

ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

Monday, 25 November 2013 (6:00 pm – 6:25 pm)

PRESENT:

Councillor Winstanley (Chair); Councillors Clarke, Irish, Olson, Pretty and Mrs Welsh

Also in attendance: Councillor Grajewski

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs Fraser, House and Sollitt

RESOLVED ITEMS (SUBJECT TO QUESTIONS ONLY)

1. MINUTES

RESOLVED -

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 September 2013 be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Daniel Clarke declared an interest in agenda item 4, Community Governance Review - West End Parish Wards, because he is a West End Parish Councillor.

3. COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW - WEST END PARISH WARDS

Consideration was given to a report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services that set out the findings of the local community governance review.

Earlier in the year, a request was received from West End Parish Council to conduct a review in respect of its warding arrangements. The Parish Council suggested that it would be more accountable if it had more wards but smaller; it was not seeking to change its membership number of 14.

The review was publicised in the local press, notice boards and the Council's website. The Parish Council produced a consultation leaflet which was delivered to every household in the parish. A summary of the consultation responses was set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

During discussion, Members were very supportive of the proposals, and agreed that it would benefit the Parish Council and help residents to know who their local councillor was.

RESOLVED -

- (1) That the findings of the community governance review in respect of the warding arrangements at West End Parish Council be noted, and residents thanked for their contributions;**
- (2) That the warding arrangements be revised as per West End Parish Council's original request and as per paragraph 21 of the report, following no substantially adverse comments received during the consultation; and**
- (3) That the revised arrangements be progressed so as to take effect from the next elections for West End Parish Council in May 2015.**

(NOTE: Councillor Clarke declared an interest on this item, remained in the room and spoke and voted.)

4. INDIVIDUAL ELECTORAL REGISTRATION

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services that outlined the proposals and implications for individual electoral registration due to come into force in 2014.

Members were advised that the individual electoral registration (IER) was being introduced nationally to reduce electoral fraud and improve the completeness and accuracy of the electoral register.

The Council's test run of this new process had had an 84% match with Department of Works and Pensions (DWP) records (one of the highest in the country). Work had now concluded to raise this figure higher with 'local matching' against the Council Tax register so that there was less work transferring across to an IER based register next year; a complete match now stood at 88%.

Central Government had provided a grant of £28K which could be increased to £35K if minor conditions were met. There was no doubt that this would be a difficult task, there were significant changes and implications involved, and it would become the individual's responsibility to inform the Elections team of any changes to their circumstances as the Team would no longer be able to obtain this information from other sources. It was anticipated that canvassers would experience difficulties obtaining dates of birth and national insurance numbers as people generally were reluctant to part with this information. In the longer term, additional administrative support would likely be required to assist with an increase in queries, verification checks, understanding the new process, and handling a large increase in paper forms.

RESOLVED -

That the implications of IER for the Council be noted and the proposed awareness raising methods be endorsed.

(NOTE: Councillor Grajewski raised concerns that residents would not be prepared to declare their personal information; and asked if there were sufficient resources to ensure that the process ran smoothly.)

5. **PROPOSED POLICY FOR THE INSTALLATION OF CLOCK/CALENDAR CONTROLLED METERS IN HACKNEY CARRIAGES**

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services that provided details of the proposed policy for the installation of clock/calendar controlled meters in hackney carriages licensed by the Borough Council.

The use of the clock/calendar controlled meter would lead to absolute public protection, it would be locked into the taximeter, and the automation of the fares in this way would leave no room for interpretation of the fare charge by the driver. Universal charging meant that the 'chips' ran for an 18, 36 or 60 month calendar period, depending on cost. They all had the same 'end date' so if a driver purchased a chip six months into the 18 month calendar, like a diary, he would have lost six months usage.

As each calendar 'chip' would only last an average of eighteen months, it was recommended that if the Trade were minded to seek a fare review then this should be undertaken to coincide with the eighteen monthly chip update installation.

No additional buttons would be fitted to the meter and the drivers would do little more than switch it on and off. The majority of taxis had the new style meter fitted and this policy would only affect a small number of vehicles that had the old style.

RESOLVED -

- (1) That the proposed policy for the installation of clock/calendar control meters in hackney carriages be adopted and take effect from 1 January 2014, and that all meters that require changing be fitted and tested by 1 April 2014; and**
- (2) That if the Trade were minded to seek a fare review then this should be undertaken to coincide with the eighteen monthly calendar chip update installation.**

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