

HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING: LICENCE FEES AND CHARGES 2022/2023

Licensing Committee - Tuesday 4 January 2022

Report of: Chief Officer Planning & Regulatory Services

Status: For Decision

Key Decision: No

Portfolio Holder: Cllr. McArthur

Contact Officer: Susan Lindsey Ext.7491

Recommendation to Licensing Committee:

That, having taken into account the responses received (shown in **Appendix A**) the proposed fees and charges listed in **Appendix B** be adopted with effect from 1 April 2022.

Reason for recommendation:

To ensure that the Council complies with its statutory duty and to ensure that the 'taxi licensing' service remains self-financing, in accordance with the Council's Service and Budget Plan.

Introduction and Background

- 1 At the Licensing Committee on 2nd November 2021, members approved the proposed fees (set out in **Appendix B**) for publication, consultation and implementation with effect from 1st April 2022, subject to consideration of any unresolved written objections.
- 2 The proposed fees were advertised and the Authority received 10 responses from individual licence holders, as well as a petition signed by 44 licence holders (set out in **Appendix A**) which include concerns that this is not an appropriate time to increase fees. Therefore, this matter must be considered by the Licensing Committee and a decision be made as to whether to adopt or modify the proposed fees for implementation from 1st April 2021.

- 3 For Members reference, the current 2021/22 fees are attached at **Appendix C**.
- 4 It is brought to the attention of Members that the matter of increasing the Hackney Carriage Tariff (raised in the petition signed by 44 licence holders in **Appendix A**) will be brought for your attention as a separate report.
- 5 The taxi licensing service is required to be self-financing and the proposed increases to fees will ensure this is maintained.
- 6 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 accordance with the objectives laid out in the budget plan.
- 7 The type of tasks involved in taxi licensing applications include: assistance to applicant, checking of an application upon receipt, processing the application. Once processed, determining the licence or arranging a hearing and holding and attending a hearing, notification of the decision, preparation and issue of the licence, updating records and registers, appeal preparation and appearing at an appeal hearing. The training of Officers and Members has also been included, as well as the cost of consumables.

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 Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

Should parts of the industry believe the Authority's fees are at a level which is greater than the costs of the statutory function, then it is 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 Assessment

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users

Net Zero Implications

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the council's ambition to be Net Zero by 2030. There is no perceived impact regarding either an increase or decrease in carbon emissions in the district, or

supporting the resilience of the natural environment.

Appendices

Appendix A - Responses received to proposed fees 2022/23

Appendix B - Fees & Charges for 2022/23

Appendix C - Current Fees & Charges (for 2021/22)

Background Papers

None

Richard Morris

Chief Officer Planning and Regulatory Services