

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MINUTES

Date: Tuesday 27 June 2017

Place: Council Chamber, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage

Present: Members: L Chester (Chair), C Latif (Vice Chair),
D Bainbridge, L Briscoe, H Burrell, A Farquharson,
L Harrington, J Lloyd, M Notley, C Saunders and
G Snell.

Start/End Time: Start Time: 6:00 pm
End Time: 6.50 pm

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors M McKay and E Connolly.

There were no declarations of interest.

2. MINUTES – 10 AUGUST 2016

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 10 August 2016 are approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3. TO APPOINT THE VICE CHAIR OF THE COMMITTEE

The Chair invited nominations for the post of the Vice Chair.

It was moved seconded and **RESOLVED** that Councillor C Latif be appointed as the Vice Chair for the Municipal Year 2017/18

4. TERMS OF REFERENCE

Noted.

5. REVIEW OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE TARIFF

The Commercial and Licensing Manager submitted a report reviewing the current hackney carriage fares tariffs following a request to the Council from a representative from the hackney carriage trade to revise them.

The Chair asked all Members to confirm that they had read the report and appendices.

Members were advised that the written request to consider an increase had

attached a list of names and signatures of 81 other drivers expressing support for the proposed increase. The proposed tariff table was advertised in the local press for two weeks beginning 6th April 2017 and a copy made available for inspection at the Council offices for this period. In addition, a letter was sent to all dual licensed drivers and licensed private hire operators in the Council's area.

The Committee was advised of the proposed scale of Hackney Carriage fares following the variation.

The Chair then invited Mr Kamali, in support of the proposed variation, to address the Committee.

Mr Kamali, a current hackney carriage driver, advised the Committee that since the last increase in the taxi tariff costs of running a taxi including maintenance costs, vehicle testing, operator's licence, DBS checks and the cost for a change of vehicle had increased dramatically. Mr Kamali advised that a number of drivers were in support of the proposed increase and he had submitted a petition in support of the increase.

The Commercial and Licensing Manager informed the Committee that a representative of those objecting to the increase had been invited to address the Committee but was not in attendance. The main objections to the increase related to competitive disadvantage.

Officers advised the meeting that the proposed tariff was designed to limit maximum fares and that it was within the gift of a hackney carriage driver to charge less than the tariff fare.

In response to a question from a Member, Mr Kamali advised that in his opinion the majority of taxi drivers in the Town were in favour of the increase.

Members asked about the impact of the ride-sharing app 'Uber'. Officers advised that Uber was not subject to hackney carriage tariffs and that the pricing structure used was complex and did not compare easily, although it was known that the fares did not differ significantly from other providers depending on the time of day and level of demand. It was known that Uber was operating in the Town but the Council had not licensed them as an operator.

It was **RESOLVED** that

1. with effect from 3 July 2017, the proposed increase of the current taxi tariff 1 from £3.00 to £3.40 be approved and applied for hirings between 0600 and 2300 hours Monday to Sunday
2. with effect from 3 July 2017, the proposed increase of the current taxi tariff 2 from £4.50 to £5.10 be approved and applied for hirings between 23:00 to 06:00 hours Monday to Sunday; 06.00 to 23.00 hours on all designated Public and Bank Holidays and

Easter Sunday; and 18.00 to 23.00 hours on New Year's Eve and 18.00 to 24.00 hours on Christmas Eve

3. with effect from 3 July 2017, the proposed increase of the current taxi tariff 3 from £6.00 to £6.80 be approved and applied for hirings 00:01 to 24:00 hours on Christmas Day and Boxing Day and 2300 on New Year's Eve to 0600 hours on New Year's Day
4. with effect from 3 July 2017, the proposed removal of the current taxi tariff 4 be approved and applied
5. that the Strategic Director be requested to approve this key decision prior to 3 July 2017 in order that the increase can come into effect from this date.

6. URGENT PART I BUSINESS

None.

7. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was **RESOLVED** that:

1. Under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in paragraphs 1-7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act as amended by Local Government (Access to information) (Variation) Order 2006.
2. Members considered the reasons for the following report being in Part II and determined that the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighed the public interest in disclosure.

8. PART II MINUTES – 10 AUGUST 2016

It was **RESOLVED** that the Part II Minutes of the General Purposes Committee on 10 August 2016 are approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

9. URGENT PART II BUSINESS

None.

Chair