

REPORT TO: LICENSING COMMITTEE – 21 SEPTEMBER 2011

REPORT BY: LICENSING MANAGER

REPORT AUTHOR: NICKII HUMPHREYS

Annual Review of Licensing Fees

The purpose of this report is for the Committee to consider a review of the non-statutory fees charged for licences/registrations which are administered by the Licensing Committee.

RECOMMENDED:

- 1) That the proposed table of licensing fees be approved and implemented with immediate effect; and**
- 2) That the Head of Legal, Licensing & Registrars be given authority to advertise, (where appropriate), such fees and charges that are subject to any formal public statutory consultation.**

1.0 Background Information

It has always been the policy of the Committee to recover, where possible, the cost of undertaking the various licensing functions although for some licences/permits, no fee is payable or the licensing fees are controlled centrally by the Government. In these cases, the Council cannot vary the fees to take into account local administrative on-costs.

When last considering a review of fees charged in respect of hackney carriage and private hire licensing on 5 November 2008, The Licensing Committee resolved that these fees are to be reviewed on an annual basis to take into account inflationary and any other increased costs (Minute No. 15/08 refers).

As per this decision, this report sets out proposals to increase the non-statutory fees payable for various types of licences/registrations by 3% which represents an increase less than the current rate of inflation (currently 4.2% CPI and 5.0% RPI¹).

There is also a recommendation to introduce new charges associated with processing applications of hackney carriage and private hire driver licences in respect of the geography test, drug tests and processing of CRB checks by the Licensing Service. Details of the reasons for introducing these additional charges are set out later in this report.

The proposed increase to licence fees is necessary in order to cover the on-costs for employees, supplies and services, agency and other contracted services so that the licensing budget meets the cash limit requirement as set

¹ CPI is the consumer prices index. It is the measure adopted by the Government for its UK inflation target. RPI is the retail prices index – the uses of the RPI and its derivatives include indexation of index-linked gilts. Historically the RPI has also been used for indexation of pensions and state benefits.

down in the Council's budget and will also ensure that full cost recovery is achieved, where possible, in relation to the cost of administration and enforcement of the various licensing functions.

2.0 Table of Proposed New Fees

Licence Type:	Existing Fee: £	Proposed Fee: £
Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licences		
Private Hire Operators:		
Grant or renewal	355.00	366.00*
Private Hire Vehicles:		
Grant or renewal	142.00	146.00*
Renewal – Extension	232.00	239.00*
Grant or renewal – LPG	131.00	135.00*
Grant – January only	71.00	73.00*
Car-to-car transfer fee	118.00	122.00
Car-to-car transfer – Admin fee	24.00	25.00
Temporary car-to-car transfer fee	60.00	62.00
Vehicle re-test fee	47.00	48.00
Private Hire Drivers:		
Grant or renewal	66.00	68.00
Replacement badge	12.00	12.00
CRB Administration Fee	NIL	10.00
Drugs Test	31.00	43.00
Geography Test – Each Separate Attempt	NIL	11.00
Hackney Carriage Vehicles:		
Grant or renewal	148.00	152.00*
Renewal – Extension	260.00	268.00*
Grant or renewal – LPG	136.00	140.00*
Car-to-car transfer fee	124.00	128.00
Car-to-car transfer – Admin fee	25.00	26.00
Temporary car-to-car transfer fee	62.00	64.00
Vehicle re-test fee	49.00	50.00
Hackney Carriage Drivers:		
Grant or renewal	66.00	68.00
Replacement badge	12.00	12.00
CRB Administration Fee	NIL	10.00
Drugs Test	31.00	43.00
Geography Test – Each Separate Attempt	NIL	11.00

* Denotes that the proposed fee is subject to formal statutory consultation

Licence Type:	Existing Fee: £	Proposed Fee: £
Street Trading Consents:		
Grant or renewal	1545.00	1590.00
Motor Salvage Operator Registration:		
Grant or renewal	72.00	74.00
Amenities on the Highway Permits:		
Goods on the Highway:		
Grant	191.00	197.00
Renewal	108.00	111.00
Variation	50.00	51.00
Tables and chairs on the Highway:		
Initial application fee	82.00	84.00
Additional fee and subsequent renewal fee:		
Highway area up to 5 m2	155.00	160.00
Highway area between 5 m2 and 10 m2	310.00	319.00
Highway area between 10 m2 and 15 m2	464.00	478.00
Highway area between 15 m2 and 20 m2	618.00	637.00
Highway area greater than 20 m2	773.00	796.00

3.0 Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Driver Licences – Additional Charges

In addition to the annual review of the above non-statutory fees, the Licensing Manager has undertaken further investigation into the costs incurred by the Licensing Authority in respect of the administration and processing of applications for the grant of private hire and hackney carriage drivers licences, in particular, the costs associated with the administration, checking and processing of:

- CRB checks;
- Drug Tests; and
- Geography tests.

At present, the Licensing Authority does not charge a separate administrative fee associated with these checks. Whilst there are fees payable by applicants/current drivers in relation to the CRB checks and drug tests, these charges are levied on the basis of the recovery of external costs only (CRB check - £44.00 and drug test - £31.00).

The proposed fees have been calculated in relation to the costs associated with officer time involved in undertaking these functions and it is considered

that they represent modest sums which more accurately reflect the true administration costs of providing this service.

4.0 Conclusion

Whilst it is recognised that the current economic climate presents challenges to all, it is recommended that the Committee approve the proposed fee increases and additional charges as they are considered to be a modest increase which is below the current inflation rate and will ensure that the cost of the provision of the statutory licensing function in respect of these types of licences/permits is recovered from the fees payable by licence holders and not subsidised by the council tax payer.

THERE ARE NO BACKGROUND PAPERS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS REPORT.



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Licensing Manager