

Licensing Committee

8 February 2017

Report Title	Review of Fees and Charges for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing functions for 2017/18	
Accountable Strategic Director	Kevin O'Keefe Governance	
Originating service	Licensing Services	
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Recommendation:

The Licensing Committee are recommended to:

- (i) Approve the proposed fees and charges for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Drivers as set out in Appendix A with effect from 1 April 2017.
- (ii) Approve the proposed fees and charges for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles as set out in Appendix B with effect from 1 April 2017.
- (iii) Approve the Hackney Carriage Exceptional Condition Assessment Fee as outlined at 4.12 and 4.13 of this report.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To approve the proposed fees and charges for licences relating to hackney carriages, private hire vehicles, drivers, private hire vehicle operators and council approved VOSA testing stations for 2017/18.

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 issue, administration and enforcement of such licences. Council policy is that fees and charges should be reviewed annually and reflect the cost of providing the service.

3.0 Proposals for 2017/18 Driver fees

- 3.1 It is proposed that the existing council fees and charges for drivers for the current year 2016/17 remain unchanged for the coming year 2017/18. As the cost of providing the service would be met by the anticipated income for 2017/18 without any requirement to increase fees and charges.
- 3.2 The cost of new and third year Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are not covered by this report as they are determined by Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and our external providers.
- 3.3 Worcestershire County Council in partnership with Wolverhampton City Council have delivered the existing Driver Training Scheme for new hackney carriage and private hire vehicle driver applicants since 2008.
- 3.4 On 22 July 2015 the Licensing Committee approved and endorsed a revised driver training programme for hackney carriage and private hire vehicle driver applicants.
- 3.5 The training has been rebalanced to focus on the safeguarding of children and the role taxi drivers can play in tackling child sexual exploitation issues.
- 3.6 Worcestershire County Council incur all the costs associated with the training and receive all the income from drivers.
- 3.7 On 5 September 2016 an outline application platform was launched for driver applications with a Service Level Agreement (SLA) for new applications of 28 working days subject to a complete application.
- 3.8 It is proposed to offer an additional fee for anyone wishing to fast track a new/renewal driver application. This service will be delivered outside normal office hours.

3.9 The proposed fee £100 reflects additional costs incurred i.e. opening of the Civic Centre/ Culwell Street outside normal working hours, associated accommodation costs, staff overtime and all on costs.

3.10 The driver fees for 2017/18 are detailed at Appendix A to this report.

4.0 Proposals for 2017/18 Vehicle and Operator Fees

4.1 The proposals for 2017/18 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 On 22 July 2015 the Licensing Committee agreed revised private hire livery requirements. This included the removal of council door stickers being replaced with approved unique operator signage placed on each side of the vehicle.

4.3 The Deregulation Act saw the introduction of three year hackney carriage and private hire vehicle drivers licences and five year private hire vehicle operators licences from 1 October 2015. Licensing Services already offer a three year drivers licence at a fee of £240 which was approved by Licensing Committee on 21 January 2015.

4.4 However, with the introduction of a new five year private hire vehicle operators licence and a five year renewal licence the proposed fees of £3,400 for a new licence and £3,140 for a five year renewal licence was considered.

4.5 On 22 July 2015 the Licensing Committee agreed that the proposed fees for vehicles and private vehicle operators would be subject to public consultation in accordance with Section 70 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 and any representations would be presented back to the Licensing Committee prior to implementation on 1 October 2015.

4.6 No representations were received therefore the proposed fees were effective from 1 October 2015.

4.7 These fees were carried forward into 2016/17.

4.8 On 1 December 2016 vehicle applications were added to the online platform with an SLA of 10 working days.

4.9 It is proposed to offer a fast track service for new/renewal Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle licence applications. This service will be delivered outside normal office hours.

- 4.10 The proposed fee of £180 reflects additional costs incurred i.e. opening of the Civic Centre/Culwell Street outside normal office hours, associated accommodation costs, staff overtime and all on costs.
- 4.11 This service will benefit the trade significantly by allowing new/renewal vehicles to be licensed within one working day.
- 4.12 It is proposed to introduce an exceptional condition assessment fee for Hackney Carriages reaching the age of 16 years and above.
- 4.13 The fee of £120 is proposed and reflects the time spent by Section Leader Licensing Services on assessing the vehicle is still fit for purpose.
- 4.14 The introduction of the online vehicle application process costs has led to a reduction in administration costs. This has been passed onto the trade and is reflected in the proposed fees for 2017/18.
- 4.15 The proposed charges for 2017/18 are detailed at Appendix B to this report.

5.0 Legal implications

- 5.1 In accordance with Section 70 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, public notice of the new charges in relation to operators and vehicles is required to be given in a local newspaper. The closing date for the receipt of objections must not be less than 28 days after the date of publication. Should objections be received, consideration must be given to them, and another date for implementation may have to be specified. Any objections received will be reported to the Committee for consideration. However, if there are no objections, the new charges will come into effect on the 1st April 2017.
- 5.2 The fees charged must be reasonable in relation to costs incurred in the issue, administration and enforcement of such licences. [RP/30122017/U]

6.0 Financial implications

- 6.1 Should the Licensing Committee agree with the recommendations in this report it is anticipated that overall income from the proposed fees and charges in Appendices A and B will cover the estimated cost of providing the service. [GE/27012017/D]

7.0 Environmental implications

- 7.1 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.

8.0 Equalities implications

- 8.1 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.

9.0 Schedule of background papers

- 9.1 Licensing Committee - 16 January 2013 - Fees and charges for hackney carriage and private hire licensing functions 2013/14.

Licensing Committee - 26 February 2014 - Fees and charges for hackney carriage and private hire licensing functions 2014/15.

Licensing Committee - 21 January 2015 - Fees and charges for hackney carriage and private hire licensing functions 2015/16.

Licensing Committee – 22 July 2015 – Revisions to hackney carriage and private hire vehicle, driver and operator criteria.

Licensing Committee – 20 January 2016 – Fees and charges for hackney carriage and private hire licensing functions 2016/17.

This report is PUBLIC
[NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED]

APPENDIX A

PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES FOR HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENCES 2017/18

	LICENCE TYPE/FUNCTION	CHARGES AGREED FOR 2016/17 £	PROPOSED CHARGES FOR 2017/18 £
1.	DRIVERS		
	(i) Hackney Carriage/Private Hire 1 Year New	77	77
	(ii) Hackney Carriage/Private Hire 1 Year Renewal	77	77
	(iii) Job Seekers Allowance 1 Year New	35	35
	(iv) Hackney Carriage/Private Hire 3 Year New/Renewal	194	194
	(v) New/Renewal Dual Hackney Carriage/Private Hire	105	105
	(vi) New 3 year Dual Hackney Carriage/Private Hire	240	240
	(vii) Conversion from Hackney Carriage/Private Hire to Dual Licence.	80 (plus testing fees)	80 (plus testing fees)
	(viii) Fast Track New/Renewal	-	100
	(ix) Hackney Carriage/Private Hire New Applicants One Day Driver Training Course/Test	40	40
	(x) Hackney Carriage/Private Hire New Applicants Driver Training Immediate Re-test	15	15
	(xi) Hackney Carriage / Private Hire New Applicants One Day Driver Training Re-sit	40	40
	(xii) Hackney Carriage/New Applicants Practical Driving Assessment	79	79

APPENDIX B

	LICENCE TYPE/FUNCTION	CHARGES AGREED FOR 2016/17 £	PROPOSED CHARGES FOR 2017/18 £
2.	<p>VEHICLES</p> <p>Hackney Carriage</p> <p>(i) 0 to 10 yrs old 1 Year or 1st 6 Months 2nd 6 Months</p> <p>(ii) Over 10 yrs old and under 16 yrs old 1 Year or 1st 6 Months 2nd 6 Months</p> <p>(iii) Fast Track New/Renewal</p> <p>(iv) Exceptional Condition Assessment required at 16 years and each subsequent 6 months</p>	<p>265</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p> <p>341</p> <p>196</p> <p>196</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p>	<p>225</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p> <p>299</p> <p>169</p> <p>-</p> <p>180</p> <p>120</p>
	<p>Private Hire</p> <p>(i) 0 to 10 yrs old 1 Year or 1st 6 Months 2nd 6 Months</p> <p>(ii) Over 10 yrs old and under 12 yrs old 1 Year or 1st 6 Months 2nd 6 Months</p> <p>(iii) Fast Track New/Renewal</p>	<p>266</p> <p>151</p> <p>151</p> <p>342</p> <p>187</p> <p>187</p> <p>-</p>	<p>225</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p> <p>299</p> <p>169</p> <p>-</p> <p>180</p>
3.	<p>PRIVATE HIRE OPERATORS</p> <p>(i) New 1 Year</p> <p>(ii) Renewal 1 Year</p> <p>(iii) New 5 Year</p> <p>(iv) Renewal 5 Year</p>	<p>1077</p> <p>785</p> <p>3400</p> <p>3140</p>	<p>1077</p> <p>785</p> <p>3400</p> <p>3140</p>
4.	<p>HACKNEY CARRIAGE/PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE TESTING FACILITIES</p> <p>Council approved VOSA registered garages.</p>	<p>150</p>	<p>150</p>