

## NON EXEMPT

### EAST HAMPSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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#### LICENSING COMMITTEE

21 November 2014

#### CHARGES FOR TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING FOR 2015/2016 Report of the Licensing Team Leader

**Key Decision: No**

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#### **1.0 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To consider the Charges for Taxi and Private Hire Licensing for the financial year 2015/2016.

#### **2.0 Recommendation**

That:

- 2.1 (a) That the charges as shown at Appendix I are approved for consultation;  
(b) That the necessary advertisement be placed; and  
(c) In the event that no representations are received in response to the consultation, the new charges be implemented for the financial year commencing 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015.

#### **3.0 Summary**

- 3.1 Licensing charges for Taxi and Private Hire were last reviewed in 2008/2009. It is intended that fees should be reviewed annually through an assessment of relevant costs. This is important to ensure that our fees are legally robust and that we have used a transparent methodology. East Hampshire District Council may only recover certain costs incurred in carrying out licensing functions as detailed in Section 53 and Section 70 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

The proposed fees seek to fully recover all relevant costs to the Council. The proposed fees are set out in Appendix I. The calculation of fees from an assessment of relevant costs are shown in Appendix II.

- 3.2 Any change to the charges for Vehicle and Operators licences has by law to be advertised in the local newspaper and any comments have to be considered at a subsequent meeting of the Licensing Committee.

## **4.0 Implications**

### **4.1 Resources:**

In arriving at the proposed charges, analysis of taxi/private hire licensing income/expenditure by the Council's Financial Team was undertaken.

A copy of the figures produced as a result of the analysis is shown at appendix II.

### **4.2 Legal**

The setting of fees for hackney carriage, private hire vehicle and operator licences is governed by section 70 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. The council may charge such amounts as are sufficient in the aggregate to cover the reasonable cost of carrying out vehicle inspections, the costs of providing hackney carriage stands and any reasonable administrative or other costs in connection with these activities and with the control and supervision of hackney carriages and private hire vehicles.

The Act sets a maximum fee of £25 for the grant of vehicle and operator licences or any such sum as the council may determine. If the council wishes to charge more than £25 or vary its existing charges, the council must publish details in at least one local newspaper specifying a period of not less than 28 days within which objections to the variation can be made. A copy of the notice must be available for inspection by the public during the 28 day period and if no objections are received, or any objections made are withdrawn, the variation shall come into operation on the date of the expiration of the period specified in the notice. If objections are made and not withdrawn, the council must consider those objections and set a further date, not later than two months after the first specified date, on which the variation shall come into force with or without modification as decided by the council, after consideration of the objections.

### **4.3 Strategy:**

The proposed fees brings East Hampshire District Council's fees into alignment with relevant costs which we can recover through fees. In the main this re-adjustment results in only minor changes in fees. However overall, most fees have been reduced. Re-assessing costs and fees is necessary to meet our strategic objective of achieving financial sustainability and public service excellence.

It is expected that our costs will be re-evaluated during the budget build for 2016-17 to further close any gap between income and costs. Furthermore, any surplus or deficit will be carried forward when reviewing future fees.

### **4.4 Risks:**

The fees proposed can be justified against a transparent assessment of our costs for administering this service.

An analysis of the effect in changing fees has been undertaken, comparing volume related income under current and proposed fees. This analysis can be seen in Appendix III. There is an estimated reduction in income of £600 from implementing the proposed fees.

#### 4.5 Communications:

The trade will be informed of the proposed fees via an advertisement which will be placed and should any comments be received, these will be referred back to the Licensing Committee on 13 January 2015. Once Committee have agreed the fees they will be reported to Cabinet for approval as part of the Budget Report to take effect from 1 April 2015.

We cannot charge fees until they are set by Cabinet at their meeting in February 2015.

#### 4.6 For the Community:

The community will be provided with a safe form of public transport funded through the fees proposed in this report.

### 5.0 Consultation

Public Consultation to follow agreement of the proposals in this report.

### 6.0 Appendices:

Appendix I – Proposed charges

Appendix II – Financial analysis figures

Appendix III – Effect of proposed charges in annual income

### Background Papers:

None

### Agreed and signed off by:

Legal Services: 7 November 2014

Finance: 11 November 2014

Relevant Executive Head: 10 November 2014

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