

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
LICENSING COMMITTEE HELD IN THE  
COUNCIL CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS,  
HERTFORD ON THURSDAY, 28 JULY  
2005 AT 7.30 PM

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PRESENT: Councillors M P A McMullen (Chairman).

Councillors W Ashley, A L Burlton, J Cain,  
J Demonti, Mrs D M Hone, L R Pinnell, M Port,  
J J Taylor, M J Tindale, A L Warman.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Linda Bevan	- Committee Secretary
Chris Clowes	- Community Protection Manager (Enforcement)
Paul Newman	- Community Protection Manager (Process)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of  
Councillors P R Ballam and N C Poulton.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor T J Cain declared a personal interest in Minute  
.... Table of Fares for Hackney Carriages (from 1  
November 2005) by virtue of her husband being a taxi  
driver in London.

RESOLVED ITEMSACTIONMINUTES

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2005 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the Licensing Sub-Committee meeting held on 1 July 2005 be received.

HUMAN RESOURCES SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the Human Resources Sub-Committee meetings held on 20 June and 11 July 2005 be received.

UPDATE ON APPLICATIONS FOR PREMISES AND PERSONAL LICENCES UNDER THE LICENSING ACT 2003

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A report was submitted by the Director of Regulatory Services informing the Licensing Committee about premises with applications for premises licences currently under consideration, and numbers of personal and premises licences issued. He gave details of the income received so far and additional staff, who might be needed, as traders had started to send in a large number of applications, as deadlines for applying approached.

Members expressed concern about traders who did not apply in time for their licences. Officers explained they were already considering what steps would be taken if enforcement action was needed. Members agreed to receive the report.

RESOLVED - that the report be received.

TABLE OF FARES FOR HACKNEY CARRIAGES (FROM 1 NOVEMBER 2005)

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The Director of Regulatory Services submitted a report on proposals for an increase in hackney carriage fares from 1 November 2005. He circulated a report at the meeting

ACTION

from the AA showing that the costs of motoring had increased by a higher rate than inflation generally.

The Director reported that officers met regularly with trade representatives to discuss possible alterations to hackney carriage and private hire vehicle licensing conditions and increases in hackney carriage tariffs. A meeting had been held with trade representatives and their latest fare proposals were shown in the appendix to the report submitted to the meeting. The increases would be advertised for public comment in newspapers and on the internet. If no objections were received the Director of Regulatory Services had been authorised to agree the increases.

The Committee had been invited by the Executive to comment on the proposals. The Committee was concerned at the proposed increase as taxis were often used by elderly people, in a largely rural area such as East Herts and they might struggle to afford the increased fares. It hoped that next year would not see large increases, if the taxi drivers' costs did not increase.

The Committee supported the proposals subject to the comments now detailed.

RESOLVED - that the Executive be informed that  
(A) the increases in the report now submitted be supported; and

(B) any proposed increase next year should be considered very carefully in relation to increases in costs.

DRS

AMUSEMENT MACHINES AT PARADISE PARK,  
BROXBOURNE

Officers reported that Legal Services had asked for more time to consider this report, and had requested its deferral.

The Committee agreed that this report be deferred.

DRS/DCG

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RESOLVED - that the report be deferred.

TRAINING

The Chairman commented that training was proceeding well and it was hoped a number of Members would have completed their training and had a chance to serve on the Licensing Sub-Committee by the end of August 2005.

RESOLVED - that the report be received.

HEARINGS PROCEDURE

The Chairman commented that the procedure for hearings at the Sub-Committee was developing as more sub-committees were held. It was important to allow objectors a chance to influence decisions as legislation favoured licensees as long as they met the licensing objectives laid down by legislation. The procedure would help to ensure all hearings were conducted in the same way and there was a consistency in decision-making.

Members raised concerns that, under the Council's policy for licensing which the new legislation had required the Council to produce, Parish Councils could not make representations themselves. It was explained that the Council's policy only allowed them to make comments on behalf of local residents or businesses. Parish Councils were being informed of applications by email where they had supplied details to officers.

It was important that the Council appeared impartial in its role as licensing authority and did not appear to be seeking objections. The current situation was different from the previous system of Public Entertainments Licensing when Parish Councils could make objections on their own behalf. Members felt Parish Councils should be informed of this.

RESOLVED - that the Chairman's comments be noted and a letter be sent to all Parish Councils explaining their position in commenting on licensing applications.

DRs

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The meeting closed at 8.30 pm.

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