
Licensing and Protection Panel

Report of the meeting held on 19th January 2005

Matters for Information

12. LICENSING COMMITTEE PROCEEDINGS

The Panel has been informed that an amendment to the Functions and Responsibilities Regulations associated with the Local Government Act 2000 has resulted in the licensing of highway amenities or pavement cafés being defined as a non-executive function, which therefore will now fall within the remit of the Licensing and Protection Panel.

The Panel has reaffirmed the guidelines adopted by the Cabinet for the determination of applications and conditions of operation and approved the fee for a licence of £220 per annum.

The Panel has authorised the Head of Administration, after consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Panel, to determine applications for pavement café licences and to take any action for contravention of the licence conditions. In the event that the Head of Administration is minded to refuse an application the Panel has also agreed that the applicant be offered an opportunity to appear before the Licensing and Protection Applications Sub-Group for determination of the application.

13. HACKNEY CARRIAGE NUMBERS

The Panel has been reminded of the Government's response to an Office of Fair Trading report on the regulation of licensed taxis and private hire services and considered an action plan from the Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Branch of the Department of Transport outlining the Government's current position.

It is the Government's view that a restriction on hackney carriage numbers should only be retained where there is strong justification that its removal would be significantly detrimental to the consumer. Those Councils that continue to restrict the number of plates will be expected to undertake a review of unmet demand including public consultation every 3 years.

The Panel has recently received the results of a survey on unmet demand and agreed that three additional hackney carriage licences should be issued to vehicles built for the purpose of access by disabled passengers. In that respect, the Panel has agreed that the

number of hackney carriages continue to be restricted in the District in line with the unmet demand survey and the limitation be reviewed again after 2 years.

14. HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARES

The Panel has been reminded of an agreement with hackney carriage proprietors to review annually the table of fares in the light of the outcome of a consultation exercise with the proprietors themselves. Having taken into account the views of the proprietors on fare options for the following year, the Panel has agreed a revised tariff of hackney carriage fares which will now be the subject of a public consultation exercise.

15. FEES AND CHARGES

The Panel has approved an increase in fees for the licences administered by the Licensing Section of the Administration Division by an average of 2.5% for 2005/06.

16. REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION

The Panel has considered the current review of the Council's Constitution and noted that this will require amendment to reflect the creation of the new licensing committee and the transfer of some of the Panel's terms of reference to that Committee.

17. LICENSING AND PROTECTION APPLICATIONS SUB-GROUP

The Panel has received the Minutes of meetings of the Licensing and Protection Applications Sub-Group held on 28th September and 24th November 2004.

J M Sadler
Chairman