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## GENERAL LICENSING COMMITTEE

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**MINUTES** of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT on Tuesday, 27 January 2015 from 7.00 - 7.18 pm.

**PRESENT:** Councillors Lloyd Bowen, Derek Conway, June Garrad, Lesley Ingham (Chairman), David Jones, Prescott (Vice-Chairman), Ben Stokes and Tony Winckless.

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Ian Mackenzie, Kellie MacKenzie and Brian Planner.

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors Mick Constable and Steve Worrall.

### 447 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 9 July 2014 (Minute Nos. 134 – 138) were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### 448 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

### 449 PUBLIC SESSION

There were no questions.

### 450 PROPOSED MINOR CHANGES TO LOCAL CONDITIONS

The Chairman introduced the report which proposed a few minor changes to the Local Conditions to help maintain the quality of the service.

A Member considered that the increase from 3 to 6 penalty points for the handheld use of a mobile phone would not be enough of a deterrent, and should be increased to 8 or 9 points.

Councillor Lloyd Bowen moved the following amendment: That the penalty points for the handheld use of a mobile phone while driving were increased from 3 to 8 penalty points. This was seconded by Councillor June Garrad. On being put to the vote the amendment was not agreed.

Members made comments which included: failure to move up the taxi rank outside Faversham station meant that drivers often parked over the area designated as a bus stop, which was an offence; and considered that 3 points for failure to set meter was not sufficient.

The Hackney Carriage Inspector explained that Civil Parking officers would be responsible for enforcing no parking over a designated bus stop. With regard to failure to set meter, the Hackney Carriage Inspector explained that he appreciated how easy it could be for drivers to be distracted and forget to set the meter, and

pointed out that it would be the driver that was 'cheated' financially, not the customer. He therefore considered 3 points was sufficient for the offence.

In response to a query from a Member, the Head of Service Delivery clarified that any driver accruing 12 penalty points would be called-in before a Licensing Sub-Committee who would review their licence.

At the request of the Chairman, the Head of Service Delivery agreed to ensure that the penalty points system was reviewed annually in future.

**Resolved:**

- (1) That the penalty points for the handheld use of a mobile phone while driving be increased from 3 to 6 penalty points.***
- (2) That a minimum size of a Top Sign of 400mm (16 inches) be included in the conditions.***

**451 FARE STRUCTURE AND LICENCE FEES**

The Chairman introduced the report which provided information on the review of fares for hackney carriages and recommended that no changes were made to the current fare structure. The report also recommended that there should be a slight change to the Driver's Licence Fee to cover the cost of DLVA licence checks.

In response to a query from a Member, the Head of Service Delivery confirmed that a copy of the agenda for the Liaison Meeting had been sent to all hackney carriage operators.

The Head of Service Delivery advised that feedback from drivers on the proposed changes to the annual driver's licence fee indicated that they considered it to be reasonable and appropriate.

The Head of Service Delivery confirmed that the proposed annual drivers licence fee would have no impact on the budget proposals to be considered at Annual Council on 18 February 2015.

**Resolved:**

- (1) That no changes are made to the current fare structure.***
- (2) That the annual driver's licence fee is increased by £5 from £50 to £55 and that the three year licence is increased by £5 from £120 to £125.***

Chairman

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All Minutes are draft until agreed at the next meeting of the Committee/Panel