



TAXI AND GENERAL COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE DIGITAL MEETING HELD VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON FRIDAY,
26TH MARCH 2021 AT 10.00 A.M.

PRESENT

Councillor D.W.R. Preece – Chair
Councillor J. Simmonds – Vice-Chair

Councillors:

M.A. Adams, Mrs E.M. Aldworth, P.J. Bevan, W. David, M. Davies, Ms J. Gale, Mrs D. Price,
J.E. Roberts, W. Williams

Together with:

J. Morgan (Trading Standards, Licensing and Registrars Manager), L. Morgan (Licensing
Manager), S. Lewis-Williams (Senior Licensing Officer), T. Rawson (Solicitor), R. Barrett
(Committee Services Officer)

1 RECORDING AND VOTING ARRANGEMENTS

The Chair reminded those present that the meeting was being filmed and would be available following the meeting via the Council's website – [Click Here to View](#). Members were advised that voting on decisions would take place by way of roll call.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J. Bevan, D. Cushing and D. Harse.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received at the commencement or during the course of the meeting.

4 ZOO LICENSING FEES

Lee Morgan (Licensing Manager) presented the report, which recommended the level of fees to be charged by the Authority for a Zoo licence as set out in Appendix 1 of the report. Members were advised that the Authority has a statutory duty to administer certain licences, registrations and permits. The review of fees charged, involves consideration of the cost to the

Authority in providing the service. The application for a licence is expected following receipt of a formal Notification of Intention to apply for a Zoo Licence.

The Committee were referred to Section 5.8 of the report which advised that upon initial grant of licence, the duration of a licence is 4 years, and thereafter, subsequent renewals are for a 6 year duration. Section 5.10 of the report highlighted that local authorities are also entitled to recover such costs as are reasonably incurred in issuing directions under the Zoo Licensing Act 1981 and exercising their duties for treating and disposing of animals in accordance with section 16E of the Act (the welfare of animals following closure of a zoo).

Reference was made to the proposed Schedule of Zoo-related fees set out at Appendix 1, which is split into two parts: Part A) the direct costs associated with processing the application and Part B) ongoing costs associated with running the licensing function, including supervision and monitoring of licensed premises and the enforcement activity for any unlicensed premises. Members were asked to note one typographical error at Line 4 of the table of proposed fees, which should refer to "Zoo Licence **Renewal** (6yr) S.14 Dispensation" and not "Zoo Licence **Grant** (6yr) S.14 Dispensation". The Committee were also invited as part of their decision-making ability to round each figure in the proposed Schedule of Fees down to the nearest whole pound for simplicity if they were minded to do so.

The Licensing Manager highlighted a dispensation under Section 14 of the Zoo Licensing Act 1981 which provides the Secretary of State with powers to relax the requirements of the Act for a small zoo or for a zoo exhibiting only a small number of different kinds of animals, and Section 14(1)(b) has been acknowledged within the calculation in Appendix 1.

During the course of the ensuing debate and in response to a Member's observation, Officers confirmed the rounding down could be applied to all future proposed licensing fees. A Member asked if a zoo licence would cover other types of venues such as petting farms.

The Licensing Manager responded to queries and explained that the requirement for a zoo licence depends on the species of animal to be exhibited but that indications are that the pending application will require a zoo licence. It was confirmed that the expected zoo application would be for an existing premises located at The Meadows on the outskirts of Caerphilly near Nantgarw.

Clarification was sought on the meaning of the Section 14 dispensation and it was explained that this relates to the number of physical exhibits at a site and that some locations may have a greater number of exhibits requiring more complex care needs. A Member queried if animal welfare at licensed zoos is the responsibility of the Authority and Mr Morgan explained that the Council is required to conduct regular inspections in this regard. A specialised zoo inspector will attend in the first instance and the frequency of subsequent visits by the Authority will be mandated by the type of animals to be exhibited. It was also confirmed that animal welfare officers from the Public Protection Team will visit jointly with zoo inspectors. Under the Act, visits must be of a frequency between 6-12 months but the Authority also has the powers to undertake random visits if they have any welfare concerns.

Discussion took place on the types of animals to be exhibited at the zoo and Mr Morgan informed that this information had not yet been received, but as of January 2021, the types of animals that require a zoo licence under the Act include racoon dogs, meerkats, wallabies and emus. It was noted that animals such as horses or pigs do not require a zoo licence. A Member asked if the premises would include species such as lions or tigers and Mr Morgan explained that there are no indications for these types of animals at this point, but that the zoo licence will give the facility for the premises to display a wider range of exotic species, which could be expanded upon over time.

A Member enquired as to the procedure for potentially dangerous escaped animals, and Mr Morgan confirmed that conditions could be attached where the zoo premises is required to let the Authority know of any escapes. However, the indications are that there are no types of animals for the proposed site that would give cause for concern. It was confirmed that clear lines of communication will be established between the applicant and Licensing department, who will be made aware of the zoo stocklist and will be notified of any potential changes.

Following consideration of the report and subject to the aforementioned rounding down in respect of fees, it was moved and seconded that the following recommendation be approved By way of roll call (and in noting there were 10 for, 0 against and 1 abstention) this was agreed by the majority present.

RESOLVED that the proposed fees for zoo licences as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report be adopted with immediate effect, subject to the fees being rounded down to the nearest whole pound for simplicity.

5 VERBAL UPDATE FROM THE LICENSING MANAGER ON TAXI LICENSING MATTERS

Mr Morgan gave an update on staffing changes across the Licensing Team and then outlined a number of reports that will be brought to Committee in due course.

Members noted that a report will be brought to Committee regarding signage/livery for Welsh Government (WG) and Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) electric vehicles, as the vehicles to be supplied do not currently meet the Council's existing vehicle specification in relation to advertising / livery.

The Committee were also advised that the Department of Transport (DfT) and Welsh Government have agreed a need for common core minimum standards for the taxi and private hire vehicle sector in order to improve public safety and standardisation, and have released two documents in this regard. The Licensing Authority will therefore need to review its current requirements in line with statutory Standards and Welsh Government's recommended harmonisation guidance. This will include a number of changes to existing policy, particularly around driver fitness criteria and Group 2 medicals. Licensing will undertake a consultation with the trade and reports will be brought to Committee on the changes.

In response to a Member's query, Mr Morgan confirmed that the aforementioned matters would be for Committee determination and would not require a recommendation to Council. Mr Morgan also responded to queries in relation to Group 2 medicals and CCBC branding on the WG/CCR electric vehicles.

The Committee noted the verbal update from Mr Morgan.

The meeting closed at 10.54 am