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## **Licensing and Protection Panel**

**Report of the meeting held on 19th March 2009**

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### **Matters for Information**

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#### **8. FEES AND CHARGES**

The Panel has approved revised fees and charges for those licences etc issued by the Central Services Directorate. The charges have been increased by 3% for the period 1st April 2009 to 31st March 2010 with the exception of the initial issue and subsequent renewal of hackney carriage and private hire licences which will increase by an additional £9 in line with an increased charge by the vehicle testing centre.

#### **9. HACKNEY CARRIAGE LICENCES**

In line with the findings of a consultation exercise it has been agreed by the Panel to delimit the issue of hackney carriage licences in the District.

As another survey to gauge unmet demand would have cost in the region of £20,000 it was considered an appropriate time to consult with the public and interested parties. Overall the results of the questionnaire have supported the lifting of the current restriction and the Panel also has agreed that new licences should be limited to those vehicles that can accommodate wheelchair passengers as supported by the majority of respondents.

The Panel therefore felt that the current policy of restricting the number of licences issued by the Council on the basis that there was no significant unmet public demand could no longer be justified.

The implementation date of the de-restriction will be set after consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

#### **10. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT CONSULTATION ON IMPROVING ACCESS TO TAXIS**

The Panel has authorised the Licensing Manager to respond to a consultation document on improving access to taxis which has been issued by the Department of Transport in relation to the 1995 Disability Discrimination Act. The response will follow consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Panel.

**11. THE ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE (PREVENTION & REMEDIATION) REGULATIONS 2009**

The Panel has approved a report seeking authority to delegate appointed Officers to enforce the provisions of the Environmental Damage (Prevention and Remediation) Regulations 2009 and has endorsed a Memorandum of Understanding on partnership working drawn up to assist in the implementation of the Regulations.

The Regulations are primarily designed to ensure preventative or remedial action and place a liability on operators of activities that cause land, water and biodiversity damage that is likely to involve large scale incidents.

The Panel agreed that although the occurrence of these events is likely to be rare there is a need for Environmental Health staff to be suitably trained to deal with any required response.

**12. LICENSING AND PROTECTION APPLICATIONS SUB-GROUP**

The Panel has received the Minutes of the meeting of the Licensing and Protection Applications Sub-Group held on 10th November 2008.

**13 ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT 1990**

The Panel has agreed to delegate authority to the Head of Environmental and Community Health Services to declare two areas of land in the District as contaminated.

J M Sadler  
Chairman