

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Licensing and Regulatory Committee Remote Microsoft Teams Meeting on Tuesday, 12th January, 2021 at 10.00 am

PRESENT: County Councillor B. Strong (Chairman)
County Councillor J. Higginson (Vice Chairman)

County Councillors: S. Howarth, A. Easson, M.Lane, R.Roden,
J.Treharne, R. Edwards, D. Evans, L. Guppy and A. Webb

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Linda O'Gorman	Principal Licensing Officer
Taylor Watts	Licensing Officer
Ben Davies	Solicitor
Richard Williams	Democratic Services Officer

APOLOGIES:

None received.

1. Election of Chair

We elected County Councillor B. Strong as Chair.

2. Appointment of Vice-Chair

We appointed County Councillor J. Higginson as Vice Chair.

3. Declarations of interest

None received.

4. To confirm and sign the following minutes:

4.1. Licensing and Regulatory Committee - 3rd September 2020

The minutes of the Licensing and Regulatory Committee meeting dated 3rd September 2020 were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

4.2. Licensing and Regulatory Sub Committee - 3rd November 2020

The minutes of the Licensing and Regulatory Sub Committee meeting dated 3rd November 2020 were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

4.3. Licensing and Regulatory Sub Committee - 13th November 2020

The minutes of the Licensing and Regulatory Sub Committee meeting dated 13th November 2020 were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

5. Review Of Annual Licensing Fees For Financial Year 2021/2022

We received a report regarding the annual Licensing Fees for the financial year 2021/2022.

Having considered the report the following points were noted:

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- The fee for taxi drivers is for a three year licensing period whilst for operators it is for a five year period. Both are looking at the long term and are content to maintain their drivers' / operating licences during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Taxi drivers have been able to operate during lockdown, though footfall has been reduced. This is one of the areas where fees can be assessed.
- With regard to street trading, they were permitted to delay renewing their consent upon renewal until footfall was there to assist them where applicable. All consents have now renewed.
- The Licensing Department is unable to assess fees for Licensing Act, such as public houses and the hospitality sector. This sector has continued to pay the annual fee in order to keep their licence live and to receive grants.
- The Finance Department is aware of the proposals set out in the Review of Annual Licensing Fees report.

We resolved:

- (i) to approve the freeze on discretionary fees, with no increase in fees for the period 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022.
- (ii) to approve the freeze on Gambling fees, with no increase in fees for the period 21st May 2021 to 20th May 2022.

6. Exclusion of the Press and Public

We resolved to exclude the press and public from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business in accordance with section 100A of the Local Government Act, as amended, on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 12 of part 4 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

7. To consider whether the driver is "Fit and Proper" to continue to hold a Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Drivers Licence

The Chairman welcomed the driver to the meeting and introduced Members of the Committee and the attending Officers and explained the protocol for the meeting.

The driver confirmed their name and address to the Committee. The driver confirmed receipt of the report. The driver also confirmed that they were content to proceed without legal representation.

The key issues and details were read out to the Committee.

The driver was then given the opportunity to address the Committee, to put forward any relevant explanations. Following this, Members of the Committee put forward questions to the driver and discussion ensued. The driver was then given the opportunity to sum up.

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Following questioning, the Committee, the Committee's legal representative and the Democratic Services Officer left the meeting to deliberate and discuss findings.

Upon re-commencement, the Chairman advised that the Committee had considered the issues and had come to the view that the driver is a fit and proper person to continue holding a Hackney Carriage/Private Hire driver licence. However, a written warning would be sent to the driver indicating that should the driver receive any further convictions then they would be brought back to the Licensing and Regulatory Committee to assess whether the driver is a fit and proper person to continue holding a Hackney Carriage/Private Hire driver licence.

8. To consider whether the driver is "Fit and Proper" to continue to hold a Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Drivers Licence

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9. Next Meeting:

Tuesday 23rd February 2021 at 10.00am.

The meeting ended at 11.59 am.