

HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING: LICENCE FEES 2014/2015

Council – 1 April 2014

Report of the: Chief Officer Environmental and Operational Services

Status: For Decision

Also considered by: Licensing Committee – 18 March 2014

Key Decision: No

This report supports the Key Aim of Safe Communities to aid in the reduction of crime within the District.

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Ms Lowe (Housing and Community Safety)

Contact Officer(s) Claire Perry Ext: 7325 / 07970 731616

Recommendation to the Licensing Committee: That the Licensing Committee recommend to Full Council that from 1 April 2014 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 set out in paragraph 7 to the report.

Recommendation to Full Council: That from 1 April 2014 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 set out in paragraph 7 to the report.

Reason for recommendation: to ensure that the Council complies with its Statutory duty and ensure that the 'Taxi Licensing' service remains self-financing, in accordance with the Council's Service and Budget Plan.

Introduction and background

1. Following the Licensing Committee meeting on 4 February 2014 communication I was sent to Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licensees asking for their views on the proposed increases in fees for the Taxi Licensing service.
2. The taxi licensing service is required to be self-financing and the proposed increases to fees will ensure this is maintained.
3. A Public Notice was also placed in a local paper and information was available on the Council's website.
4. The licence fees and associated costs of 'taxi' licensing are proposed to be increased in line with the 3.5% inflation rate in accordance with the Council's

Service and Budget Plan. All other increases in cost of providing the service have been absorbed by efficiency savings as a result of the Licensing Partnership.

5. In the report to the Licensing Committee on 4 February 2014 the details of the other charges levied by other agencies were outlined.
6. To date the only response that has been received is attached as Appendix A and is copied below.

'I have viewed the proposed increase in the Taxi Licensing fees for 2014/2015 which are acceptable to me as a current licensed Taxi Driver in Sevenoaks.

Many of my licensed colleagues have discussed these new increase charges and we are content that they are necessary for the purpose of providing the support and licensing for our business.

Hope these comments are helpful.

Mr. John Lewis

H20'

7. The proposed fees are:

| | Existing Fees | New Fees for 2014/15 |
|---|-----------------------|---|
| Hackney Carriage Driver Licence | | |
| On initial application | £163 for three years | £169 for three years |
| Disclosure Barring Service search fee | £44 every three years | £44 every three years or £13 per year if they sign up to the DBS online service |
| Total (including DBS fee) | £207 for three years | £213 for three years |
| On renewal | £118 for three years | £122 for three years |
| Disclosure Barring Service search fee | £44 every three years | £44 every three years or £13 per year if they sign up to the DBS online service |
| Total (including DBS fee) | £162 for three years | £166 for three years |
| Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence | £290 for one year | £300 for one year |

| Private Hire Operator Licence | | |
|--|-----------------------|---|
| On initial application | £300 for three years | £300 for three years |
| On renewal | £96 for three years | £100 for three years |
| Private Hire Driver Licence | | |
| On initial application | £163 | £169 |
| Disclosure Barring Service search fee | £44 every three years | £44 every three years or £13 per year if they sign up to the DBS online service |
| Total (including DBS fee) | £207 for three years | £213 for three years |
| On renewal | £118 for three years | £122 for three years |
| Disclosure Barring Service search fee | £44 every three years | £44 every three years or £13 per year if they sign up to the DBS online service |
| Total (including DBS fee) | £162 for three years | £166 for three years |
| Private Hire Vehicle Licence | £290 for one year | £300 for one year |
| Additional Costs | | |
| Change from Hackney Carriage to Private Hire | £68 | £70 |
| Change from Private Hire to Hackney Carriage | £90 | £90 |
| Replace vehicle plate | £23 | £23 |
| Replace driver badge | £9 | £9 |
| Vehicle re-test | £54.85 | £54.85 |
| Vehicle partial re-test | £27.42 | £27.43 |
| Change of ownership of licensed vehicle | £67 | £69 |
| Attempting "Knowledge Test" after one failure | £49 | £50 |

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Failure to attend in time for the vehicle test (10 minutes prior to the test start time) | £27.42 | £27.43 |
| Failure to attend with correct documentation | £27.42 | £27.43 |
| Copy of existing paper licence | £8 | £11 |
| Change of address details for a replacement licence | £10.50 | £11 |
| Change of name for a vehicle or operator licence | £10.50 | £11 |
| Change of name and address for a driver badge | £20 | £20 |
| Medical fee for a new and renewal driver licence for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire payable directly to The Cedars Surgery | £50 for three years payable directly to the surgery | £50 for three years payable directly to the surgery |
| <p>Replacement Vehicles</p> <p>If a licensed vehicle is replaced during the valid licence period then the cost of licensing the replacement vehicle will be £290. 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> | | |

Other Options Considered and/or Rejected

8. If the Licensing Committee were minded not to approve these fees the Council would not be able to meet the Council's Service and Budget Plan or ensure the Taxi Licensing Service was self-financing.

Key Implications

Financial

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.

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 a judicial review proceeding. 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 Impacts

| Consideration of impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty: | | |
|---|--------|------------------------|
| Question | Answer | Explanation / Evidence |
| a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to disadvantage or discriminate against different groups in the community? | No | N/A |
| b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have the potential to promote equality of opportunity? | No | |
| c. What steps can be taken to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above? | | |

Appendices

Representation

Background Papers:

[Report to Licensing on 4 February 2014](#)

Mr Richard Wilson

Chief Officer Environmental and Operational Services