

## **EAST HAMPSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

At a meeting of the Licensing Committee held on 25 September 2020

Present

Councillor: B Moulard (Chairman)

Councillors: D Ashcroft (Vice-Chairman), K Carter, T Denton, A Glass, G Hill, C Louisson, J Matthews, R Standish, I Thomas, P Wigman and E Woodard

### **16 Apologies for Absence**

There were apologies for absence from Councillors S Dolan, M Johnson and N Taylor.

### **17 Confirmation of Attendance**

Councillors verbally confirmed their attendance at the meeting.

### **18 Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

### **19 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **20 Confirmation of Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 February 2020 were confirmed as a correct record.

### **21 Variation to the Hackney Carriage Table of Fares**

The committee adjourned at 10:15am

The committee reconvened at 10:26am

The Environmental Health Manager (Food, Safety & Licensing) introduced the report. The committee were being asked to consider an application from the East Hampshire Taxi Association to vary the Council's Hackney Carriage Table of Fares. The recommendation of the Committee would be submitted to Full Council on 19 November 2020.

The request referred to fares charged on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve between the hours of 18:00hrs and 23:00hrs be added to Rate 2 in the Table of Fares. Current charges for these days and times were at Rate 1 until 11pm. From 11pm to 12pm Rate 2 could be charged. Councillors were referred to Appendix A of the report which set out the Table of Charges.

The Table of Fares had last been reviewed in 2018, when the fares had been increased.

Following receipt of the request a consultation letter was sent out to all dual hackney carriage and private hire drivers, detailing the request. Councillors were referred to Appendix C and D which contained a copy of the letter and the response sheet. 312 letters had been sent out and 70 replies had been received, 61 of whom agreed with the proposed increase.

Comparisons had also been made with neighbouring authorities' charges and it was confirmed that they all charged at the higher rate.

Mr Blackman, Chairman of the East Hampshire Taxi Association addressed the Committee.

He explained the difficulty of finding drivers to work on these nights, partly because the money was not there. Increasing the fares would encourage drivers in covering these times.

He confirmed that the demand was there for drivers, but there were not enough drivers to cover it. There use to be a demand for long distance drives, but the demand was now more for local residents.

It was confirmed that Petersfield Taxi drivers were not members of the East Hampshire Taxi Association and that the consultation letter had not gone out to every driver in the District.

In response to a question about fares in the neighbouring district of Waverley it was confirmed that they also charged at Fare 2.

Councillors indicated their general support for the application and expressed concern about the effect of the pandemic and that pubs and clubs now had to close at 10pm which made the window to cover and take fares smaller.

Following the discussion, it was resolved that it be RECOMMENDED to Council that the Table of Fees be varied.

**The meeting commenced at 10.06 am and concluded at 10.55 am**