

NONEXEMPT

EAST HAMPSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

LICENSING COMMITTEE

14 August 2015

CHARGES FOR TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING FOR 2015/2016

Report of the Licensing Team Leader

FOR DECISION

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To consider a amendment to the Charges for Taxi and Private Hire Licensing for the financial year 2015/2016 as a result of the introduction of the Deregulation Act 2015.

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 commencing 1st October 2015.

3.0 Summary

- 3.1 Licensing charges for Taxi and Private Hire were last reviewed and agreed by Licensing Committee on 13 January 2015 for the financial year 2015/16.
- 3.2 The Deregulation Act 2015 enacted on 1st April 2015 introduced a standard length of 3 years for Driver's licences and 5 years for Operator's Licences.
- 3.3 Fees have been calculated in line with legislation in order to fully recover The Council's costs through offering these longer duration licences. The proposed fees are shown as Appendix I.
- 3.4 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.

Under current service volumes and fees, the Council can expect to receive an annual income of £34528 from issuing driver's licences, and £5200 from issuing Private Hire Operator's licences.

Using the current service volumes and proposed fees for the longer licence durations, the Council can expect to receive an annual income over three years of £75140 from issuing driver's licences, and £14080 over five years from issuing Private Hire Operator's licences.

Over the length of the licence, this equals an annual income of £25047 from driver's licences and £2816 from operators licences, a reduction in annual income of £11865.

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 introduction of a longer licence duration will reduce the burden on the licensed trade through having to renew licences annually and contribute to the Council's Strategic aims of public service excellence and economic growth. The proposed fees brings East Hampshire District Council's fees into alignment with relevant costs which we can recover through fees. Re-assessing costs and fees

is necessary to meet our strategic objective of achieving financial sustainability and public service excellence.

4.4 Risks:

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

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 25 September 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

Background Papers:

None

Agreed and signed off by:

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Finance: Jane Eaton/Simon Little, 3 August 2015

Relevant Executive Head: Andrew Pritchard, 5 August

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