

**LICENSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH COMMITTEE held at
COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNCIL OFFICES, LONDON ROAD, SAFFRON
WALDEN, CB11 4ER, on TUESDAY, 23 JANUARY 2024 at 7.00 pm**

Present: Councillor A Armstrong (Chair)
Councillors N Church, J Davey, G Driscoll (Vice-Chair), J Moran,
A Reeve and M Tayler

Officers in attendance: T Cobden (Environmental Health Manager - Commercial),
J Jones (Licensing and Compliance Officer), N Katevu
(Monitoring Officer), J Livermore (Senior Licensing and
Compliance Officer), C Shanley-Grozavu (Democratic Services
Officer) and B Stuart (Accountant)

LIC38 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ahmed and Regan.

There were no declarations of interest.

LIC39 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The following minutes were approved as a correct record:

- 7th August 2023 (Licensing Panel)
- 10th August 2023 (Extraordinary Committee Meeting)
- 24th August 2023 (Licensing Panel)
- 13th October 2023 (Licensing Panel)
- 14th December 2023 (Licensing Panel)

**LIC40 PROPOSED 2024/25 LICENCE FEES FOR HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND
PRIVATE HIRE DRIVERS, VEHICLES AND OPERATORS**

The Senior Licensing Officer presented the proposed Licence fees for the period of 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 relating to Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers, Vehicles and Operators.

In response to questions, officers clarified the following:

- Licensing was a cost-recovery service which were not permitted to generate true surpluses or deficits. The predicted surpluses within the account forecasts were as a result of delayed costs and the funds would therefore be transferred into the reserves to be drawn out over the course of a three-year lifespan of a licence.
- Recharges from other departments were based on time allocation data. There was a predicted rise in ICT and legal costs, presumably due to the higher number of licences being issues as well as the increased costs of the required software.

- It was not possible to compare the licensing fees with other Local Authorities as it was only reflective of the costs incurred at the Council. However, UDC did charge less for a Licence than neighbouring Braintree District Council.
- It was appropriate for fees and charges associated with the Licensing regime to be set as cost recoverable. Fees could not be increased for profit, nor decreased to be more competitive.

Councillor Driscoll proposed approval of the recommendations set out within the Officer's report.

This was seconded by Councillor Reeve.

RESOLVED: that

1. Members note the contents of this report.
2. the Committee refer the approval of the revised fees to full council following the end of the consultation period and the production of the full report findings.

LIC41 **ENFORCEMENT UPDATE**

The Licensing and Compliance Officer presented an update on the compliance and enforcement activities carried out by Licensing Officers during the period from 1 June 2023 to 31 December 2023.

In response to questions from members, officers clarified the following:

- There had been 63 suspensions where drivers had not registered with the DBS update service. These suspensions did not have a set expiry date and would typically last as long as the driver did not comply with the requirement.
- Complaints had been received relating to six separate licensed premises.
- All Local Authorities were now legally required under the Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (Safeguarding and Road Safety) Act 2022 to use the National Register of Taxi and Private Hire licence Revocations and Refusals, also known as NR3. This included data for any individuals who have had a licence refused, suspended, or revoked.
- Local Authorities could make Data Protection Act (DPA) requests about a licence, where they require additional information about a driver.
- There were roughly between 40 – 50 hackney carriages and over 1000 Private Hire Vehicles licensed under UDC.
- Drivers had the right to “roam” and work wholly or predominantly in an area away from where they obtained their licence. For this reason, Uttlesford have many drivers, particularly home-to-school operators, which had branched out across a number of areas in the country.

Members expressed interest in attending PubWatch meetings. The Monitoring Officer confirmed that this could be permitted, however processes first needed to

be put in place within the Council's constitution to avoid any action which might call the decision making process into disrepute.

The report was noted.

Meeting ended at 19:42