

MINUTES of the meeting of Regulatory Committee held at The Council Chamber, Brockington, 35 Hafod Road, Hereford on Tuesday 15 January 2013 at 2.00 pm

Present: Councillor JW Hope MBE (Chairman)
Councillor RC Hunt (Vice Chairman)

Councillors: CM Bartrum, PL Bettington, BA Durkin, PJ McCaull, C Nicholls,
FM Norman and GA Powell

56. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Brig. P Jones CBE.

57. NAMED SUBSTITUTES (IF ANY)

There were no substitutes present.

58. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

59. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2012 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

60. REVIEW OF AMENDED TAXI FEES

The Head of Environmental Protection & Licensing presented a report on the review of the amended taxi fees. He advised members that a decision was made by the Regulatory Committee in May 2012 to increase taxi fees in line with Cabinet's decision of June 2011 to move towards full cost recovery for Council services wherever possible. He reminded Members that as part of their decision the Committee had requested a review after nine months to ensure that the proposed fees were appropriate.

He advised the Committee that there was going to be a shortfall in the current financial year due to two factors, firstly, and primarily, the new fee structure had not been implemented from the start of the financial year. Secondly, there were fewer taxi drivers licensed in the current financial year. It was noted that these two factors had led to a projected 9.5k shortfall.

Members sought clarification in respect of the administration costs referred to in the report. The Head of Environmental Protection & Licensing confirmed that these costs related to various factors including ICT Support, accommodation, HR, payroll and invoicing to name a few. He agreed to email a breakdown of the costs to Members of the Committee.

In response to a question regarding benchmarking, the Head of Environmental Protection & Licensing advised Members that the fees were comparable with neighbouring authorities.

The Strategic Financial Advisor advised the Committee that the Council had factored in a 2% increase in all fees and charges and that it was considered that the taxi fees would be subject to the same increase. However she noted that it was essential that the increased fees did not result in the department operating at a profit.

Members discussed the report and were of the opinion that no further action was required at this stage regarding the taxi fees but that there may need to be further research undertaken to ensure that the service operated on a full cost recovery in the next financial year.

RESOLVED:

THAT Committee agrees that the proposed fees are working towards attaining full cost recovery and continue to be applied in line with general Council policy.

The meeting ended at 2.15 pm

CHAIRMAN