

Committee: Licensing & Environmental Health

Date:

Title: Fees for Drivers, Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles and Private Hire Operators

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Summary

The purpose of this report is for Members of the Licensing and Environmental Health Committee to review and approve the licence fees in respect of Hackney Carriage, Private Hire and Operator Licences with effect from 1 April 2021.

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.

Financial Implications

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.

Background Papers

The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report.

None

Impact

Communication/Consultation	Operators and Hackney Carriage proprietors and Trade Association will be emailed and advised of proposed fee structure and it will be advertised in 2 local newspapers circulating the District of Uttlesford and also on our Uttlesford website.
Community Safety	None
Equalities	None

Health and Safety	None
Human Rights/Legal Implications	As set out in the body of this report
Sustainability	None
Ward-specific impacts	None
Workforce/Workplace	None

Situation

- 1 It is a statutory requirement for this Committee to review and approve the licence fees.
- 2 The Council are legally entitled to charge such a fee for licences and they consider reasonable with a view to recover the costs of the issue and administration of the licence.
- 3 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.
- 4 The fees for Hackney Carriage, Private Hire and Operator Licences are reviewed by the Council 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. The basis of the costing review for licences fees consists of an analysis of the time taken and/or cost for each element of the licensing process. This review has been undertaken and it has been identified that the total timings and costs associated with the licensing process is inline with the current fees charged. The proposed fee increase is therefore quite minimal. However, in order to meet more stringent checks and procedures it is planned to recruit an additional officer whose time will be spent mostly undertaking compliance relating to vehicle but with a small amount of compliance relating to operators being undertaken as well. As a result, this necessitates the fees for vehicles rising more materially to recover the extra costs.
- 5 The increase in licence fees required in order to fully recover the underlying costs associated with the issue and recoverable administration costs of each licence type is shown in Appendix B. Appendix A shows the forecast deficit/surplus for 2020/21 to 2022/23 on the assumption that the fees are increased as proposed in Appendix B. The forecast deficits and surpluses in these years relate to the fact that there is a timing mismatch between when the income for driver and operator licences are received and when the costs are incurred for these licences. It is because of this 'timing mismatch' that the licensing reserve was established in order to hold some of the income received from driver and operator fees until the

costs relating to this income have been incurred and the two can be offset against each other.

- 6 A table showing fees and charges from Essex and neighbouring Authorities is attached for information as Appendix C. This shows Uttlesford as still having the lowest vehicle licence fees and among the lowest driver and operator fees.
- 7 Members are asked to approve the fee structure proposed in Appendix B to come into effect on 1 April 2021 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 in at least one local newspaper circulating in the district. If any objections are received then Members will need to meet to consider the same and must then set a further date (not being later than two months after the first) on which the variation to fees will come into force with or without modification. They will be reported back to this Committee for consideration.

Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Fees are set as a level in excess of that required to cover the cost of the Licensing Authority	1 – in preparing the proposed fees officers have kept costs to an absolute minimum	2 – a surplus would be generated which could be countered by a reduction in future years	Fees are kept under constant review and adjusted as necessary.

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.