

LICENSING COMMITTEE - 21st JANUARY 2008	
HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING: LICENCE FEE INCREASES	
Report of the:	Community and Planning Services Director
Status:	For Decision
<p>Executive Summary: This report considers the appropriate licence fees and associated costs of hackney carriage and private hire licensing for the 2008/9 financial year to ensure that the 'Taxi Licensing' service remains self-financing, in accordance with the Council's Service and Budget Plan.</p>	
<p>This report supports the Key Aim of safe communities and effective management of Council Resources.</p>	
Portfolio Holder	Cllr. Loney
Head of Service	Head of Environmental and Operational Services – Mr. Richard Wilson
<p>Recommendation: It be RESOLVED that from 1st April 2008 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:</p>	

	New Fees	Existing Fees
<u>Hackney Carriage Driver's Licence</u>		
On initial application	£140 for three years	£140
Criminal Records Bureau Search Fee	£36	£36
On renewal	£100 for three years	£100
Criminal Records Bureau Search Fee	£36	£36
<u>Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence</u>		
	£254 for one year	£247
<u>Private Hire Operator's Licence</u>		
On initial application	£265 for three years	£257.50
On renewal	£84 for three years	£82

Item No. 2Private Hire Driver's Licence

On initial application	£140 for three years	£140
Criminal Records Bureau Search Fee	£36	£36
On renewal	£100 for three years	£100
Criminal Records Bureau Search Fee	£36	£36
<u>Private Hire Vehicle Licence</u>	£254 for one year	£247

Additional Costs

Change of Hackney Carriage to Private Hire	£59	£57
Change from Private Hire to Hackney Carriage	£79	£77
Replace Vehicle Plate	£30	£25
Replace Identification Badge	£20	£15
Vehicle Re-test	£50	£45
Vehicle Partial Re-Test	Half the current MOT fee	-----
Change of Ownership of Licensed Vehicle	£59	£57
Attempting "Knowledge Test" after two failures	£45 for each attempt	£45
Copies of existing licences	£5 each	£5

Replacement Vehicles

If a licensed vehicle is replaced during the valid licence period then the cost of licensing the replacement vehicle will be £254. 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.

If a licensed vehicle is replaced temporarily for up to 2 months because of damage to it then the fee will be £96 to test and licence the replacement vehicle and a further £96 to test and re-licence the original vehicle.

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Background

- 1 The licence fees and associated costs of 'taxi' licensing are required to be raised by the 3% inflation rate which is in accordance with the Council's Service and Budget Plan.
- 2 This service is self- financing and the proposed increase will ensure this is maintained.
- 3 Careful monitoring of income and expenditure has been carried out over the current financial year and the income from licence fees and associated costs, together with expenditure has been in accord 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 are fixed for three years and that the cost of these licences were last raised by this Committee in January 2006.
- 5 In the past year The Driving Standards Agency has increased its fee for the test new applicants are required to take from £58 to £60. Medical Fees and the fee for the Criminal Records Bureau Enhanced Search remain the same as last year at £50 and £36 respectively.
- 6 It is estimated that income from the proposed licence fees and associated costs for the year 2008/09 will be £91,334. The estimated expenditure associated with the direct service will be £37,000; with salaries £34,522 and support services £24,617. The deficit of £4,805 is expected to be made up by fees collected from temporary and replacement vehicles and sundry fees collected from "additional costs" as shown on the recommendation.

Consultation

- 7 The proposed increases in the licence fees were put to a meeting of some fifty drivers at the beginning of December. No comment was made and there has been no correspondence or contact from any persons regarding the proposals.
- 8 Drivers attending this meeting were also informed if they wished changes to be made to the maximum hackney carriage fare rates they should be submitted in time for Members to consider them at the same time as the proposed changes to licence fees. No submissions for change have been made.

Key Implications

Financial

- 9 The cost of licence fees takes into account the need to maintain self financing for the service. The proposals contained in this report will achieve that goal.

RISK ASSESSMENT STATEMENT

- 10 If the proposed licence fee increases are not agreed then the burden of financial support to the Taxi Licensing Service will have to be borne from within the Council's budgets.

Sources of Information:

Licensing Committee minutes 23.1.2006

Local Government (Miscellaneous) Provisions Act 1976.

Taxi Licensing Policy

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KRISTEN PATERSON

COMMUNITY AND PLANNING SERVICES DIRECTOR