

REPORT TO	DATE OF MEETING
GENERAL LICENSING COMMITTEE	24th February 2015

Report template revised July 2004



SUBJECT	PORTFOLIO	AUTHOR	ITEM
Taxi Licensing Fees & Charges	REGENERATION, LEISURE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES	Niky Barrett	7

SUMMARY AND LINK TO CORPORATE PRIORITIES

The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 contains provisions for a Licencing Authority to determine the fees it charges for taxi and private hire services.

Section 53(2) provides the mechanism for charging for Hackney and Private Hire Driver's badges, with section 70 providing for Hackney Carriage, Private Hire Vehicles and Private Hire Operators fees.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee consider the proposed fees and authorise Officers place the required public notice.

DETAILS AND REASONING

Recent cases have highlighted the need for the Licensing Authority to ensure that it keeps its fees and charges under review.

The Council's fees in respect of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing should be set with a view to recovering the costs of issue and administration. They cannot be charged to fund the costs of enforcement action against un-licensed drivers or vehicles.

A detailed review of the current level of fees charged by the Licensing Authority has been undertaken by officers in recent months, following a number of changes to way in which the Council delivers its licensing service. Appendix 1 is a list of the proposed fees.

If the Committee wishes to proceed with the new fee structure, a public notice must be placed in a local newspaper specifying a date (not less than 28 days from the date on which the notice is first published). If there are no outstanding objections to the fee changes by this date, they shall come into effect on that date. A copy of the notice it is proposed to place in the Lancashire Evening Post as part of this process is attached at Appendix 2.

If there are outstanding objections, the matter will have to be re-considered by Committee when it meets on the 14th April 2015. The level of fees to be charged then must be re-advertised (even if they have not been amended from the earlier decision) to take effect on a date set not more than 2 months after the first date advertised.

WIDER IMPLICATIONS

In the preparation of this report, consideration has been given to the impact of its proposals in all the areas shown below. A risk assessment has also been carried out. The table shows the implications in respect of each of these.

FINANCIAL	The move to changing from an annual renewal process to a new process of 3 years for Drivers Licences and 5 years for Operators Licences would result in a reduction in Taxi Licensing income of circa. £8,300 per annum based upon current licence renewals. This proposed reduction can be contained within the financial budget forecasts.
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LEGAL	If objections are received the matter must be reconsidered by the Committee in light of the objections. The process of consultation must be adhered to otherwise there may be grounds for a legal challenge.
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RISK	If this new charging scheme is not undertaken then the council may be subject to challenge and may have to repay backdated fees to the trade.
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THE IMPACT ON EQUALITY	None
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OTHER (see below)	
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<i>Asset Management</i>	<i>Corporate Plans and Policies</i>	<i>Crime and Disorder</i>	<i>Efficiency Savings/Value for Money</i>
<i>Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion</i>	<i>Freedom of Information/ Data Protection</i>	<i>Health and Safety</i>	<i>Health Inequalities</i>
<i>Human Rights Act 1998</i>	<i>Implementing Electronic Government</i>	<i>Staffing, Training and Development</i>	<i>Sustainability</i>

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Detailed costings