

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO LICENSING COMMITTEE

DECISION

Agenda Item No.

meeting date: TUESDAY, 29 NOVEMBER 2011
title: ANNUAL FEES AND CHARGES – HACKNEY AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENCES
submitted by: LEGAL SERVICES MANAGER
principal author: DIANE RICE

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To determine the annual fees for hackney carriage and private hire vehicle licences.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Council Ambitions - } The Council aims to be a well-managed Council providing efficient services based on identified customer needs. The fees charged for licences fund part of that service, and should reflect the costs incurred whilst being set at a reasonable level for licence holders.
- Community Objectives - }
- Corporate Priorities - }
- Other Considerations - }

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 The Council has power to charge for licences, subject to statutory provisions which both give rise to the power to charge and specify the way the charge for certain licences has to be calculated.

2.2 The relevant provisions are contained in the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

2.3 Section 53(2) is the relevant provision for:

- driver's licences for hackney carriages;
- drivers licences for private hire vehicles.

2.4 Section 70 is the relevant provision for:

- hackney carriage vehicle licences;
- private hire vehicle licences;
- private hire operator's licences.

2.5 Changes to the licence fees in respect of hackney carriage vehicles, private hire vehicles and private hire operator licences must be advertised in one newspaper, circulated in the local area 28 days before the change in charges takes effect.

2.6 The legislation provides that the fees should be set at a level which provides "such a fee as they consider reasonable with a view to recovering the costs of issue and administration". This is the basis upon which the fees were reviewed when the fee structure was last altered. There is no evidence to suggest the structure needs to be reviewed at this point provided increased costs are reflected in an inflation based uplift.

2.7 The Committee has, since it took responsibility for hackney and private hire licences, considered fees and charges at its final meeting of the financial year. However, in order to synchronise fee setting with the budget process, the decision by Committee has been brought forward, however the implementation date remains 1 April 2012.

2.8 The current fees for each type of licence are set out below:

<u>TAXI LICENSING CHARGES</u>	
PRIVATE HIRE & HACKNEY CARRIAGE	2011 from 1 April
	£
Driver's Renewal/Annual Licence	52.50
Temporary/Six month Licence	26.25
Replacement Driver's Badge	10.30
Vehicle Licences:	
ANNUAL – Up to 3 years old	147.25
6 MONTHS – Over 3 years but not exceeding 7 years	77.25
4 MONTHS – Over 7 years	55.50
Discount on previous Licence (1/12 th annual)	12.20 one full month
Transfer on Licence ownership	21.50
New or replacement:	
Plates	At cost plus 10%
Brackets	admin
Private Hire Operators Licence (From 1 December to 30 November) per annum for 5 vehicles or fewer, thereafter £10 per vehicle	136.00
Log books (100 sheets) each	1.40
Knowledge test – first one free then	6.50

3 ISSUES

3.1 In recent years licence fees have generally been uplifted annually in line with inflation. The Council is recommending uplifting the fees by reference to inflation (based on 3%) the annual fees (rounded up or down as most appropriate) for 2012 from 1 April would be as follows:

<u>TAXI LICENSING CHARGES</u>	
PRIVATE HIRE & HACKNEY CARRIAGE	2012 from 1 April
	£
Driver's Renewal/Annual Licence	54.00
Temporary/Six month Licence	27.00
Replacement Driver's Badge	11.00
Vehicle Licences:	
ANNUAL – Up to 3 years old	151.00

6 MONTHS – Over 3 years but not exceeding 7 years 4 MONTHS – Over 7 years	80.00 57.00
Discount on previous Licence (1/12 th annual)	12.60 one full month
Transfer on Licence ownership	22.00
New or replacement: Plates Brackets	At cost plus 10% admin
Private Hire Operators Licence (From 1 December to 30 November) per annum for 5 vehicles or fewer, thereafter £10.50 per vehicle	140.00
Log books (100 sheets) each	1.45
Knowledge test – first one free - paper - in person	7.00 14.00

3.2 The current fee for the Knowledge test has been reviewed. Applicants can choose between a written test, or a test where a member of staff goes out in the vehicle with the applicant and the test is verbal. However, this involves a member of staff spending up to one hour conducting the test. Hence the proposed difference in fee between the written or verbal test.

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- Resources – Committee must set fees at a level which reflects the Council's costs, however any surplus could be used to fund improvements to services and/or enforcement.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – N/A
- Political – N/A
- Reputation – N/A

5 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

5.1 Agree to set the current fees with effect from 1 April 2012, as shown at Table 2.

HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

For further information please ask for Diane Rice, extension 4418.