

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of **General Purposes Committee** held in the Castle House, Great North Road, Newark, Notts. NG24 1BY on Thursday, 13 June 2019 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs R Crowe (Chairman)
 Councillor R White (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Mrs K Arnold, Councillor L Brazier, Councillor Mrs B Brooks,
Councillor Mrs I Brown, Councillor M Cope, Councillor R Jackson,
Councillor Mrs S Michael, Councillor Mrs S Saddington, Councillor
I Walker, Councillor K Walker and Councillor Mrs Y Woodhead

APOLOGIES FOR Councillor S Carlton and Councillor P Harris
ABSENCE:

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS FROM MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

NOTED that no Member or Officer declared any interest pursuant to any statutory requirement in any matter discussed or voted upon at the meeting.

2 DECLARATION OF ANY INTENTION TO RECORD THE MEETING

NOTED that an audio recording of the meeting was to be made by the Council.

3 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14 MARCH 2019

AGREED (unanimously) that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 March 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4 HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARE REVIEW

The Committee considered the report of the Director – Communities & Environment in relation to the consultation proposals for a review of Hackney Carriage fares. The report set out that the last review of fares was undertaken in 2012 but that no change had been effected at that time. The last increase in fares had been some seven or eight years previously. A benchmarking exercise had been undertaken with paragraph 2.3 providing the results thereof. Appendix One of the report set out the current fare levels; those proposed by the trade together with the figures from three separate percentage increases.

In considering the report Members asked a number of questions in relation to enforcement; the cost of fares for hackney carriages and private hire vehicles; whether there was a nationally set level of fares; and the cost of fares in rural areas.

In relation to the proposed consultation on the fare increases the Director – Communities & Environment queried whether it was possible to include the public in the process. The Business Manager – Public Protection confirmed that the public could be included in the consultation. He also confirmed that the proposals already received from the trade only included a small group of individuals who were mainly Newark based. The full consultation would be undertaken throughout the district.

In discussing the figures to be consulted on Members agreed that the following figures be used: a 10% per mile increase; and a 20% flag increase.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the proposed fare review calculations as indicated above be consulted on, these being a 10% per mile increase; and a 20% flag increase; and
- (b) the proposed method for carrying out the fare review be supported.

5 CASTLEGATE TAXI RANK

The Committee considered the verbal report of the Business Manager – Public Protection which sought to update Members on the progress in relation to the proposed change of hours for the Castlegate Taxi Rank, as previously reported to Committee.

It was reported that a request had been forwarded to Nottinghamshire County Council, concerning changing the operational hours of the rank from the current 8pm start to 6pm. The County had undertaken a consultation on the proposed change and had received 20 responses from a gymnasium located on Castlegate stating that their customers would be disadvantaged by the proposed changes. A Member stated that there was a public pay and display car park close by and suggested that checks be made as to what other alternative parking arrangements were available.

The Business Manager advised that a suggestion had been received that the new hours of operation only apply on a Friday, Saturday and Sunday but it was felt that the signage would be too complicated. Members agreed and noted that often taxis were double parked because they could not get onto the rank. In discussing the issues Members also agreed that the amended hours would only be meaningful if they were enforced. The Business Manager advised that tickets had been issued to private vehicles which had been parked in the rank during its hours of operation. He noted that most parking breaches occurred during the day but that the Civil Parking Enforcement Officers would change their operational hours if requested to do so.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) Nottinghamshire County Council be requested to amend the Castlegate Taxi Rank's hours of operation to commence at 6pm; and
- (b) a further report be presented to the September meeting of the General Purposes Committee on how the amended hours had been received.

6 GENERAL PURPOSES FORWARD PLAN - JUNE 2019 TO MAY 2020

The Committee considered the Forward Plan and suggested the following items be added:

- (i) Update on the Castlegate Taxi Rank (September 2019)
- (ii) Update on the Hackney Carriage Fares Consultation (September 2019)

AGREED (unanimously) that the aforementioned items be added to the General Purposes Forward Plan.

7 UPDATE ON PERFORMANCE AND ENFORCEMENT MATTERS

The Committee considered the report of the Director – Communities & Environment in relation to the activity and performance of the Licensing Team which included details of current ongoing enforcement issues.

Information contained in the report related to the number of applications for grants and renewals of licences for Hackney Carriage; Private Hire; and Ambulance Drivers together with those for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles. A note of ongoing enforcement activity was also listed with information as to what action had been taken to-date. Also provided within the report was information relating to both street and house to house collections.

AGREED (unanimously) that the report be noted.

Meeting closed at 6.36 pm.

Chairman