licences falling within the responsibility of the Licensing Section and the Food and Public Protection Section of the Governance and Regulatory Services Directorate. The Regulatory Panel had responsibility for determining the licence fees, with the exception of those under the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 which fell to the Executive.

The Regulatory Services Manager explained the extremely wide ranging and principal functions covered by licensing income, and drew Members' attention to the charging structures in Appendices A to C.

The Regulatory Services Manager also set out the fee structure for Animal Welfare (licensing of activities involving animals) as set out in Appendix B and the one off registration fee for Cosmetic piercing, Tattooing, Electrolysis and Acupuncture.

RESOLVED – That the charges as set out in Appendices A, B & C of report GD.67/21 be agreed with effect from 1 April 2022 and to recommend to the Executive to agree the charges for the Scrap Metal Act Fees for 2022/23.

The Meeting ended at: 14:31