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AYLESBURY VALE DISTRICT COUNCIL Democratic Services

Please ask for: Alice Fisher; afisher@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk;
Switchboard: 01296 585858
Text Relay Prefix your telephone number with 18001
30 December 2015

LICENSING COMMITTEE

A meeting of the **Licensing Committee** will be held at **10.00 am** on **Monday 11 January 2016** in **The Olympic Room, Aylesbury Vale District Council, The Gateway, Gatehouse Road, Aylesbury, HP19 8FF**, when your attendance is requested.

Contact Officer for meeting arrangements: Alice Fisher; afisher@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk;

Membership: Councillors: J Brandis (Chairman), M Hawsett (Vice-Chairman), P Cooper, A Harrison, A Huxley, S Lambert, T Mills, G Powell, S Renshell, B Russel and Sir Beville Stanier Bt (ex-Officio)

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES

2. TEMPORARY CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP

Any changes will be reported at the meeting.

3. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 4)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 2 November 2015 attached as Appendix A.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members to declare any interests.

5. FEES FOR RIDING ESTABLISHMENTS (Pages 5 - 6)

To consider the attached report.

Contact Officer: Peter Seal 01296 585083



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Agenda Item 3

Licensing Committee

2 NOVEMBER 2015

PRESENT: Councillor J Brandis (Chairman); Councillors A Huxley, S Lambert, G Powell, S Renshell and B Russel

APOLOGIES: Councillors M Hawkett, P Cooper, T Mills and Sir Beville Stanier Bt

1. TEMPORARY CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP

There were none.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2015 be approved as a correct record.

3. REVIEW OF FEES IN RESPECT TO LICENSES FOR ANIMAL RELATED PREMISES

The Council were responsible for licensing a number of animal related businesses, including catteries, riding establishments, pet shops, businesses which involved the breeding of dogs, the keeping of 'dangerous wild animals' and zoos. The licensing authority were allowed to set fees for each based on the cost recovery of delivering the service when issuing licences.

Fees had not been reviewed for a number of years and had only risen in line with inflation, which had been negligible. The current fee list had been attached as an appendix to the report.

In recent years licensing services had increasingly sought the assistance of vets whilst carrying out inspections and had, in some cases, had to pick up the financial burden this incurred. Resources had also been committed to a small number of problem premises.

Licensing services had undertaken a review of fees for all animal related licenses, and the proposed fees had also been attached as an appendix to the report. Fee calculations had taken into account each stage of the licensing process, from receipt and processing to inspection and issue, including routine visits. The use of vets had been reduced wherever possible. However, in some cases the law required a veterinary inspection on initial application and occasionally on renewal. Where a vet inspection was not required on renewal, the renewal fee reflected the reduction in cost to the Council. Dangerous Wild Animal and Zoo licences did not include vet fees, as their fees varied considerably dependent on the species and establishment. It was intended that the applicant pays the council's fee and in addition pays the cost of the veterinary inspection.

All premises license holders had been consulted and their responses relating to the fees were also attached as an appendix to the report.

The most notable change related to riding establishments. The present fee varied dependent on the number of horses; £275 plus £15 per horse/pony.

It was proposed that new riding establishments be charged £495 (including vets fees) and renewals be £395 (including vets fees) regardless of the number of horses or ponies kept.

However, the representation from Horses Helping People demonstrated an inherent unfairness to small establishments. Currently 18 such establishments were licensed by the council and under the new fee structure 5 would pay more than they currently did.

It was proposed that the new fee structure be implemented from 1 January 2016 with the exception of those relating to riding establishments. Almost all animal related licenses started from 1 January and ended on 31 December with the exception of riding establishments which lasted for 12 months from the date of issue and Dangerous Wild Animal and Zoo licences. Given the concerns relating to riding establishments, it was proposed to look at an alternative fee structure for them and bring this back to committee at later date.

RESOLVED –

1. That Members noted the review of fees relating to licences for animal related businesses and agreed the proposed fee structure as set out in the appendix to the report, with the exception of those fees relating to riding establishments; and
2. That a further report regarding fees for riding establishments be brought back to committee at a later date.

4. REVIEW OF FEES FOR SEX ESTABLISHMENT LICENSEES

At the meeting of full Council held on 1 December 2010, members agreed to adopt Schedule 3 to the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 291982 as amended by Section 27 of the Policing and Crime Act 2009 with effect from 1 September 2011. At that meeting the Licensing Committee were given delegated powers to determine applications for Sex Entertainment Venues Licences, formulate a policy, set fees and standard conditions and all other functions arising from the adoption of Schedule 3.

The Council already had the power to licence sex shops and sex cinemas. The decision brought Sex Entertainment Venues (e.g. lap dancing clubs) within the description of sex establishments.

The sex establishment policy, fees and standard conditions were agreed by the Licensing Committee in July 2011.

Since then only one establishment, Mirage in Aylesbury, had been affected by the new system. This operated as a nightclub at weekends and as a lap dancing club for a couple of days during the week. No other applications for sex establishments had been received since September 2011.

Although Aylesbury Vale District Council's Sex Establishment Licensing Policy, conditions and procedures remained fit for purpose, given recent senior court judgements and 4 years experience in implementing the regime it had been felt necessary to review the fees structure.

Fees could be limited only to cost recovery in respect of processing and determining of an application and any subsequent costs that arose. Unsuccessful applicants could also obtain a refund.

Prior to the current regime of processing applications for sex establishments, it had been assumed that applications would be significantly contested, which would result in considerable administrative time, the need for hearings to decide an application and possibly further appeal. Arising from all this a fee of £2020 had been arrived at to cover all costs.

As any applications for Sex Establishments could draw particular attention and scrutiny, it had been proposed to continue to charge the full fee for all new, transfer and variation applications. In relation to the existing premises it had been felt unfair to levy the full cost of a hearing in a renewal of a licence, however, the right was reserved to obtain this balance should a hearing be required.

It was proposed that any new, transfer or variation to a licence, if uncontested, would receive a proportionate, partial refund. An unsuccessful application would receive a smaller refund equal to the costs of compliance inspections.

The proposed fees list for 2016 had been attached to the report as an appendix.

RESOLVED –

That Members agreed the Licensing fees for Sex Establishment Venue Licenses as set out in the appendix to the report.

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LICENSING COMMITTEE

11.1.16

REVIEW OF FEES RELATING TO RIDING ESTABLISHMENT LICENCES

1 Purpose

- 1.1 For Members to agree the proposed changes in respect to Riding Establishment licence fees.

2 Recommendations/for decision

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| 2.1 That the Committee note the review of fees relating to riding establishment licences and agree the proposed fees as set out in paragraph 3.4. |
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3 Supporting information

- 3.1 Members will recall that in November 2015 Licensing Committee received a report on a review of fees relating to licences for animal related businesses. All proposed fees were agreed with the exception of those relating to riding establishments.
- 3.2 The original proposed fee for riding establishments was a generic fee based on the overall cost of providing the service and the number of existing premises. This approach was designed to simplify the fee structure and negate the need to calculate the fee for each premises. However during consultation a representation was received from the director of Horses Helping People who pointed out that it resulted in a significant increase in costs for her charity. Further examination revealed that 5 other licensed businesses would effectively pay more for their licence.
- 3.3 Given the inherent unfairness Members were asked to defer a decision on fees relating to riding establishments and their general views were sought. Members were in agreement that the fee should reflect the size of the establishment and the consequent work required to determine the licence and ensure compliance.
- 3.4 The costs of delivering this particular service have been reviewed based on practical experience, recently introduced efficiencies and establishing competitive charges with nominated vets. It has been possible to slightly reduce the fee. The existing fee is £275 plus £15 per horse. It is possible to cover the costs of running the service based on existing businesses by maintaining the £275 and reduce the cost per horse to £10.
- 3.5 All existing licence holders were consulted on this revised fee. Unsurprisingly only one response was received and that was from Debbie La-Haye. She was grateful for the reconsideration of fees, agreed it was fairer and acknowledged it reduced her costs. In accordance with best practice it is recommended that fees are reviewed periodically to ensure they are accurately set so that they cover the cost of maintaining the service and no more.
- 3.6 As with the current fee structure, if the number of horses used in the riding establishment increases during the term of the licence the licence holder will be required to pay the council an additional fee based on the number of

horses to be added to the licence. Any new horses brought into a riding school part way through the duration of the licence must also be inspected by our authorised vets at the expense of the licence holder.

4 Options considered

- 4.1 The fee proposed has been calculated to cover the cost of covering the licensing regime for riding establishments.

5 Reasons for Recommendation

- 5.1 This fee has not been reviewed in a number of years and due to efficiencies and operational changes it has been possible to slightly reduce the fee.

6 Resource implications

- 6.1 All costs will be recovered by the proposed fee.

Contact Officer	Peter Seal 01296 585083
Background Documents	None