

THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL

At a special meeting of the Regulatory Services Committee held in the Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Rickmansworth, on Thursday, 12 October 2023 from 7.30 pm - 7.55 pm

Present: Councillors

Tony Humphreys, Vice-Chair
Stephen Cox
David Coltman
Ian Morris
Matthew Bedford
Sarah Nelmes
Ciaran Reed
Narinder Sian

Officers in Attendance:

Kimberley Grout
Matthew Roberts
Lorna Fryer

RG7/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Roger Seabourne, Councillor Raj Khiroya and Councillor Andrew Scarth.

RG8/23 MINUTES

The minutes of the Regulatory Services Committee meeting held on 14 June 2023 were confirmed as a correct record and will be signed by the Chair.

RG9/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

RG10/23 NOTICE OF OTHER BUSINESS

None received.

RG11/23 APPLICATION FOR HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARE INCREASE

A joint request was submitted by Mealing Taxis and South Oxhey Radio Taxis in May 2023 seeking permission from the council for price increases for the Hackney Carriage fare tariff. Those requests are an increase of £4 for the first 1015 metres or part thereof, and an increase of £1 to the night time charge, making it £4.50. This request follows last year's increases, last year's review agreed to changes to the tariff that previously remained unchanged, since 2013, although last year's review agreed only to the nighttime hour to 9.30pm, instead of the original proposal of 11.00pm.

Officers followed the same methodology used in 2013 and 2022, and agreed to the changes proposed, which are reflected within the recommendation; the varied version of the fare tables are advertised for 21 days, however, having regard to the legislative requirements and last year's discussion on this point, 14 days is considered acceptable as it meets the legislative

requirements, enables the table to be amended and come into force quicker and reduces the press notice cost to the council.

No comments have been received to date from the drivers who had been contacted.

Members raised the following points:

A 25% percent increase in the tariff is significantly high, and the council should consider whether it is appropriate.

However, as the fares had not been increased previously up until 2022, this increase does not seem unreasonable.

In response to a question a Member asked, the officer advised that there was no feedback regarding the price increase from 2022. Hackney Carriage trade is very limited, and ultimately, we don't want to keep inflating the prices to make it unreasonable for the public to use them.

On being put to the Committee the recommendations, as detailed in the report, were declared CARRIED by the Chair, the voting being by general assent.

RESOLVED:

That the Members of the Committee:

- a) Agree the increase of HC fares as follows:
 - A £1 increase to the 'first 1015 metres or part thereof to £4
 - A £1 increase to the 'night time charge' to £4.50
- b) Agree for Officers to publish the agreed varied version of the Hackney Fare Table in the Watford Observer for 21 days (the legislation requests not less than 14 days) and for the Head of Regulatory Services to consider any objections in consultation with the Lead Member.
- c) If no objections are received for the varied tariff to take effect following the expiration of the press notice.
- d) If objections are received and not withdrawn, for Officers to arrange an Extraordinary Regulatory Services Committee by 12 December 2023 to consider the representations received.

RG12/23 POLLING DISTRICT AND POLLING PLACE REVIEW 2023

The Council is required to carry out a polling district and polling place review every 5 years, and this time around the review falls between 1 October 2023 and 31 January 2025.

The Committee are asked to note the timeline for the statutory review of polling districts and polling places now, as there will be a parliamentary election before the end of January 2025.

The review went live in the beginning of October, and the proposed time table is in place, so an updated register could be in place for 1 February 2024, which will work with all of our local elections on 2 May 2024 and if there is a General Election as well on the same day.

Members will be aware that in December 2013, Council delegated to Regulatory Committee the approval of any changes should they need to take place. There will be a requirement to have another Special Regulatory Committee meeting in January 2024 to provide the outcome of the review and adopt any changes required.

Members raised the following points:

It would be useful to have some statistics on the number of people on the register in each polling district and the number of people who vote on the day in each polling district, as it

might help to inform any decisions the council will want to make in terms of locations, and which polling stations are appropriate.

In addition, if the information could also be provided on the number of postal votes, that have been cast, divided compared to where their polling place would be.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee note and comment on the timeline for the statutory review of polling districts and polling places.

RG13/23 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

“Under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined under paragraph (X) of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act. It has been decided by the Council that in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.”

RG14/23 OTHER BUSINESS - IF APPROVED UNDER ITEM 3 ABOVE

None.

CHAIRMAN