

LICENSING COMMITTEE - 22ND JANUARY 2009		
HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING: LICENCE FEES 2009/2010		
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 2009/10 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 2009 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	£154 for three years	£140
Criminal Records Bureau Search Fee	£36	£36
On renewal	£110 for three years	£100
Criminal Records Bureau Search Fee	£36	£36
<u>Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence</u>		
	£262 for one year	£254
<u>Private Hire Operator's Licence</u>		
On initial application	£273 for three years	£265
On renewal	£87 for three years	£84

Item No. 4Private Hire Driver's Licence

On initial application	£154 for three years	£140
Criminal Records Bureau Search Fee	£36	£36
On renewal	£110 for three years	£100
Criminal Records Bureau Search Fee	£36	£36
<u>Private Hire Vehicle Licence</u>	£262 for one year	£254

Additional Costs

Change of Hackney Carriage to Private Hire	£62	£59
Change from Private Hire to Hackney Carriage	£81	£79
Replace Vehicle Plate	£35	£30
Replace Identification Badge	£25	£20
Vehicle Re-test	£50	£50
Vehicle Partial Re-Test	Half the current MOT fee	-----
Change of Ownership of Licensed Vehicle	£61	£59
Attempting "Knowledge Test" after two failures	£45 for each attempt	£45
Copies of existing licences	£7.50 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 £262. 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 £99 to test and licence the replacement vehicle and a further £99 to test and re-licence the original vehicle.

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 taxi licensing service is required to be self- financing and the proposed increases to fees 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 they were last raised by this Committee in January 2006. It is for that reason and the fact that this licence fee will be fixed for a further three years that the rise for the ensuing period of three years is one of 10%.
- 5 In the past year The Driving Standards Agency have increased the fee for it's 'taxi driver test', that new applicants are required to take in accordance with the Council's 'Taxi Licensing Policy', from £60 to £69 and notification has been received that as from the 31st March 2009 that fee will rise again to £78 payable to the DSA by the applicant. The Cedars Surgery at Swanley has again been selected to be the approved Centre for medical examinations in respect of Driver Licence applications in accordance with the Taxi Licensing Policy for the three years commencing 1 January 2009 and from that date the fee payable by the applicant has risen from £50 to £55. The fee for the Criminal Records Bureau Enhanced Search, at the present, remains the same as last year at £36.
- 6 The three costs mentioned in the preceding paragraph, 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 £323 from 1 April 2009 whilst an applicant for a renewal of a licence will pay a total of £201 from the same date. It is estimated that income from the proposed licence fees and associated costs for the year 2009/10 will be £99,537.
- 7 The estimated expenditure associated with the direct service will be £36,960; with salaries £35,558 and support services £25,355 which will allow the Service to be self-financing.
- 8 The drivers are aware that it is Council policy to review licence fees annually at this time and that the increase to fees is a recommended 3% with consultation with the drivers taking place if the increase is greater than this.

Key Implications

Financial

- 9 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.

Risk Assessment Statement

- 10 If the proposed licence fee increases are not agreed, as proposed, then 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
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