

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE LICENSING COMMITTEE HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM 2/3, CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND ON THURSDAY 17 MARCH 2011 AT 2.00PM

Present:

Councillor D K Edwards - Chairperson

Councillors

Councillors

R D L Burns
E M Dodd
C E Hughes
C J James
R D Jenkins

D N W Jones
D A Unwin
C Westwood
M C Wilkins
R Williams

Officers:

L Jones - Group Manager, Legal and Regulatory Services
Y Witchell - Licensing and Registration Officer
K Watson - Legal Officer
R Lewis - Legal Officer (Observing)
C Branford - Democratic Services Officer - Committees

72 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from the following Members:

Councillor D Buttle
Councillor M Butcher - Holiday

73 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declarations of prejudicial interest were made:

Councillor C E Hughes - Agenda item 4 - Licensing Functions: Discretionary Licence Fees and Charges - as the Chairman of the Taxi Association is one of his tenants.

Councillor R D Jenkins - Agenda item 4 - Licensing Functions: Discretionary Licence Fees and Charges - as his daughter and her partner are both Hackney Carriage drivers.

Councillors Hughes and Jenkins left the meeting whilst this item was considered.

74 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of a meeting held on 19 January 2011 were approved as a true and accurate record.

75 LICENSING FUNCTIONS: DISCRETIONARY LICENCE FEES AND CHARGES

The Group Manager - Legal and Regulatory Services presented a report of the Assistant Chief Executive - Legal and Regulatory Services the purpose of which was to determine licensing fees and charges for 2011/12. He explained that the Licensing Committee had the power to determine those fees which were not set by statute. The discretionary fees allowed the Council to recover costs rather than to make a profit. An increase of 3% for licensing fees had been applied in line with the Council's budget strategy and inflation, with the exception of those fees charged by third parties.

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The Group Manager advised the Committee of some amendments to the table of fees and charges set out in Appendix 1 of the report: an increase in the Criminal Records Bureau fee had resulted in an increase in the proposed cost of a Hackney Carriage Licence from £114.00 to £122.00, and the proposed cost of a Criminal Records Bureau check for Hackney Carriage drivers had increased from £36 to £44.

A Member of the Committee asked if third parties were also bound by inflation when setting charges.

The Group Manager advised that this was not the case, and that third parties were able to increase their fees by a percentage that was higher than the inflation rate. He confirmed that there were no means by which the Council could object to an increase set by a third party.

The Committee Member requested that officers pursue the possibility of a request being made to Council that the Council's policy in respect of setting licensing fees and charges be amended to state that any increases made by the Council should be in line with inflation.

The Group Manager confirmed that he would seek advice on the process to be followed in making the request.

A Committee Member questioned whether the Sports Ground Certificate fee applied to private sports grounds or those owned by Bridgend County Borough Council.

The Licensing and Registration Officer advised that this fee applied to any regulated sports grounds having a stand which could accommodate more than 500 spectators.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee approved the proposed fee increases, shown in Appendix 1, subject to the amendments detailed above, to be effective from 1 April 2011, with the exception of fees relating to taxi vehicle licences and operator licences which are subject to Public Notice and will become operative either 28 days following the expiration of the Public Notice, or if objections are received on a date to be determined by the Licensing Committee following formal consideration of the objections.

The meeting closed at 2.15pm.