

<b>Subject:</b>	Taxi and Private Hire Licence Fees	<b>Status:</b>	For Publication
<b>Report to:</b>	Licensing Committee	<b>Date:</b>	22 <sup>nd</sup> February 2022
<b>Report of:</b>	Public Protection Manager	<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Communities
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>General Exception</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Special Urgency</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Equality Impact Assessment:</b>	Required:	No	Attached: No
<b>Biodiversity Impact Assessment</b>	Required:	No	Attached: No
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<b>1.</b>	<b>RECOMMENDATION(S)</b>
1.1	That members consider the report and, subject to the required consultation approve the revised fees
1.2	

## 2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To inform members of a review of the current fees in relation to the licensing of Taxis and Private hire drivers, vehicles and operators and following the required consultation process, seek approval to adopt the proposed new fees and charges

## 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions Act (1976) lays out the mechanism for setting fees for both drivers, and vehicles and operators
- 3.2 In relation to drivers licence fees, Section 53(2) states; *A district council may demand and recover for the grant to any person of a licence to drive a hackney carriage, or a private hire vehicle, as the case may be, such a fee as they consider reasonable with a view to recovering the costs of issue and administration.*
- 3.3 Section 70 states; *A district council may charge such fees for the grant of vehicles and operators licences as maybe resolved from time to time and as may be sufficient to cover the cost of*
1. *Carrying out inspections of hackney carriages and private hire vehicles for the purpose of determining whether any such licence should be granted or renewed*
  2. *The reasonable cost of providing hackney carriage stands*
  3. *Any reasonable administrative or other costs in connection with the foregoing and with the control and supervision of hackney carriages and private hire vehicles.*
- 3.4 The 1976 Act set the maximum fee for each hackney carriage vehicle, private hire vehicle or private hire operator's licence at £25, or subject to specified conditions at a level determined by the district council.
- 3.5 Before this fee is set, the district authority must publish in a newspaper circulating in the area, details of the proposed variation and set a period of not less than 28 days for the receipt of any objections to the proposals.
- 3.6 Any fees set must be reasonable and only cover the costs of the licensing functions, without achieving a surplus of income.

- 3.7 Any surplus that is recovered should be returned to licence holders via a reduction in future fees.
- 3.8 This was the case in 2015, when fees were reduced from those agreed in 2013.
- 3.9 In addition grants were paid to existing licence holders to subsidise the cost of complying with the mandatory fitting of CCTV in taxis and private hire vehicles
- 3.10 Fees have remained at this level since November 2015.
- 3.11 However, fees should be reviewed on a regular basis, and as such using a cost analysis method previously scrutinised by Grant Thornton, acting for the Audit Commission, a cost analysis has been completed looking at current fees and overall costs.
- 3.12 Consequently, it is recommended that fees for the coming year be adjusted to accurately reflect the cost of the service.

3.13 Currently the fees are

- Drivers licence (both hackney and private hire) 3 years £185
- Vehicle licence (hackney and private hire) 1 year £ 140
- Private hire operator’s licence (5 years) £ 300

3.14 Proposed fees are;

- Drivers Licence 3 years £ 223
- Vehicle Licence 6 months £ 89  
(annual equivalent £178)
- Private Hire Operators 5 year £ 413
- 3 year £ 294
- 1 year £ 175

Peripheral items

- Change of vehicle £ 42
- Replacement Hackney Car & Private Hire Door Stickers £ 7.50 each
- Replacement ID Plate £ 13.00
- Lanyard £ 1.50
- Replacement ID badge £ 5.00

3.15 It should be noted that whilst the proposed fees accurately reflect the cost of the service today, the proposed fees are at a lower level than they were prior to 2015.

#### 4. RISK

4.1 All the issues raised and the recommendation(s) in this report involve risk considerations as set out below:

- Failure to set fees that accurately reflect the cost of the taxi and private hire licensing regime could have a detrimental impact on other council finances, and put an undue burden on council tax payers

#### 5. FINANCE

5.1 The proposed Fees and Charges included in this report were presented to the Council's Overview and Scrutiny on 1st February 2022. It was resolved that the proposed Fees and Charges be considered by Cabinet. Cabinet resolved on 9th February 2022 to recommend the (unchanged) draft Fees and Charges for 2022/23 for approval to Council on 23rd February 2022 as part of the budget setting process and these are included in the Council's 2022/23 net revenue budget estimate of £8.991m.

#### 6. LEGAL

6.1 All legal implications are covered in the body of the report

#### 7. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The review of Vehicle and operator licences are subject to a 28 day consultation period as laid down by the LGMPA (1976)

#### 8. CONCLUSION

8.1 The accurate setting of licensing fees which reflect the true cost of running the taxi and private hire licensing service, is vital to ensure that both licence holders and wider council tax payers in the borough are not unduly burdened. These proposed fees address that need and will continue to be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that this balance is maintained.

#### Background Papers

Document	Place of Inspection
Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policy	<i>On line</i>