

**WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**LICENSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE**

**COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY, KIDDERMINSTER**

**MONDAY 22<sup>ND</sup> APRIL 2013 (10.30AM)**

---

**Present:**

Councillors: P B Harrison (Chairman), A T Hingley (Vice-Chairman), R Bishop, C Brewer, J A Hart, P V Hayward, N Knowles, B McFarland, M Price, M A Salter, J A Shaw, D R Sheppard and G C Yarranton.

**Observers:**

There were no members present as observers.

**LIC.49 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P Dyke, J Greener, V Higgs, M B Kelly and N J Thomas.

**LIC.50 Appointment of Substitutes**

Councillor J A Hart was appointed as a substitute for Councillor J Greener. Councillor B McFarland was appointed as a substitute for Councillor M B Kelly. Councillor J A Shaw was appointed as a substitute for Councillor V Higgs.

**LIC.51 Declaration of Interests**

No declarations of interest were made.

**LIC.52 Minutes**

**Decision: The minutes of the meeting held on 15th April 2013 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

**LIC.53 Increase of Hackney Carriage / Private Hire Licensing Fees and Charges for 2013/2014**

The Committee received a report from the Director of Worcestershire Regulatory Services on behalf of Wyre Forest District Council to consider an objection received from The Wyre Forest Taxi Drivers Association relating to the proposed increase in Hackney Carriage / Private Hire Licensing Fees and Charges for 2013/2014.

Members were taken through the report and were advised that following agreement at the Council meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2013 to increase the fees and charges for licensing fees, the Council were required by legislation to advertise the increases in the local newspaper and one letter of objection to

the increase had been received.

In response to a question, Members were advised that it was not possible to predict any legal challenge the Council could face nor the estimated cost. It was important that the Council broke even when setting the fees and charges. If any profit was made, this would have to be reflected in the following years accounts.

Members were informed that the Council had the most expensive fees and charging scale throughout the County but it was unknown as to why they varied between district to district. However it was noted that different Council's used different methods of calculating what they recharged. The projected potential surplus was in line with Section 70 of the Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1976. Members were referred to the budget book for figures relating to 2012/13.

The objector, Mr R South, addressed the Committee and reiterated the points in his letter which was at appendix 1 of the report.

A Member asked if the Committee could chose to vote against the Council decision to increase fees and charges and were informed that it could do so if they so wished.

Members had concerns that local taxi businesses could suffer from the increase and jobs could be lost.

Upon a show of hands the decision was carried.

**Decision: The objection received in response to the public notice dated 7<sup>th</sup> March 2013 was considered and the increase in Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licence fees and charges by 5% as set out in the Council's 2013/2014 budget strategy be endorsed.**

The meeting ended at 11.17am.