

**Public Document Pack
SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL**

Licensing Committee

Date: Monday, 17th October, 2022

Time: 10.00 am

Place: Committee Room 1 - Civic Suite

Contact: Tim Row - Principal Committee Officer

Email: committeesection@southend.gov.uk

A G E N D A

- 1 Apologies for Absence**
- 2 Declarations of Interest**
- 3 Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday, 23rd March, 2022**
- 4 Revocation of Taxi Stand on Weston Road Southend-on-Sea**
(Pages 5 - 10)
Report of Executive Director (Neighbourhoods & Environment) attached
- 5 Review of Fares and Charges (Pages 11 - 18)**
Report of Executive Director (Neighbourhoods & Environment) attached

TO: The Chair & Members of Licensing Committee:

Councillor A Thompson (Chair),

Councillors M Berry (Vice-Chair), B Beggs, M Borton, S Buckley, A Dear, K Evans,
N Folkard, A Jones, J Lamb, A Line, K Mitchell, I Shead, M Terry and C Walker

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SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

Meeting of Licensing Committee

Date: Wednesday, 23rd March, 2022
Place: Committee Room 1 - Civic Suite

3

Present: Councillor A Thompson (Chair)
Councillors K Mitchell (Vice-Chair), M Berry, S Buckley, T Cowdrey,
K Evans, N Folkard, T Harp, J Lamb, A Line, D McGlone, A Moring
and I Shead

In Attendance: A Penn, E Anakwue and T Row

Start/End Time: 10.00 am - 10.35 am

848 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

849 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Lamb declared a non-pecuniary interest in respect of Agenda Item No. 5 (Temporary Increase to Taxi Fares) on the basis that he was on the board of trustees of SAVS, which was mentioned in the debate.

850 Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday, 16th August, 2021

Resolved:-

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday, 16th August 2021 be received, confirmed as a correct record and signed.

851 Age of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Licence Conditions

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director (Neighbourhoods and Environment) which sought approval to the temporary, one year amendment of the licensing conditions relating to the age of Hackney Carriages (HC) Private Hire Vehicles (PHV) at the stage of first licensing (from the date of amendment), whereby the 5-year age limit (6-year age limit for wheelchair accessible vehicles) is disapplied, and, to permanently require the application of compliance with Euro 6 emission standards that reduces harmful emissions from vehicles within the conditions.

The intention of these changes is to increase the number of vehicles available to the public by enabling more vehicles to be licensable, and to protect air quality and assist to the climate change agenda.

Resolved:-

1. That the amended age-related conditions as set out below be approved for a 1-year period from the date of this decision, after which time the conditions will

automatically revert to their former wording, or until adoption of any new conditions relating to vehicles are introduced, whichever is the sooner:

Proposed Conditions for Hackney Carriages

2.1.1(a) Where a vehicle is more than 5 years old when first licenced (Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles 6 years), the vehicle must be Euro 6 emission rating (petrol or diesel vehicles) or capable of achieving zero emissions (hybrid or electric vehicles). All vehicles should not be more than 10-years old when subsequently licenced (Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles 20 years). The 10-year maximum is based on the condition of the vehicle which is considered at 8 years and can be extended by 6-month intervals to a maximum of 10 years. Any limousine or specially approved vehicle shall have no specific age limit and will be reviewed annually.

Proposed Conditions for Private Hire Vehicles

1.1.2 Where a vehicle is more than 5 years old when first licenced (Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles 6 years), the vehicle must be Euro 6 emission rating (petrol or diesel vehicles) or capable of achieving zero emissions (hybrid or electric vehicles). All vehicles should not be more than 10-years old when subsequently licenced (Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles 20 years). The 10-year maximum is based on the condition of the vehicle which is considered at 8 years and can be extended by 6-month intervals to a maximum of 10 years. Any limousine or specially approved vehicle shall have no specific age limit and will be reviewed annually.

2. That the additional requirement relating to emission standards as set out in the amended conditions be permanently adopted.

852 Temporary Increase to Taxi Fares

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director (Neighbourhoods and Environment) that sought approval of the temporary amendment of the fare structure of Hackney Carriages (HC) Private Hire Vehicles (PHV) for a period of one year (from the date of amendment) after which it will be reviewed, or until the review of all licensing conditions is completed, in response the current fuel price emergency.

It was noted that the intention of these changes was to maintain the number of vehicles available to the public by ensuring drivers vehicles are financially viable.

In response to questions regarding the consultation process, the Council's Regulatory Services Manager confirmed that in addition to the statutory requirement to place a public notice in the local paper, a copy of the notice would be placed on the notice board in the reception area of the Civic Centre and placed on the Council's website. He also undertook to inform SAVS (Southend Association of Voluntary Services) and the Citizens Advice Bureau of the outcome of the consultation.

Resolved:-

1. That the fare structure of Hackney Carriages (HC) Private Hire Vehicles (PHV) be temporarily amended to allow a temporary additional fare of 40p per trip.

2. That the revised fare chart set out at Appendix 1 be approved.

3. That any changes to the fare and extra charges' structure be duly advertised, implementing the public consultation process. Any appeals will be heard by the Licensing Committee. In the eventuality that no objections are received, the amendment be deemed as approved without the need to return to the Committee for consideration. To avoid the requirement not to consult during the local election purdah period, the consultation will commence on 6th May 2022 or later.

Chair: _____

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Southend-on-Sea City Council
Report of Executive Director
(Neighbourhoods and Environment)
To
Licensing Committee
On
17 October 2022

**Agenda
Item No.**

4

Report prepared by: Elizabeth Georgeou
Head of Regulatory Services

Revocation of Taxi Stand on Weston Road Southend-on-Sea

A Part 1 Public Agenda item

1. Purpose of Report

To approve the revocation of the taxi stand on the westbound carriageway of Weston Road Southend-on-Sea and authorise the commencement of the statutory consultation process.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Licensing Committee considers revoking the taxi-stand in Weston Road and duly advertises the proposal, implementing the statutory public consultation process.**
- 2.2 Any objections or representations made to the statutory consultation process will be heard by the Licensing Committee.**
- 2.3 Where no objections or representations are received it is proposed that the revocation of the taxi stand in Weston Road be approved without the need to return to Committee.**

3. Background

To improve the accessibility to the town centre it is proposed that the taxi stand in Weston Road, which is not used extensively, be revoked. This is to provide space for additional disabled parking in the proximity of the High Street.

The High Street would still be served by the following taxi stands:

- The stub end of London Road as it abuts the High Street
- Chichester Road
- Tylers Avenue
- High Street
- Heygate Avenue
- Elmer Avenue

These stands support those who are unable to drive or access public transport. They provision of stands also supports the night-time economy and the safe egress of visitors from the town centre.

Appendix 1 shows the current location of the taxi stand on Weston Road marked in red and pink.

4. Other Options

- 4.1 If the Council were to do nothing, the stand would remain largely unused and there would be no increase in the availability of disabled parking in the proximity of the High Street in the centre of Southend.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

To increase the accessibility to the town centre through the provision of additional disabled parking spaces in this location.

6. Corporate Implications

6.1 Contribution to the Southend 2050 Road Map

The Council's outcome delivery plan is to be connected and smart facilitating a wide choice of transport that improves accessibility and mobility to all residents. The removal of this taxi stand provides space for the installation of additional disabled parking spaces.

6.2 Financial Implications

The removal of the taxi stand will be undertaken at the same time as the works to re-line the road at this location.

6.3 Legal Implications

The provision for revoking taxi stands for hackney carriage vehicles is contained in the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 Section 63.

6.4 People Implications

None

6.5 Property Implications

None

6.6 Consultation

The trade associations for hackney carriage were consulted with on 19 August 2022, and their agreement was given to the revocation of this stand. The statutory consultation will be instigated, and outcomes considered. If there are objections or representations made to the revocation of this stand the matter will be referred back to the Licensing Committee for their consideration.

6.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications

There were no adverse equalities issues identified in respect of this proposal because customers can be dropped at their required location. There is also another rank within 40 metres of this stand, in close proximity to the High Street.

There are positive outcomes for those who may have difficulty in travelling on public transport identified in the Equalities Assessment.

6.8 Risk Assessment

That the stand in Weston Road will remain largely unused and an opportunity to increase the parking for those with mobility issues will be missed.

6.9 Value for Money

Undertaking these works at the time that the road is scheduled for re-lining is a cost-effective way of removing this stand.

6.10 Community Safety Implications

This stand is not well used, and there are additional taxi stands available in proximity to the High Street, these stands facilitate the safe egress from the town centre, supporting the night-time economy.

6.11 Environmental Impact

None

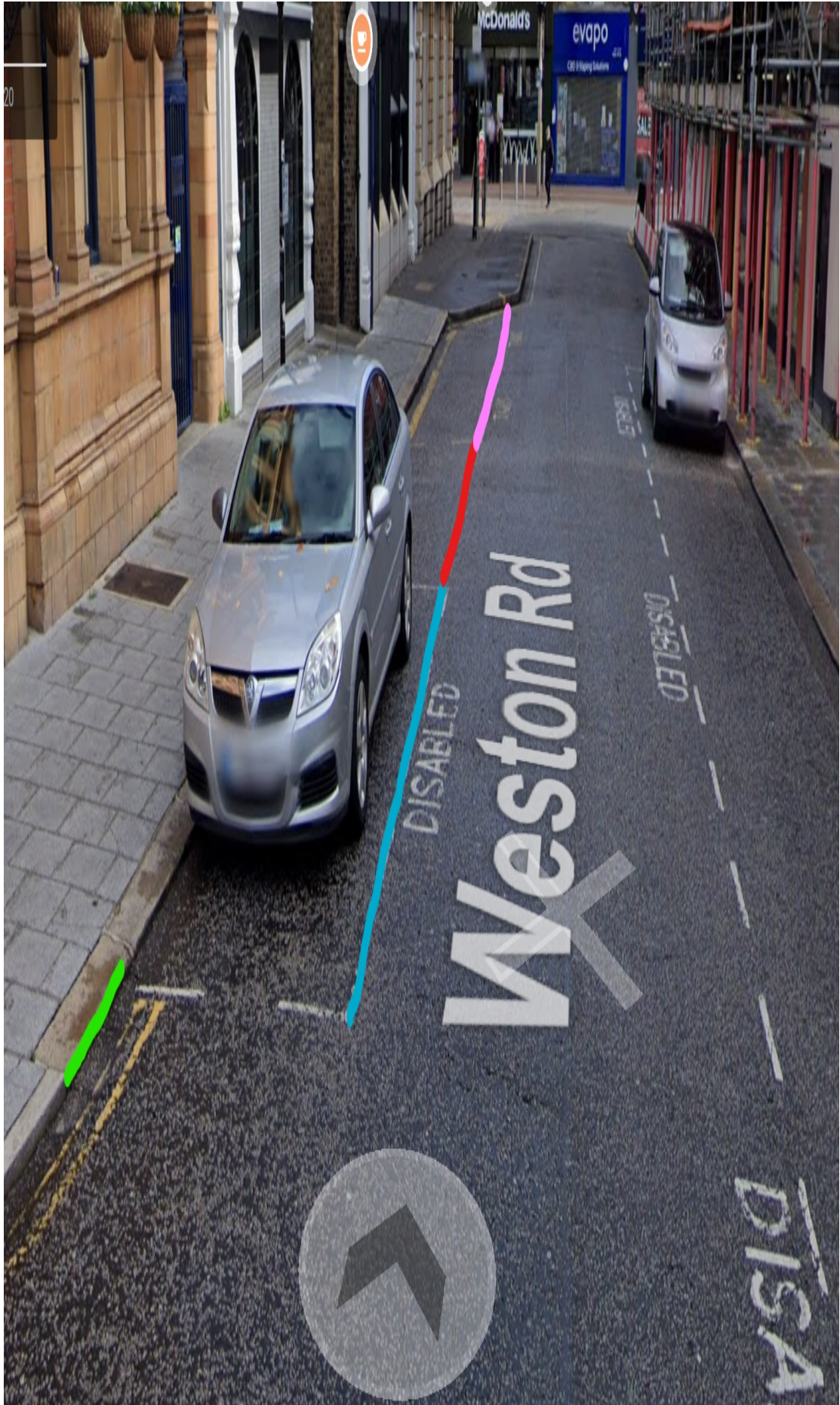
7. Background Papers

None

8. Appendices

Appendix 1 shows the current location of the taxi stand on Weston Road, Southend-on-Sea and where the disabled parking will be located.

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Southend-on-Sea City Council
Report of Executive Director
(Neighbourhoods and Environment)
To
Licensing Committee
On
17th October 2022

**Agenda
Item No.**

5

Report prepared by: Elizabeth Georgeou Head of Regulatory
Services

Review of Fares and Charges

Licensing Committee

A Part 1 Public Agenda item

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 Members are invited to consider the results of a consultation with the Southend Licensed Taxi Drivers Association (SLTDA) for an increase in the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle fares and charges.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 **That the changes to the fare chart structure be duly advertised, implementing the public consultation process.**
- 2.1 **To approve the revised fare chart set out at Appendix 1 subject to consideration of any objections to the statutory advertisement of the proposals by the Licensing Committee.**
- 2.2 **To return the proposed changes to the fare chart to the Licensing Committee for consideration where there are objections to the statutory advertisement.**

3. Background

- 3.1 The Council is empowered to determine fares for Hackney Carriages. In addition, all those private hire vehicles which are equipped with a meter must also apply the same fares. Revision to the fares must be advertised before any revision comes into effect.
- 3.2 Licensing Committee 21/10/14 Minute 308 resolved the circumstances when a fare increase would be proposed and the methodology to be applied to calculating the new fees and charges. It was agreed that the decision on whether to increase the fares and charges be based on Southend being around 60 in a national League Table of taxi fares. The league table is produced, updated and published monthly in the national Private Hire and Taxi Monthly publication and records fares across all Licensing Authorities in the UK. While not being an official Government published League Table, it is widely acknowledged to be the definitive document for recording and comparing taxi fares. As at September 2022, Southend-on-Sea City Council was rated as between 170 and 188 in that table.

- 3.3 There is no automatic entitlement for the trade to have a fare increase at any time. Any fare increase proposed is subject to approval by the Council. The last time the fares were increased was in 2019 at the meeting of Licensing Committee held 17 October 2019 (Minute 487 refers) although due to covid implementation was delayed until 21 October 2021. (Appendix 2)
- 3.4 There was an emergency temporary increase agreed by the Licensing Committee at its meeting on 23 March 2022 (Minute 852 refers) (Appendix 3) as a result of the increase in fuel prices. This increase was agreed for a period of 1 year, or until an application is made by the trade for an increase.
- 3.5 In line with the methodology referred to in 3.2 above there were four options proposed to Southend on Sea City Council's licenced trade.
- 40p to be added to the face
 - 20p to be added to the face and 20p on the yardage
 - 40p on the yardage
 - No increase
 - 40 pence to be added to the yardage of the fare tariff (currently 186 & 142 yards respectively), changing the yardage to 170 and 134 yards respectively

The calculated increase of 40p on the yardage will result in an increase to approximately £6.80 for the two-mile fare instead of £6.40. The meter increases in 20p increments. This would put Southend on Sea City Council in position 102 to 124 inclusive of the Private Hire and Taxi Monthly publication published September 2022.

There is no change to the day rate or the unsocial hours rate.

4. Corporate Implications

4.1 Contribution to the Southend 2050 Road Map

The Council's outcome delivery plan is to be Connected and Smart and intends to establish joined up transport across the town. The provision of a viable taxi and hire car service is supported by the Council's transport strategy.

The taxi and private hire service contributes to the Safe and Well outcome. The availability of these services across the town may improve the feeling of safety for individuals using the night-time economy, enabling people to leave the area in a managed way. It also supports access to services for those who are unable to take public transport and are unable to drive.

4.2 Financial Implications

The cost of implementing any fare changes is contained within the licence fee.

4.3 Legal Implications

Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 details the process for fixing of fares, which will be followed.

If no objections are made within the period specified in the notice, or if all objections made are withdrawn, the table of fares will come into operation on the date of the expiration of the period specified in the notice or the date the last objection is withdrawn, whichever date is the later.

4.4 **People Implications**

None

4.5 **Property Implications**

None

4.6 **Consultation**

All licensed drivers were written to inviting them to participate in the consultation, which was accessible through the Council MySouthend portal via a link to be provided to them individually and took place between 22 August and 12 September 2022. ([Appendix 4](#))

4.7 **Equalities and Diversity Implications**

An Equalities Assessment has been undertaken and will be reassessed if there are responses to the statutory consultation. There may be an adverse impact on those who use licenced taxi and private hire services because of the increase in cost. However, the increase in fares is lower than the rate of inflation and represents the first increase since 2021. (see 3.3, above). In addition, the 40p fuel surcharge will no longer apply.

4.8 **Risk Assessment**

The increase in fares may deter users from using licenced taxi and private hire services. This is balanced against the increase being below inflation and supporting the viability of a licenced hackney carriage and private hire service.

4.9 **Value for Money**

Not applicable

4.10 **Community Safety Implications**

Providing a licenced taxi and private hire service supports safe egress from town centres.

4.11 **Environmental Impact**

None

5. **Background Papers**

None

6. **Appendices**

Appendix 1 - Revised Fare Chart

Appendix 2 - Licensing Committee 17 October 2019 Minute 487

Appendix 3 - Licensing Committee 23 March 2022 Minute 852

Appendix 4 - Consultation Response

Appendix 1

Revised Fare Chart

New Logo Here

Authorised Fares

November 2022

Standard Rates

£3.00	For the first ¼ mile or the first 2 minutes (or a combination of parts of such distance or time)
20p	For each additional 170 yards or 48 seconds (or a combination of parts of such distance or time) until a fare of £6.80 is shown on the taxi meter
20p	For each additional 134 yards or 36 seconds (or a combination of parts of such distance or time) when a fare of £8.80 is shown on the taxi meter

NIGHT CHARGE/UNSOCIAL HOURS

For hirings begun between 9pm and midnight and 4am and 6am, also on Sundays, Bank Holidays and Public Holidays between 6am and midnight, also between 6am and midnight on 1 January and 4am until 6am on 2 January, an additional:

£1.00

For hirings from midnight until 4am, and from midnight until 6am Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holiday Mondays, **except during Christmas and New Year periods**, an additional:

£2.00

CHRISTMAS CHARGES

For hirings from midnight 24 December to 6am 26 December (double the day and unsocial hours rate)

£8.00

For hirings on Boxing Day from 6am to 6am on 27 December (plus an additional 10p on the Standard Yard Rate :

£5.00

NEW YEAR CHARGES (AN ADDITIONAL)

For hirings from midnight 31 December to 6am 1 January (double standard rates and unsocial hours rate)

£8.00

Extra Charges

1. LUGGAGE

For any luggage carried. No charge for disabled persons wheelchairs, disability aids or any animal transported in the vehicle

("Luggage" is intended as hand luggage, shopping bags, suitcases, etc. The driver reserves the right to negotiate an additional charge for larger items up to a maximum of £10)

40p
(Max Charge)

2. ADDITIONAL PASSENGERS

For each person in excess of one

40p

LOST PROPERTY

Specific requests for the delivery of property left in taxis must be paid for at the metered fare

ANY COMPLAINTS SHOULD BE MADE TO SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL, CIVIC CENTRE, VICTORIA AVENUE, SOUTHEND ON SEA, ESSEX SS2 6ZG. COMPLAINTS CAN ALSO BE EMAILED TO hackneycarriage@southend.gov.uk THE NUMBER OF THE CAB OR DRIVER SHOULD BE QUOTED.

Appendix 2

Licensing Committee 17 October 2019 Minute 487

Review of Fares and Charges

Further to Minute 101 of its meeting held on 26 June 2019, the Committee received a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) that presented the results of the consultation with the Southend Licensed Taxi Drivers Association (SLTDA) for an increase in the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle fares and charges and other associated amendments.

Resolved:-

1. That the changes to the fare and extra charges structure set out at Appendix 1 of the submitted report be duly advertised, implementing the public consultation process.
2. That subject to there being no representations received following statutory advertisement, the Deputy Chief Executive (place) be authorised to approve the revised fare chart set out at Appendix 1 of the submitted report and implement the new charges.
3. That any objections received during the statutory advertisement of the proposals be submitted to the Licensing Committee for consideration.

Appendix 3

Licensing Committee 23 March 2022 Minute 852

Temporary Increase to Taxi Fares

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director (Neighbourhoods and Environment) that sought approval of the temporary amendment of the fare structure of Hackney Carriages (HC) Private Hire Vehicles (PHV) for a period of one year (from the date of amendment) after which it will be reviewed, or until the review of all licensing conditions is completed, in response to the current fuel price emergency.

It was noted that the intention of these changes was to maintain the number of vehicles available to the public by ensuring drivers' vehicles are financially viable. In response to questions regarding the consultation process, the Council's Regulatory Services Manager confirmed that in addition to the statutory requirement to place a public notice in the local paper, a copy of the notice would be placed on the notice board in the reception area of the Civic Centre and placed on the Council's website. He also undertook to inform SAVS (Southend Association of Voluntary Services) and the Citizens Advice Bureau of the outcome of the consultation.

Resolved:-

1. That the fare structure of Hackney Carriages (HC) Private Hire Vehicles (PHV) be temporarily amended to allow a temporary additional fare of 40p per trip.
2. That the revised fare chart set out at Appendix 1 be approved.
3. That any changes to the fare and extra charges' structure be duly advertised, implementing the public consultation process. Any appeals will be heard by the Licensing Committee. In the eventuality that no objections are received, the amendment be deemed as approved without the need to return to the Committee for consideration. To avoid the requirement not to consult during the local election *purdah* period, the consultation will commence on 6th May 2022 or later.

Appendix 4

Consultation Response

Drivers were given the following 4 options:

- 20p on the face and 20p on the yardage, meaning that passengers would see an additional 20p on the face of the meter and a further 20p would be added incrementally up to 2 miles.
- 40p on the face, meaning that passengers would see an additional 40p on the face of the meter.
- 40p on the yardage, meaning the fee would increase incrementally up to 2 miles by which point it would have increased by 40p
- No increase

The outcome of the vote was as follows:

	<u>Total</u>
20p on the face and 20p on the yardage	34
40p on the face	60
40p on the yardage	91
No increase	4