

**Wolverhampton City Council      OPEN INFORMATION ITEM**

Committee / Panel	<b><u>LICENSING COMMITTEE</u></b>	Date	<b>16/01/13</b>
Originating Service Group(s)	<b><u>EDUCATION AND ENTERPRISE</u></b>		
Contact Officer(s)/ Telephone Number(s)	<b><u>COLIN PARR</u></b> <b><u>0105</u></b>		
Title/Subject Matter	<b><u>FEES AND CHARGES FOR HACKNEY</u></b> <b><u>CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING FUNCTIONS</u></b> <b><u>FOR 2013/14</u></b>		

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**Recommendation**

The Licensing Committee are recommended to:-

- (i) Note the report relating to hackney carriage and private hire licensing functions proposed fees and charges for 2013/14.

**REVIEW OF FEES AND CHARGES FOR HACKNEY CARRIAGE  
AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENCES FOR 2013/14**

**1.0 Purpose of Report**

1.1 To note the proposed fees and charges for licences relating to hackney carriages, private hire vehicles, drivers and private hire vehicle operators for 2013/14.

**2.0 Background**

2.1 The Council is empowered by statute to levy fees and charges in respect of licences for hackney carriages, private hire vehicles, drivers and their operators. The fees charged must be reasonable in relation to costs incurred in the administration and enforcement of such licences. Council policy is that fees and charges should be reviewed annually and increased at least in line with the increased cost of providing the service, whilst also having due regard to the Council's social and economic policies.

**3.0 Current Level of Fees and Charges**

3.1 When Councillors considered the fees and charges for the current year (2012/13) they agreed that the fees and charges should remain at the levels previously agreed for 2011/12.

**4.0 Proposals for 2013/14**

4.1 The proposals for 2013/14 have been developed in accordance with Council policy and the desire to minimise costs to the private hire and hackney carriage trade whilst ensuring that public safety is not compromised and the vehicle licensing function operates on a cost neutral basis.

4.2 It is proposed that the existing fees and charges for drivers and vehicles for the current year 2012/13 are revised for the coming year 2013/14. As the cost of providing the service has changed.

4.3 No changes are proposed to private hire operators licence fees.

**5.0 Driver Fees**

5.1 It is proposed that fees for driver licences are generally increased by 4% for 2013/14. The proposed driver fees are detailed at Appendix A.

5.2 Following representations from the trade it is also proposed to introduce a dual hackney carriage and private hire vehicle drivers licence. Driver assessment requirements are currently being developed and it is hoped to offer the badge from the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2013.

5.3 The cost of new and third year Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) checks are not covered by this report as they are determined by Criminal Records Bureau.

5.4 The fee currently charged for an enhanced CRB disclose is £50 this includes administration costs. The CRB has indicated that there is no proposal to increase the fee at this time. However, if the fee is increased this will automatically be passed onto drivers.

5.5 Worcestershire County Council in partnership with Wolverhampton City Council deliver the Driver Training Scheme for new hackney carriage and private hire vehicle driver

applicants. Worcestershire County Council incur all the costs associated with the training and receive all the income from drivers.

5.6 Worcestershire County Council have indicated that they do not intend to increase their charges for 2013/14 due to the current economic climate.

## 6.0 **Revision to Vehicle Fees**

6.1 It is proposed that changes are made to the internal licensing requirements which will result in a reduction of £4 (vehicles under six years old) and £8 (for vehicles over six years old).

6.2 Employees are also in dialogue with VOSA registered garages across Wolverhampton to look at allowing tests to be offered at private garages. This will enable the trade to benefit from economies of scale and potential discounted rates for rectification work/tests.

6.3 These proposals will be presented to Councillors for agreement prior to implementation. However, the removal of the testing fees currently charged will represent a significant reduction in vehicle licence fees. The revised vehicle fees are detailed at Appendix B to this report. It is proposed to maintain existing arrangements until Councillors have approved any revisions to testing arrangements.

## 7.0 **Legal Implications**

7.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this information report. [SH/02012013/F].

## 8.0 **Financial Implications**

8.1 There are financial implications resulting from this report. Currently all hackney carriage and private hire vehicles are tested at the Council's Culwell Street Depot. The opening up of testing to other facilities will result in a loss of income and potential resource implications. This will be factored into the ongoing review of Fleet Services and the Culwell Street facility. [ES/07012013/V]

## 9.0 **Environmental Implications**

9.1 The pricing structure for vehicles may act as an incentive for proprietors and operators to use newer vehicles which are generally, due to national vehicle emissions requirements less polluting than older vehicles.

## 10.0 **Equalities Implications**

10.1 There are equalities implications arising from this report in that the reduced fees for persons on Job Seekers Allowance directly benefit potentially lower income applicants.

**PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES FOR HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENCES 2013/14**

		<b>EXISTING CHARGE 2012/13 £</b>	<b>PROPOSED CHARGE 2013/14 £</b>
1.	<b>DRIVERS</b>		
	(i) Hackney Carriage/Private Hire 1 Year New	74	77
	(ii) Hackney Carriage/Private Hire 1 Year Renewal	74	77
	(iii) Job Seekers Allowance 1 Year New	34	35
	(iv) Hackney Carriage/Private Hire 3 Year New/Renewal	187	194
	(v) New/Renewal Dual Hackney Carriage/Private Hire	N/A	105
	(vi) New 3 year Dual Hackney Carriage/Private Hire	N/A	240
	(vii) Conversion from Hackney Carriage/Private Hire to Dual Licence.	N/A	80 (plus testing fees)
	(viii) Hackney Carriage/Private Hire New Applicants One Day Driver Training Course/Test	75	75
	(ix) Hackney Carriage/Private Hire New Applicants Driver Training Immediate Re-test	21	21
	(x) Hackney Carriage / Private Hire New Applicants One Day Driver Training Re-sit	75	75
	(xi) Hackney Carriage/Private Hire New Applicants Practical Driving Assessment	64	64

		<b>EXISTING CHARGE 2012/13 £</b>	<b>PROPOSED CHARGE 2013/14 £</b>
2.	<b>VEHICLES</b> <b>Hackney Carriage</b> (i) 0 to 6 yrs old 1 Year or 1 <sup>st</sup> 6 Months 2 <sup>nd</sup> 6 Months  (ii) Over 6 yrs old and under 16 yrs old 1 Year or 1 <sup>st</sup> 6 Months 2 <sup>nd</sup> 6 Months	   351 204 196   493 279 279	   285 170 170   361 206 206
	<b>Private Hire</b> (i) 0 to 6 yrs old 1 Year or 1 <sup>st</sup> 6 Months 2 <sup>nd</sup> 6 Months  (ii) Over 6 yrs old and under 10 yrs old 1 Year or 1 <sup>st</sup> 6 Months 2 <sup>nd</sup> 6 Months	   347 200 191   483 274 274	   285 170 170   361 206 206
3.	<b>PRIVATE HIRE OPERATORS</b> (i) New (ii) Renewal	 1077 785	 1077 785