

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Schedule of Fees and Charges

Meeting/Date: Licensing & Protection Committee - 17th October 2018

Executive Portfolio: Executive Councillor for Operations and Regulation – Cllr M Beuttell

Report by: Head of Community – Chris Stopford

Ward(s) affected: All

Executive Summary:

To acquaint Members with adjustments to fees and charges for licences and associated charges issued by the District Council effective from 1st December 2018 following legislative changes in Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licensing introduce 3yr licences for drivers and 5yr licences for Operators, along with changes to fees for Animal Welfare Licensing.

Recommendation:

It is recommended –

that the Panel notes the adjustments to fees and charges for licences issued by the District Council which come into effect from 1st December 2018.

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1. WHAT IS THIS REPORT ABOUT?

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the Panel with details of revised fees and charges for the 2018/19 for Taxi licensing service and Animal Welfare Licensing.

2. BACKGROUND

Taxi Licensing

- 2.1 The Local Government (Miscellaneous provisions) Act 1976 Part II and the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 permit for the charging of fees for the grant of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licences such fees should be set with the aim of full cost recovery of the service.
- 2.2 The Deregulation Act 2015, introduced April 2016 set a standard duration of Three years for driver licences and 5 years for Operator licences a review of the current fees charged.
- 2.3 This report arises from the need to look at new fees in detail to facilitate change from 1 year licences for operators and drivers to the move to 3 and 5 year licences respectively, however some additional charges have been reviewed and amended to reflect the real cost of issuing replacement badges and conducting DVLA checks.
- 2.4 As part of the new taxi licensing policy currently subject to committee approval it is proposed to introduce a Knowledge/ Competency Test, therefore a new fee for this is included in the report subject to adoption.

Animal Licensing

- 2.5 Animal Welfare has been licensed under a range of legislation all introduced independently over a number of years since the 1950`s. Areas covered include :-
- Animal Boarding
 - Pet Shops
 - Dog Breeding
 - Dangerous Wild Animals
 - Riding Stables
- 2.6 Central Government has now introduced new legislation bringing all parts of animal licencing under one new piece of legislation, namely The Animal Welfare Act 2018.
- 2.7 This new piece of legislation updates existing statute and clarifies the law on some areas that have been developing significantly over recent years such as the provision of day care for dogs.
- 2.8 The new legislation specifies that authorities must allow for licences to last for up to 3 years (currently annually) on a risk based approach following a formal inspection.
- 2.9 This change means that we as an authority need to review our current fees and charges to reflect the change and to ensure that our processes are aimed at full cost recovery.

- 2.10 All fees will be reviewed annually to ensure that cost recovery remains our key aim.

3. ANALYSIS

- 3.1 Fees and charges for functions and services undertaken by the Licensing section in respect of Hackney Carriage, Private Hire and Animal Licensing are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure full cost recovery.
- 3.3 In carrying out this review we have adopted a new model to calculate fees that reflects the service costs more effectively and allows a benchmark with other authorities.
- 3.4 The actual full year costs and income from fees will be monitored over a rolling two-year cycle in order to ensure they accurately reflect the cost of running the service.
- 3.2 Under the Council's Code of Financial Management, the Manager is responsible for reviewing and varying fees and charges annually within their remit, after consultation with the Executive Councillor and Chairman of the Panel. Consequently the revised Schedule of Fees and Charges attached at Appendix A is appended for information only.
- 3.3 All Council Fees & Charges are usually reviewed in the Autumn preceeding the financial year in question so decisions on Fees & Charges can be built into the budget preparation process.

3. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Fees need to be advertised and therefore may be challenged.

4. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The duties are already performed by existing staff within the Licensing Section.
- 4.2 For future year, all Fees & Charges will be determined as part of the normal budget setting process.

5 REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- 5.1 To make the Panel aware of the adjustments to fees and charges it is recommended –

that the Panel notes the adjustments to fees and charges for licences issued by the District Council which came into effect from 1 December 2018.

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Licensing and Protection Committee Fees and Charges

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Schedule of Fees and Charges.

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