

Crawley Borough Council

Minutes of Licensing Committee

7 November 2006 at 7.30pm

Present:

Councillor B M Brockwell (Chair)
Councillors B K Blake, S A Blake, A G Brown, B J Burgess, B Clay, D G Crow,
C C Lloyd, B McCrow, J L Millar-Smith, B J Quinn, L A Seekings
and D J Shreeves

Officers Present:

G Ackland Vincent	Principal Lawyer
T Baldock	Group Manager for Food, Licensing and Occupational Health
M Lyons	Licensing Officer
M Shopland	Democratic Services Officer

Apologies for Absence:

Councillors R J Hull and C J Redmayne

Also in Attendance:

Councillors R D Burrett and A J E Quirk

7. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 6th September 2006 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

8. Hackney Carriage Fares 2006-2007

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Environmental Service ES/176 on the Hackney Carriage Fares 2006-2007.

The Licensing Officer presented the report to the Committee. Members were reminded that it was the Council's informal policy to consult with the relevant trade association to establish an appropriate 'table of fares' for the forthcoming period. Subsequent to consultation with the Crawley Taxi Association, a letter had been received by the Council dated 1st August 2006 (Appendix B to the report), which outlined the trade's proposals. The letter suggested that the initial hiring amount of £2.80 remain unchanged but that the initial hiring distance be reduced from 1 mile to 1,564 yards. The Licensing Officer went on to inform the Committee that on the 24th October 2006 a petition signed by 54 licensed drivers (Appendix E to the report) had been received by the Council. The petition suggested that the current initial hiring

amount of £2.80 for the first 1,759 yards be increased to £3.00 with the meter showing £3.20 for a distance of 1,760 yards.

It was noted that a misprint had occurred in Appendix C with regard to the waiting times. The figure should read 50 seconds/20p as opposed to 52 seconds/20p.

The Committee expressed concern that two different proposals had been received; from the Crawley Taxi Association and from a group of licensed drivers. Members were informed that the 54 licensed drivers who had signed the petition (as set out in Appendix E) made up a significant proportion of all licensed drivers currently working in the Crawley area, of which there were approximately 132. The Committee stated that it was mindful of the differences in opinion but that it hoped that its decision did not create any bad feeling and that good relations with the licensed drivers would continue.

It was agreed that there was little to choose between the two proposals. Several Members felt that some customers might think that £3.00, as an initial hiring fee was overly expensive. However, having considered the matter in detail the Committee felt that the proposal to increase the initial hiring fee to £3.00 but not decrease the initial hiring distance was more open and ultimately a better deal for the customer.

Members questioned the recommendation to change 'Tariff 2' so that the x1.5 tariff commenced at 18.00hrs on New Years Eve as opposed to 00.01 hours on New Years Day. It was suggested that this time was perhaps too early and might encourage people to use their own vehicles more, which in turn might lead to an increase in drink driving. In response to these concerns, the Committee was notified that the x1.5 tariff had commenced successfully at 18.00 hours on New Years Eve in previous years. Members went on to agree that it would not be unreasonable for the x1.5 tariff to commence at 18.00 hours, as the licensed drivers would be working long, unsociable hours during the busy New Year period.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the current initial hiring amount of £2.80 for the first 1,759 yards be increased to £3 with the meter showing £3.20 for a distance of 1,760 yards, with the current drop of 20p for each subsequent 196 yards to remain unchanged, and relative increases for tariffs 2 (x1.5) and 3 (x2) of the CBC table of tariffs.
- (2) That 'waiting time' of 20p per each period of 52 seconds be changed to 20p per each period of 50 seconds.
- (3) That the following change be made to 'Tariff 2':

'Applies to all hirings begun between midnight and 6am, including all Bank Holidays, plus all hirings from 18.00 hours to 23.59 hours on the 24th December and from 18.00 hours on New Years Eve to 23.59 on January 1st.'
- (4) That all other tariffs and extra charges unless already mentioned remain unchanged from the current tariff table.
- (5) That the Committee grant permission to advertise this decision in the local press and resolve to adopt the table of fares as set out in the Appendices
- (6) That, following the advertisement the Committee meet to consider any objection that may be lodged within the specified time period: if no objection is

- (7) received the Committee approve the proposals with an implementation date set for the 1st December 2006.

9. Delegation to the Licensing Sub Committee

The Committee was advised that at its meeting on 27th November 2006, the General Purposes Committee would be asked to recommend to the Council that the Constitution should be amended to provide for the function of determining applications to review premises licences/club premises certificates to be delegated to the Licensing Sub Committee, in accordance with published guidance.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the Licensing Committee concur with the proposed decision.

10. Closure of Meeting

With the business of the Committee concluded, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 7.55pm

B M BROCKWELL
Chair