

EAST HAMPSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Licensing Committee held on 30 November 2012 at Penns Place, Petersfield.

Present:

Councillors J Onslow (Chairman), P Aiston, R Ayer, D Denston, P Drury, L Evans, A Glass, M Harvey, B Moulard, P Seward and C Wherrell.

6. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors D Ashcroft, K Carter, D Phillips and G Stacpoole.

7. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2012, which had been previously circulated, were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

8. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no Chairman's announcements.

9. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations.

10. GAMBLING ACT 2005 – REVIEW OF STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

The Principal Licensing Officer introduced report EXGK.29/12.

The Committee RESOLVED that the draft revised Statement of Principles on gambling be recommended to Council for approval.

11. HACKNEY CARRIAGE TABLE OF FARES – BOOKING FEE

The Principal Licensing Officer introduced report EXGK.31/12. She highlighted that Cllr Saunders had made a late request on behalf of the East Hampshire Disability Forum for an exemption from the booking fee for disabled people to be considered. She explained that Hackney Carriage Proprietors could decide whether or not to accept a private hire booking and that if a booking was accepted; the proposed booking fee would be discretionary and only apply in the circumstances shown in the recommendations. She suggested that the application of the proposed booking fee would be a commercial decision and that the availability of a booking fee would increase the number of Hackney Carriage Proprietors prepared to offer a service to the more rural areas of the District.

During the discussion the Committee was informed that the Taxi Association had been consulted on the changes and had canvassed its members. All taxi drivers in the District were automatically members of the Taxi Association. From the feedback received, the Principal Licensing Officer had formed the impression that not many drivers would charge a booking fee.

Concern was raised that disabled people and those who lived in the most rural areas would be the most likely to be affected by the proposed booking fee. The Committee was uncomfortable that few authorities in the country had set such a fee and thought that the proposed charging structure was overly complex. The proposed booking fee of £10 for pick-ups over 5.1 miles away from the operator's business was also felt to be too high.

Conversely, some members of the Committee predicted that market forces would rule and as the charge was discretionary, people would contact different firms in order to obtain the best deal.

The Committee voted on the recommendation to make the following changes to the Council's Hackney Carriage Table of Fares:

'Extra Charges

A Booking Fee may apply in the following circumstances:

- no booking fee where the journey to pick up is less than two miles from the operator's business address
- 2.1 to 5 miles from operator's business address to pick up point - £5.00
- 5.1 miles and over from operator's business address to pick up point - £10

Notification of the booking fee will be given to the customer at the time of booking ie prior to the start of the journey.'

Following the vote, the recommendation was declared LOST, 5 Councillors voting FOR the recommendation, 6 Councillors voting AGAINST the recommendation and no Councillors ABSTAINING from voting.

It was therefore RESOLVED that the proposed changes to the Council's Hackney Carriage Table of Fares would not be recommended to Council for approval.

The meeting commenced at 10am and concluded at 10.47am

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Chairman

During the course of the meeting no members of the public or the press were present.