

LICENSING COMMITTEE – 11 APRIL 2012

HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING: LICENCE FEES 2012/2013

Report of the: Community and Planning Services Director

Status: For Decision

Executive Summary:

This report considers the appropriate licence fees and associated costs of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licensing for the 2012/13 financial year to ensure that the 'Taxi Licensing' service remains self-financing, in accordance with the Council's Service and Budget Plan.

This report supports the Key Aim of safe communities and effective management of Council Resources.

Head of Service Head of Environmental and Operational Services – Mr Richard Wilson

Recommendation: It is RESOLVED that from 16 April 2012 the list of fees and associated costs for licences in respect of hackney carriage drivers and vehicles and private hire drivers, vehicles and operators be varied as follows:

| | Existing Fees | New Fees |
|--|----------------------|----------------------|
| Hackney Carriage Driver's Licence | | |
| On initial application | £154 for three years | £159 for three years |
| Criminal Records Bureau Search Fee | £44 | £44 |
| On renewal | £110 for three years | £115 for three years |
| Criminal Records Bureau Search Fee | £44 | £44 |
| Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence | £272 for one year | £280 for one year |

| | Existing Fees | New Fees |
|--|------------------------------------|--|
| Private Hire Operator's Licence | | |
| On initial application | £284.50 for three years | £294 for three years |
| On renewal | £91 for three years | £94 for three years |
| Private Hire Driver's Licence | | |
| On initial application | £154 for three years | £159 for three years |
| Criminal Records Bureau Search Fee | £44 | £44 |
| On renewal | £110 for three years | £115 for three years |
| Criminal Records Bureau Search Fee | £44 | £44 |
| Private Hire Vehicle Licence | £272 for one year | £280 for one year |
| Additional Costs | | |
| Change of Hackney Carriage to Private Hire | £64 | £66 |
| Change from Private Hire to Hackney Carriage | £85 | £88 |
| Replace Vehicle Plate | £37 | £23 |
| Replace Identification Badge | £26 | £9 |
| Vehicle Re-test Vehicle Partial Re-Test | £54.85 Half the current MOT fee | £54.85 Half the current MOT fee |
| Change of Ownership of Licensed Vehicle | £63 | £65 |
| Attempting "Knowledge Test" after two failures | £47 for each attempt | £48 |
| Vehicle Tests – | | Owner turning up without their insurance |

| | Existing Fees | New Fees |
|--|---------------------|---|
| | | documents will be charged half the fee and the test will not go ahead. |
| Copies of existing licences | £8 each | £8 each |
| <p><u>Replacement Vehicles</u></p> <p>If a licensed vehicle is replaced during the valid licence period then the cost of licensing the replacement vehicle will be £280. However, if the vehicle is replaced within six months of the issue of the licence then the fee will be reduced by £100 in the first of those six months; £90 in the second; £80 in the third; £70 in the fourth; £60 in the fifth and £50 in the sixth month.</p> <p>If a licensed vehicle is replaced temporarily for up to 2 months because of damage to it then the fee will be £99 to test and licence the replacement vehicle and a further £99 to test and re-licence the original vehicle.</p> | | |
| Medical Fee for new and renewal driver licences for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire payable directly to The Cedars Surgery | £55 for three years | £55 for three years NB: Medical provider tender will be sent out during 2012 |

Background

1. This taxi licensing service is required to be self-financing and the proposed increases to fees will ensure this is maintained.
2. The licence fees and associated costs of 'taxi' licensing are also increased in line with a 3% inflation rate in accordance with the Council's Service and Budget Plan.
3. Careful monitoring of income and expenditure has been carried out over the current financial year to minimise the need for additional increases and the income from licence fees and associated costs, together with expenditure has been in accordance with the objectives laid out in the budget plan.
4. Members are reminded that the fees for the hackney carriage and private hire driver licences were last reviewed by this Committee in January 2009 for the period 1 April 2009 until 31 March 2012.
5. In the past year the fee for the Criminal Records Bureau Enhanced Search, at the present, has gone up from last year to £44.
6. The cost of the Driving Standards Agency, currently £79.66 (weekdays), the cost of the medical, currently £55 and the Criminal Records Bureau Enhanced Search, currently £44 which a new applicant has to pay, means that in addition to the licence fee set by Members, a new applicant for a driver licence will have to pay, if

the recommended licence fee increase is approved, a total of £337.66 from 16 April 2012 whilst an applicant for a renewal of a licence will pay a total of £214 from the same date.

7. The Licensing team have written to all Hackney Carriage Proprietors, Private Hire Operators, and all Drivers on 13 February 2012 to give all parties the opportunity to make comment. Their comments are attached as Appendix A for Members consideration.

| | New applicant for driver licence | Renewal of a drivers licence |
|------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Application | £159.00 | £115.00 |
| CRB | £44.00 | £44.00 |
| Medical | £55.00 | £55.00 |
| DSA driving test | £79.66 | |
| Total | £337.66 | £214.00 |

Key Implications

Financial

8. The cost of licence fees takes into account the need to maintain a 'self financing' position for the service. The proposals contained in this report will achieve this.

Legal, Human Rights etc.

9. Should parts of industry believe the authority's fees are at a level which is greater than the costs of the statutory functions then it would be open to them to undertake judicial review proceedings. Should this arise, the authority would need to evidence how it arrived at the fee levels to demonstrate that they have been calculated on a cost recovery basis only.

Equality

10. Hackney Carriages and Private Hire vehicles available to all groups within the community.

RISK ASSESSMENT STATEMENT

11. If the proposed licence fee increases are not agreed, as proposed, then financial support to the Taxi Licensing Service will have to be born from within the Council's budgets.

Local Government (Miscellaneous) Provisions Act
1976.

Sources of Information:

Taxi Licensing Policy

Contact Officer(s):

Claire Perry Ext. 7325

Jessica Bolton Ext. 7480

**COMMUNITY AND PLANNING SERVICES DIRECTOR
KRISTEN PATERSON**