

Runnymede Borough Council

REGULATORY COMMITTEE

Thursday 24 January 2008 at 7.30 p.m.

in the Council Chamber

at the Civic Offices, Addlestone

PLEASE NOTE THIS MEETING FOLLOWS THAT OF THE LICENSING COMMITTEE



Members of the Committee

Councillor D.W. Parr (Chairman), Mrs P.I. Broadhead (Vice-Chairman), R.J. Edis, C. Knight and B.J. Relph.

In accordance with Standing Order 29.2 any non-member of the Committee who is considering attending the meeting should first request the permission of the Chairman.

A G E N D A

Notes:

- i) Any report on the Agenda involving confidential information (as defined by section 100A(3) of the Local Government Act 1972) must be discussed in private. Any report involving exempt information (as defined by section 100I of the Local Government Act 1972), whether it appears in Part 1 or Part 2 below, may be discussed in private but only if the Committee so resolves.
- ii) The relevant "background papers" are listed after each report in Part 1. Enquiries about any of the Agenda reports and background papers should be directed in the first instance to **Miss C. Pinnock, Department of Administration and Leisure, Committee Section, Civic Offices, Station Road, Addlestone (Tel. Direct Line: 01932 425627). (Email: clare.pinnock@runnymede.gov.uk)**.
- iii) Agendas and Minutes are available on a subscription basis. For details, please ring Mr. B.A. Fleckney on 01932 425620. Agendas and Minutes for all the Council's Committees may also be viewed on www.runnymede.gov.uk.
- iv) In the unlikely event of an alarm sounding, members of the public should leave the building immediately, either using the staircase leading from the public gallery or following other instructions as appropriate.

LIST OF MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

PART I

Matters in respect of which reports have been made available for public inspection

	<u>PAGE</u>
1. FIRE PRECAUTIONS	3
2. NOTIFICATION OF CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP	3
3. MINUTES	3
4. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	3
5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	3
6. REVENUE ESTIMATES 2008/09	3
7. HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARE INCREASE 2008 – LOCAL GOVERNMENT (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) ACT 1976	4
8. HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE DRIVERS' FORUM	6
9. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC	6

PART II

Matters involving Exempt or Confidential Information in respect of which reports have not been made available for public inspection.

- a) Exempt Information
(No reports to be considered under this heading)
- b) Confidential Information
(No reports to be considered under this heading)

1. FIRE PRECAUTIONS

The Chairman will read the Fire Precautions which set out the procedures to be followed in the event of fire or other emergency.

2. NOTIFICATION OF CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

3. MINUTES

To confirm and sign, as a correct record, the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 22 November 2007 as attached at Appendix 'A'.

4. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

If Members have an interest in an item please record the interest on the form circulated with this Agenda and hand it to the Legal Representative or Committee Administrator at the start of the meeting. A supply of the form will also be available from the Committee Administrator at meetings.

Members who have previously declared interests which are recorded in the Minutes to be considered at this meeting need not repeat the declaration when attending the meeting. Members need take no further action unless the item in which they have an interest becomes the subject of debate, in which event the Member must leave the room if the interest is personal and prejudicial.

6. REVENUE ESTIMATES 2008/09 (DF)

(Ref: Minutes of Regulatory Committee, January 2007, page 714, para. 498)

1. **Purpose of Report**

1.1 **The purpose of this report is to consider the draft Revenue Estimates for 2008/09.**

2. Background Information

2.1 A budget is the expression in financial terms of the Council's policies over the next year and is a statement of intention against which achievement can be compared. The main objectives of budgeting are:

- Satisfaction of statutory requirements
- Determining the amount which needs to be raised from Council Tax or rents
- Assisting in the planning and policy making process
- Policy implementation and control
- A means of measurement, and
- Strategic planning

3. **Report**

3.1 The report is attached at Appendix 'B'. The estimates are divided into the following sections:

- i) Regulatory Function estimates (Annex 1, pages 5 - 11);
- ii) Current and proposed fees and charges (Annex 2, pages 13 - 14).
- iii) Assumptions used in setting the budgets for 2008/09 (Annex 3, pages 15 – 18)

The Officers' Recommendation covers all the above service areas.

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that -

- i) **the draft Revenue Estimates for 2008/09 be approved as submitted and the Corporate Management Committee be requested to make provision accordingly; and**
- ii) **the proposed increases in fees and charges for 2008/09, as set out in Appendix 'B' to the estimates, be approved to be effective either from the first week of April 2008 or 1 April 2008 as appropriate.**

(TO RESOLVE)

Background Papers

Director of Finance's Estimates Files (Part Exempt).

7. HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARE INCREASE 2008 – LOCAL GOVERNMENT (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) ACT 1976 (DTS)

(Ref: Minutes of the Regulatory Committee, January 2007, page 714, para. 499)

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 **The purpose of this report is to consider amending the level of fare tariffs charged in respect of Hackney Carriage vehicles and those Private Hire vehicles fitted with a taximeter.**

2. Background Information

2.1 Following a comprehensive survey with the taxi trade in November 2006 and an open forum in December 2006 it was agreed that Officers would recommend a substantial increase in fares of 7.6% to take effect in April 2007, followed by further reviews by the Council on an annual basis. An additional rate of 1¼ was also introduced for Sundays and late evening between 22:00hrs and midnight. (The night rate between midnight and 06:00hrs remained at 1½) This new rate effectively made the increase 10% for the typical driver.

2.2. Hitherto, tariff changes had been made on an ad hoc basis in response to requests for a review from the trade.

2.3 Calendar control has been compulsory for all vehicles fitted with taximeters since the last tariff change in April 2007. Drivers can no longer manually select one of the four rates programmed, dependant on time of day and whether or not it is a National Holiday.

2.4 Calendar control eliminates the possibility of an error either by genuine mistake or otherwise and may be programmed with national holiday and BST/GMT up to three years in advance. Tariff changes may also be programmed to take place ahead of the due date with some taximeters, easing the burden on the trade and council resources.

3. Report

3.1 It is a requirement that all Hackney Carriages are fitted with a meter indicating the fare chargeable. Many Private Hire vehicles are also fitted with a meter, although they undertake pre-quoted bookings and the meter is not fully utilised.

3.2 In considering a proposal to alter the fares it is appropriate to compare this Council's fares with those of other authorities locally, as attached at Appendix 'C'.

3.3 Government statistics show the Retail Price Increase (RPI) to have risen by 4.3% in the previous 12 months to November 2007.

3.4 With regard to other forms of public transport, the Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC) has announced fare increases, scheduled for January 2008. Regulated travel (season tickets and standard returns) will increase by 4.8% and unregulated travel (cheap day return and advanced purchases) by 5.4%.

- 3.5 Runnymede's licensing fees and charges are reviewed and adjusted annually. The renewal fees for the vehicle and driver licences are scheduled to rise by an average of 12.9% in April 2008.
- 3.6 The Automobile Association produces monthly statistics on the average cost of fuel. The cost of diesel has surged from 92.1p per litre in January 2007 to £1.08p per litre in December 2007, an increase of 15%. A typical full time driver covering 50,000 miles per year, at 48mpg is therefore likely to spend over £5,000 on diesel fuel during 2008.
- 3.7 A consultation letter was sent out to all 251 drivers and 21 operators (Appendix 'D') at the start of the New Year. The letter contained suggested changes to the level of fares for consideration.
- 3.8 Some early feedback has been received from the trade regarding difficulties in calculating the time factor of fares unless multiples of 60 are used. The suggested rate of £19.00p in paragraph '3.11' below has therefore been increased to £19.20. A suggestion of keeping all fares in multiples of 10p has also been accepted by adjusting rate 2 in allowing increments of 20p rather than 25p but adjusting the distance and time accordingly.
- 3.9 Drivers are generally reluctant to increase the initial 'pull off' or 'flag' charge currently set at a rate of £3.20 due to the psychological effect on passengers when the taximeter is set to 'fare' it stays at the same price for the first mile. Furthermore, a figure divisible by 40p eases the need for carrying a lot of change due to 'silver pricing'.
- 3.10 Officers propose an increase of 5½ % for the second and subsequent miles travelled, by *decreasing* the distance covered for each 20p from 170m to 161m. Each mile would then cost exactly £2.00p.
- 3.11 A similar adjustment to the 'waiting time' was proposed by *decreasing* the time allowed for each 20p from 40 to 37.5 seconds, an increase of 6¼ %. The metered charge for waiting would increase from £18.00p to £19.20p per hour.
- 3.12 A revised table of fares is set out at Appendix 'E'. The amendments appear in bold.

4. Council Policy

- 4.1 It is appropriate to review Hackney Carriage Fares either at the request of Hackney Carriage proprietors or in the event of increases in costs experienced by the trade. The last increase in fares was April 2007.

5. Resource Implications

- 5.1 If an increase in fares is agreed then arrangements will have to be made for all the meters to be adjusted and tested against the measured mile. There are 188 Hackney Carriages and Private Hire vehicles fitted with taximeters.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 permits local authorities to set fares for Hackney Carriages. This legislation also requires that the proposed changes be published in a local newspaper prior to implementation at least 14 working days before the change is due to take place. As a result of the advertising if any objections are received these will have to be considered by this Committee accordingly.

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that –

Subject to no representations being received, the proposed Hackney Carriage Fare Rate set out at Appendix 'E' be adopted with effect from 2 April 2008.

(TO RESOLVE)

Background Papers

None Stated.

8. HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE DRIVERS' FORUM (DTS)

A verbal report on the outcome of a Drivers' Forum being held on Thursday 17 January will be given at the meeting.

9. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

If Members are minded to consider any of the foregoing items in private, it is the

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that -

where appropriate the press and public be excluded from the meeting during discussion of the report(s) under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the report(s) in question would be likely to involve disclosure of exempt information of the description specified in the appropriate paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

(TO RESOLVE)

PART II

Matters involving Exempt or Confidential Information in respect of which reports have not been made available for public inspection.

a) Exempt Information

(No reports to be considered under this heading)

b) Confidential Information

(No reports to be considered under this heading)