

SCHEDULE OF ITEMS RECOMMENDED FROM COMMITTEES AND OTHER MEMBER BODIES

Committee: Council

Date: 13 July 2017

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[S53]

Member Body	Report No.
<p>1. LICENSING COMMITTEE – 17 MAY 2017</p> <p><u>Market Street Taxi Rank Consultation</u></p> <p>The Committee considered a report, R290 previously circulated, which reported on the statutory consultation on the Licensing Authority's proposal to extend the Market Street in Ely taxi rank forwards to the junction of High Street Back.</p> <p>The Senior Licensing Officer reminded the Committee that taxi ranks were a vital part of the transport network, provided a safe location for the public to obtain services and connected to other transport links. Currently 9 to 10 taxi parking spaces were provided within Ely city centre by the Council, though there were additional ones at the railway station. This was a low number compared to the number of licensed vehicles.</p> <p>The consultation proposed to expand the Market Street taxi rank, which would result in the loss of 2 public parking spaces. 71 responses had been received, as set out in Appendices 1, 2 and 3 in the report, with comments supporting or objecting to the proposal or with neutral comments. Supporters thought this would reduce pollution and reduce conflict and confusion. Opponents believed it would be detrimental to local business and general public amenity.</p> <p>Alternative options were outlined in the report, under paragraphs 5.9 to 5.15, and included using a 'smart' rank, though this would be cost prohibitive, additional ranks or switching the taxi rank and public parking bays around.</p> <p>The Committee was asked to consider the options and make a recommendation to full Council.</p>	<p>R290 (attached at Appendix A)</p>

Councillor Elaine Griffin-Singh could not deny that the taxi trade was needed and that there was an under-provision of taxi ranks for their use. A lot of objections had been received, including from the City of Ely Councillors and Councillors representing outlying villages. A balanced approach would be needed and the suggestion from Councillor Paul Cox, to swap the taxi and public bays, would be a suitable compromise as no public parking would be lost.

Councillor Alan Sharp noted that the Market Place rank had been mentioned as having a problem with its signage, making enforcement difficult. Would better signage help the situation? The Senior Licensing Officer did not think this would alter the issue, and stated that this rank was not as well used as the Market Street rank. Although the signage was clear it could be worth talking to Cambridgeshire County Council to correct the road markings to help enforcement.

Councillor Sharp continued and acknowledged that more taxi spaces were needed but was unsure where these could be provided. It might be an option to use one of the current bus stop spaces as additional space for taxis, as a solution was needed.

Councillor Julia Huffer thought that issue could be brought up with the County Council, as current County Councillors had taken an interest in the matter in hand.

The Environmental Services Manager thought this issue could be linked to the air quality consultation being undertaken, as it would be looking at pollution levels in Ely city centre. Maybe this could be used to highlight this issue.

Councillor Christine Ambrose Smith supported Councillor Paul Cox's idea, as there was a need to hold around 6 spaces for taxis. To provide a holding area for taxis, could the car park behind Thing-Me-Bobs be used? The Committee was advised that although the car park was privately owned it could be converted for taxi use but there would be issues over access to and from it onto Market Street. This could mean the installation of traffic lights and would mean those taxis using it would end up in front of the taxi rank. It would be better to use the car park near the Atrium as a holding area, otherwise there would be additional traffic problems.

Councillor Paul Cox did not think that using the car park in High Street Back would be feasible, as drivers would not know if there were any spaces before driving in, which could cause a potential bottleneck. A holding area system would be very complex and very expensive. The simplest solution would be to swap the bays around as previously suggested. The percentage of space for taxis versus public vehicles could also be amended and 1 bus stop could be used for public parking instead. When the leisure centre was open then an additional taxi rank would be required there too.

The Senior Licensing Officer explained that currently the public were approaching taxis parked in the public spaces, annoying the taxi drivers who had lined up in the right place. Public vehicles also could block the first taxi in the rank, making it difficult for them to pull out. Moving the rank up Market Street to that junction would be better, as the taxis would not be obstructed.

Councillor Sue Austen thought that the public spaces could be used for taxis now and then consideration could be given for future provision. The arguments against this being bad for business but the taxis were also a business. Councillor Elaine Griffin-Singh acknowledged that the businesses themselves had not offered any objections, which had come from elsewhere.

Councillor Julia Huffer offered a suggestion that the car park at the Paradise Centre could be used as the holding area for taxis. If the site were developed the relevant Section 106 money could be used for that purpose. Then the 'smart' rank system could be looked at later.

The suggested recommendation outlined in paragraph 5.13, to re-organise the parking bays, was proposed and unanimously agreed.

The Committee then agreed that the Senior Licensing Officer liaise with the County Council about improving the Market Place taxi rank.

As the Committee had highlighted other related issues, it was proposed that a review into city centre traffic management be recommended, to cover the issues raised.

<p>It was resolved TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL:</p> <p>(i) That the taxi rank and public parking bays in Market Street Ely be re-organised so that the taxi rank be moved along Market Street to the junction of Market Street and High Street Back and the public parking bays be relocated along Market Street towards Market Place.</p> <p>(ii) That a review of city centre traffic management be conducted to include investigations into:</p> <p>(a) the possibilities for potential sites within the city centre for a 'holding area' for hackney carriages; and</p> <p>(b) the possibilities for taxi provision at the new leisure village.</p> <p>It was resolved:</p> <p>That the Senior Licensing Officer be instructed to liaise with Cambridgeshire County Council to improve the taxi rank situated adjacent to the Market Place in Ely.</p>	
<p>2. RESOURCES AND FINANCE COMMITTEE – 19 JUNE 2017</p> <p>a. <u>Review of Members' Allowances – Report of Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP)</u></p> <p>The Committee considered a report (reference S25, previously circulated) containing the report and recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) relating to Members' Allowances.</p> <p>IRP Member, Stan Curtis, introduced the report of the Panel and explained the background and rationale for their recommendations. He stated that the Panel had received clear feedback from Councillors via the questionnaire and interviews, and particularly from the new intake, who commented that the current level of allowances was low and could result in a 'democratic deficit', with only the retired and self-employed able to afford to serve if this was not addressed. Members fully recognised that the allowances paid by this Council were low compared to other Councils both locally and nationally. Part of the reason for this was the 10% reduction which had yet to be recovered and the Panel</p>	<p>S25 (attached at Appendix B)</p>

believed should be reinstated now that the Council was in a more sound financial position. As a result of the extensive comparative information provided to the Panel and feedback from Councillors, the IRP had proposed what they regarded as a reasonable level of increases, but would still mean that this Council's allowances remained low when compared to other Councils. The IRP also were conscious of the reduction in the number of Councillors from 39 to 28 from the District Council elections in May 2019, which would significantly increase the workloads of the Councillors elected from that date. This new intake needed to be clear on the level of allowances they would be paid for the role.

Mr Curtis highlighted that the IRP also had made a number of 'other recommendations' detailed in their report which, whilst not strictly within their remit, were due to the feedback received from Councillors. One of these related to the IT provision/allowance for Councillors, which appeared to be unclear to Members and needed review, particularly with regard to the possible provision of Tablets/IPads for Councillors. The Member responses also indicated that Councillors were not aware of their entitlement to and the level and type of allowances they could claim when elected, in some cases because they did not attend the Member Induction sessions. The Panel believed that Member Induction for new Councillors should be compulsory and the timing of the induction considered. The IRP acknowledged the comment made by a number of Councillors that they should not be required by the Government to vote on the level of their own allowances.

A revised motion was tabled at the meeting, proposed by Councillor Bradley and seconded by Councillor Morris as follows:

1. That Council determine the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) as set out at Appendix 1.
2. That Council be recommended to increase the level of the allowances payable to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council to accord with any increase agreed in the level of Special Responsibility Allowances.
3. That Council consider the IRP comments in

relation to Members ICT allowances and the allowance for venue hire costs for Member Surgeries.

4. That it should be noted that there will be a reduction in the Budget for Members Allowances from May 2019 due to the reduction in the number of Councillors from 39 to 28 as a result of the Electoral Review.

Councillor Morris referred to the fact that the IRP had not made a recommendation relating to an allowance for Member Service Delivery Champions and considered that this should not wait until the next review, since some Service Delivery Champions were undertaking a significant amount of work on the role.

In response to a question by Councillor Dupré, it was confirmed that the revised motion would leave full Council to take the final decision on the level of allowances to be paid in the future. Councillor Dupré commented that she had found the responses from Councillors detailed interesting, particularly with regard to the low level of the current allowances and the problems this caused in recruiting younger people to serve as Members. She stated that the majority of Members remained in the 50-70 age range and the fact that it was difficult to get younger working people to serve as Councillors needed looking at. Councillor Dupré also queried the comment made by some Councillors about Vice-Chairman not being allowed to chair meetings.

Councillor Dupré referred to the proposed wording for the Overnight Accommodation allowance stating that 'claims for overnight stays within Cambridgeshire will not be approved' and recommended that this wording should be tightened to make it more pragmatic to prevent close border issues. Councillor Dupré also believed that the allowance and process for venue hire costs for Member Surgeries needed reviewing to simplify and rationalise it. The Democratic Services Manager clarified the current level and criteria for the Member Surgery venue hire allowance.

In concluding, Councillor Dupré stated that it was important to address the fact that this Council's allowances had fallen behind the national average, as we needed to encourage a wider demographic of people to

stand as Councillors.

The Chairman highlighted the fact that he was a Vice-Chairman chairing this Committee meeting. However, he acknowledged the points on the need to look at the wording regarding the Overnight Accommodation allowance and to review the allowance and process for venue hire costs for Member Surgeries.

Councillor Bradley believed that, with the clarification from the Democratic Services Manager, the allowance and process for venue hire costs for Member Surgeries was acceptable.

Councillor Rouse commented that the fact that some Members were not aware of a number of the allowances that could be claimed needed to be addressed.

Councillor Cheetham highlighted the fact that a major contributing factor to allowances falling behind the national average was the reduction in 2010 and he believed that this should not be allowed to continue if it meant that it led to a Council with a majority of Members over 65 and self-employed, as this would not be representative of the local community and we needed to ensure a better balance on the Council.

Members queried how their recommendations above relating to particular allowances would be addressed. The Chief Executive and Chairman referred to the fact that the Minute of this meeting would be submitted to full Council as part of the 'Recommendations from Committees' report and Council then could consider the comments made relating to the particular allowances and come to a decision.

The revised motion, upon being put to the vote, was carried.

The Chairman thanked the IRP for their work and thorough report, which was very thought-provoking and he was sure would be fully debated at Council.

It was resolved to RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL:

- 1. That Council determine the recommendations of the Independent**

<p>Remuneration Panel (IRP) as set out at Appendix 1.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. That Council be recommended to increase the level of the allowances payable to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council to accord with any increase agreed in the level of Special Responsibility Allowances. 3. That Council consider the IRP comments in relation to Members ICT allowances and the allowance for venue hire costs for Member Surgeries. 4. That it should be noted that there will be a reduction in the Budget for Members Allowances from May 2019 due to the reduction in the number of Councillors from 39 to 28 as a result of the Electoral Review. <p><u>b. Treasury Operations Annual Performance Review</u></p> <p>The Committee considered a report (reference S28, previously circulated) which summarised the Council's Treasury operations during 2016/17. The Finance Manager, Ian Smith, highlighted the interest received during the financial year of £179,274, which was £79,274 above the budget of £100,000. This figure was made up of £156,013 from investment in money markets and £23,261 from the Loan to ECTC and equated to an average interest rate of 0.69% across the year.</p> <p>Councillor Bradley raised questions on the £2.7M reduction in total investments in Table 1 of the report and the role of Members of this Committee with regard to Treasury Management detailed in paragraph 3 of the report, which were responded to by the Finance Manager.</p> <p>It was resolved to RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL:</p> <p>That the report on the Council's Treasury operations during 2016/17 including the actual Prudential and Treasury Indicators, as set out at Appendix 1 to the submitted report, be approved.</p>	<p>S28 (attached at Appendix C)</p>
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