

LICENSING HEALTH AND SAFETY AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**22 MARCH 2017**

REPORT TITLE	PERIODIC REVIEW OF LICENSING FEES FOR TAXIS AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES
REPORT OF	MANAGING DIRECTOR FOR DELIVERY

REPORT SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is for Members of the Licensing Health and Safety and General Purposes Committee to review and approve the licence fees in respect of Hackney Carriage, Private Hire and Operator Licences with effect from 26 April 2017.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That Members of the Licensing Health and Safety and General Purposes Committee review and approve the licence fees as set out in Appendix 1 in respect of Hackney Carriage, Private Hire and Operator Licences with effect from 26 April 2017, subject to any objections being received as part of the consultation process.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 It is a statutory requirement for this Committee to review and approve the licence fees.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 There is no provision for other options to be considered.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Council are legally entitled to charge such a fee for licences that they consider reasonable with a view to recover the costs of the issue and administration of the licence.
- 3.2 Under the provisions of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 the cost of a licence must be related to the cost of the licensing scheme itself. It is therefore appropriate for a local authority to recover their administrative and other associated costs.
- 3.3 At a meeting of this Committee on 7 July 2015 Members were advised that the income received by Licensing over the following 3 years would be reduced as a result of a change in legislation which was to direct licensing to issue licences for a period of three years and five years where they had previously been issued on an annual basis. Members were advised at that time that there was a risk that the income received may not cover the costs of issuing and administering the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Driver Licences as well as the Operator Licences as this was the first time that the Council would be issuing licences that are valid for more than a year. Members were advised at that time that the costs of these changes would be kept under review and may require further amendments to the fee structure.
- 3.4 The fees for Hackney Carriage, Private Hire and Operator Licences are reviewed on an annual basis to determine whether the income received from the previous year has been in line with the cost of delivering the service. This review has been undertaken and it has been identified that the projected income received for the financial year 2016 - 2017 will not cover the costs of delivering the service.

4.0 PROPOSED FEES

- 4.1 A review of the licensing budget for 2016 - 2017 in respect of the expenditure and income relating to the issue and the administration of licences for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles, Drivers and Operators has identified a projected deficit of income against expenditure. In addition there will be a 1% increase in staffing costs in 2017-2018.

- 4.2 The proposed fees set out in the table in Appendix 1 are considered appropriate to recover the administration and associated costs of the service.
- 4.3 Members are asked to approve the fee structure proposed in Appendix 1 and that the fees in respect of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Licences and Private Hire Operators Licences be advertised for a period of 28 days. If any objections are received, they will be reported back to this Committee for consideration. If no objections are received Members are asked to approve the implementation of the fee structure in Appendix 1 from 26 April 2017.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are cost implications to the Council in undertaking this legal duty and this is recognised in the legislation which gives provision for the Council to recover the costs of administering the scheme and to ensure compliance.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 A decision of the Committee may be subject to legal challenge.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

- 7.1 There are implications to the Council in undertaking this legal duty and this is recognised in the legislation which gives provision for the Council to recover the costs of administering the scheme and to ensure compliance.

8.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 8.1 There are risks that the costs associated with the administration of licences for taxis and private hire may not be recovered should the licence fee not be increased.

9.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 9.1 Increases in respect of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Licences and Private Hire Operators Licences must be advertised for a period of 28 days and if any objections are received, they will be reported back to this Committee for consideration.

10.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report.

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APPENDICES

- **APPENDIX 1 – Fee structure**

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Licensing Health and Safety and General Purposes Committee	7 July 2015
Licensing Health and Safety and General Purposes Committee	16 March 2016