

**Minutes of a meeting of the
Worthing Licensing Committee
25 March 2024
at 6.30 pm**

Councillor Henna Chowdhury (Chair)
Councillor Richard Mulholland (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Mike Barrett	*Councilor Kevin Jenkins
Councillor Russ Cochran	*Councillor Dale Overton
*Councillor Dan Coxhill	Councillor Hilary Schan
Councillor Cathy Glynn-Davies	*Councillor Sam Theodoridi
Councillor Claire Hunt	Councillor Andy Whight
Councillor Charles James	Councillor Rosey Whorlow

***Absent:**

LCC/14/23-24 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

LCC/15/23-24 Public Question Time

There were no questions from the public.

LCC/16/23-24 Members Questions

There were no questions from Members.

LCC/17/23-24 Confirmation of Minutes

Resolved: that the minutes of the committee meeting of the **27 November 2023** and the Sub Committees held on **27 November 2023** and **3 January 2024** be approved as the correct record.

LCC/18/23-24 Items Raised Under Urgency Provisions

There were no urgent items.

LCC/19/23-24 Worthing Fees and Charges Consultation Committee Report

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for Sustainability & Resources, a copy of which had been circulated to all members.

The Officer clarified for Committee Members how the licence fee system had altered from issuing one year licences to three/five year licences and this accounted for some of the figures differing year to year. He explained that the proposed fee increases would allow the licensing department to become a self-funding service although this may take more than one year.

During debate members were concerned that the proposed fee increases may be an additional financial burden on the taxi drivers, taking into account the current cost of living crisis and fuel price increases. It was also considered that administration for this service needed to be paid for and it was noted that, although the Licensing department was a non-profit making service, it was important that it be self-funding.

Members debated the possibility of encouraging the use of electric vehicles amongst the taxi trade by reducing fees in those cases. However the Officer clarified that the administration of all licences cost an equal amount regardless of whether or not they were for EV's. The Committee acknowledged this but remained keen to investigate more innovative ways of applying licensing charges to encourage greener choices and the Officer agreed to initiate discussions regarding this.

A proposal was made to accept the Officers recommendation. This was seconded and voted on with a result of 10 votes in favour and 1 vote against. There were no abstentions.

Decision - The Committee noted that one response was received following the Council placing a notice in a local newspaper setting out the changes to the vehicle and operator fees and inviting representations on those changes within 28 days. Having considered the response and the current financial situation of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire summary account, the Licensing and Control Committee agreed to continue with the proposed fees. The Licensing and Control Committee also agreed to recommend to Council that it formally ratifies the Licensing Fees in Appendix 3 and that they shall come into effect on 1 April 2024.

The meeting ended at 6.55 pm

Chair