

TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING; FEES AND CHARGES

1 Purpose

- 1.1 For Licensing Committee to consider objections received during the recent public consultation period on taxi and private hire licensing fees and charges and either agree the fees as proposed or vary them as they see fit. To authorise the Group Manager – Regulatory Services to implement the fees and charges.

2 Recommendations/for decision

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none">2.1 That Licensing Committee considers objections received during the consultation period on taxi and private hire licensing fees and agree the final fees and charges, with or without modification.2.2 In respect to vehicle and operator fees and charges that Licensing Committee recommend their approval by the appropriate Cabinet Member.2.3 That the Group Manager – Regulatory Services is authorised to implement the introduction of the proposed taxi and private hire licensing fees from the 1st June 2018. |
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3 Supporting information

- 3.1 The Council's taxi and private hire licence fees and charges have not been formerly reviewed for a number of years. However existing fee levels as a whole appear not to be wholly disproportionate. Existing taxi fees and charges are attached as Appendix 1.
- 3.2 Over the last two years taxi licensing has been subject to a number of changes relating to the introduction of new technology, some key decisions by the Council's Licensing Committee and significant changes in the law. Whilst the overall budget for hackney carriages and private hire, through diligent management, remains neutral it is prudent that the Council carry out a thorough review of fees and charges and agree them in accordance with the law. Following review the proposed taxi fees and charges are attached as Appendix 2.
- 3.3 The relevant legal provisions are set out in the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 ('the Act') and specifically Section 53 in respect to drivers and Section 70 in relation to vehicles and operators. Both the procedure and authorisation process in respect to Sections 53 and 70 are different. The setting of fees for drivers (Section 53), for example is delegated to Licensing Committee and there is no requirement to advertise any proposed fees. Fees for vehicles and operators (Section 70) is a Cabinet decision and there are more extensive implementation arrangements.
- 3.4 The implementation process is as follows:
 1. A notice must be published in a local newspaper stating the proposed fees.
 2. This must specify a date, not less than 28 days from the date on which the notice is first published. That date has 2 functions:
 - a) It is the date by which any objections must be lodged; and
 - b) It is the date on which the revised fees will come into effect if

- (i) no objections are received; or
- (ii) any objections received have been withdrawn.

3. If objections are received and are not withdrawn the Council must consider the objections. In the light of these objections the Council then sets a second date which cannot be more than 2 months after the first date specified when the new fees come into force.

If objections are received and not withdrawn Licensing Committee must consider them and agree the final fees with or without modification. If an alteration is required after consideration, the fees can be increased as well as decreased.

- 3.5 As required the statutory notice was published in the Bucks Herald newspaper for a 28 day period. The notice detailed the proposed date on which the fees and charges would come into effect if no objections were received (1st April 2018), and the date that fees and charges would come into effect were objections received and not withdrawn (1st June 2018).
- 3.6 During the 28 day consultation period responses/objections were received from 4 individuals. A summary of these with the Licensing Authorities response are attached in Appendix 3 to this report. Full copies of the objections received are available at Appendix 4. Where comments made were not relevant to the setting of taxi licensing and private hire fees and charges they have not been considered.
- 3.7 On the 17th April 2018 the summary of objections and responses document (Appendix 2) was sent to the 4 individuals who had taken the time to respond to the consultation along with information on the Licensing Committee process and this meeting date. To date no consultation responses have been withdrawn.
- 3.8 Attached as Appendix 5 to this report is another report complete with appendices relating to the setting of fees and charges for taxi and private hire licences. The report is comprehensive and self-explanatory and went before the Environment and Living Scrutiny Committee on the 19 December 2017.
- 3.9 Attached as Appendix 6 is a report that came before Licensing Committee on the 15th January 2018 recommending that the taxi and private hire licensing fees set out in Appendix 1 of the report be approved with effect from the 1 April 2018; and that the Group Manager – Regulatory Services be authorised to carry out the statutory consultation.

4 Options considered

- 4.1 None.

5 Reasons for Recommendation

- 5.1 The periodic review of taxi licence fees and charges is a legal requirement.

6 Resource implications

The cost of running the taxi and private hire licensing service, including the review of fees, is met by appropriate fees and charges.

Contact Officer
Background Documents

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Open for business: LGA guidance on locally set licence
fees