

Runnymede Borough Council

REGULATORY COMMITTEE

14 April 2010 at 7.35pm

Members of the Committee present: Councillors D W Parr (Chairman), Mrs F J Barden (Vice-Chairman), R J Edis, Mrs M T Harnden and Mrs M Roberts.

Members of the Committee absent: None

Councillors P A Francis, Mrs E Gill, RN Jones and C Knight also attended the meeting with the permission of the Chairman.

709. FIRE PRECAUTIONS

The Chairman read out the fire precautions.

710. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings of the Regulatory Committee held on 28 January and 9 February 2010 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

711. FINANCIAL MONITORING STATEMENT

(Ref: Minutes of Regulatory Committee, November 2009, page 388, para 407)

The Committee noted the latest financial monitoring statement for the services under the remit of the Regulatory Committee.

There was little change from the position reported with the Revenue Estimates in January 2010. Members noted the ongoing savings target of £5,000.

Income from both Taxi and Hackney Carriage Fees and Driver licence renewals was slightly lower than the predicted budget but this was noted to be an issue of timing and unlikely to affect the final outturn position.

712. HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARE INCREASE – LOCAL GOVERNMENT (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) ACT 1976

(Ref: Minutes of Regulatory Committee, January 2008, page 695, para 493, January 2009, page 716, para 462 and page 717 para 463 and January 2010, page 511, para 540)

The Committee reconsidered a proposal to increase the level of fare tariffs charged by Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles fitted with a taximeter.

Members recalled that Hackney Carriage Fares had not increased since April 2008. In January 2009, Members had resolved that any increase should be held for 2009/10 and implemented instead from April 2010.

However, when the matter was considered by this Committee in January 2010, and the new level of fares advertised, as required under Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, one representation had been received, supported by a small number of other drivers, which needed to be considered, prior to the implementation of a new level of fares.

After the objections were received, Officers consulted members of the Taxi Trade (some 193 Hackney Carriage and Private Hire operators, whose vehicles were fitted with a taximeter). However, only 53 drivers had replied, representing only 27% of the Taxi Trade. 41 of those responding were Hackney Carriage drivers, the remaining 12 were Private Hire drivers. The responses showed a fairly even split between those in favour and against an increase in the level of fares. Officers confirmed that 49% were in favour of an increase and 51% against.

It was noted that no representations had been received from members of the public.

The Committee received a further response from the member of the Taxi Trade who made the original representation, who was unable to attend the meeting in person. This re-iterated their opposition to an increase in the level of fares, citing the detrimental effect that an increase would have on the Taxi Trade generally and the level of business they could expect to achieve.

The Committee agreed that in the current economic climate it would not be beneficial to increase fares, noting however that when they did increase the rise was likely to be significantly more than the approximate 5% proposed.

Members acknowledged that a number of costs for the drivers were increasing; including Car Tax and fuel prices.

The Committee concluded it was sensible to hold the fares at the April 2008 level, for a further year or until such time as representations were received from the Taxi Trade for an earlier increase.

RESOLVED that –

the proposed table of Hackney Carriage Fares previously scheduled to take place on 1 April 2010 be not implemented and the current fare rates, as at April 2008 and attached at Appendix ‘A’, continue to apply.

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 7.49 pm)