

HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING: LICENCE FEES AND CHARGES 2025/26

Licensing Committee – Thursday 12th September 2024

Report of: Chief Officer Planning & Regulatory Services

Status: For Decision

Key Decision: No

Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Irene Roy

Contact Officer: Sharon Bamborough Ext.7325

Recommendation to Licensing Committee:

That,

- a) having taken into account the information provided by the Head of the Licensing partnership, increases to the fees set out at Appendix A be subject to a 6 week public consultation process;
- b) if, following consultation, there are no adverse comments to the proposed levels, the proposed fees and charges be implemented from 1 April 2025; and
- c) if, following consultation, there are adverse comments to the proposed levels, a further report be brought back to the Licensing Committee for consideration.

Reason for recommendation:

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

Introduction and Background

1. The taxi licensing service is required to be self-financing and the proposed increases to fees will ensure this is maintained.
2. 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.

3. The type of tasks involved in taxi licensing include:
 - a) Assistance and advice to applicants
 - b) Compliance checks in line with Policy including criminal checks
 - c) Checking and validating licence applications upon receipt
 - d) Final approval of applications and the processing of licences
 - e) Keeping updated records and registers
 - f) Enforcement of drivers, operators and vehicles
 - g) Arranging and attending Hearings.
 - h) Appeal preparation and court attendance at appeal
 - i) Training of Officers and Members
4. Total income for Income and expenditure for the year 2023-24 resulted in a credit position of £8,100 (this includes Government Grants received to the sum of £1,800).
5. It is proposed that the fees are increased in line with inflation and the council's corporate policy of 2.5%
6. There will be an increased cost incurred to the service over the current period and the period 2025-26 due to potential pending National Pay Awards, and additional resource provided within the Licensing Hub Team. We predict that this will balance the credit position at the end of 2024-25.

Key Implications

Financial

The cost of licence fees takes into account the need to maintain a 'self financing' position for the service.

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 - Current & Proposed fees and charges 2025-26

Background Papers

None

Richard Morris
Chief Officer Planning and Regulatory Services