

LICENSING COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 24 March 2021 commencing at 5.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Clack (Chairman)

Cllr. Pett

Cllrs. Abraham, Dr. Canet, Coleman, Esler, Hunter, Layland, Parkin and Raikes

Cllrs. Osborne-Jackson were also present.

48. Minutes

Resolved: That the Minutes of the Licensing Committee held on 5 January 2021 be agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

49. Declarations of interest

For transparency, Cllr Raikes declared that he had been acquainted with one of the consultees through Sevenoaks Town Council.

50. Actions from the previous meeting

There were none.

51. Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing: Licence Fees and Charges 2021/2022

Members considered the report which proposed the 2.5% rise of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licence fees from April 2021 following the public consultation that received 6 comments as set out in Appendix A and B of the report.

Members discussed the proposed fees and expressed concerns for taxi drivers who had been financially impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. It was advised that the inflationary increase of 2.5% was proposed as the taxi licensing service was required to be self-financing.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That the proposed fees and charges as set out below be adopted with effect from 1 April 2021.

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FEES FOR 2021-2022 Hackney Carriage Driver Licence

| | Proposed Cost |
|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Knowledge Test | £51.50 per test |
| EQUO online test | £66 |
| Fee on initial application | £204 for three years |
| Total New Licence | £321.50 |
| On Renewal | £112 for three years |
| Total Renewal Licence | £112 for three years |

Dual Driver Licence

| | Proposed Cost |
|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Knowledge Test | £51.50 per test |
| EQUO online test | £66 |
| Fee on initial application | £204 for three years |
| Total New Licence | £321.50 |
| On Renewal | £112 for three years |
| Total Renewal Licence | £112 for three years |

Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence

| | Proposed Cost |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| New and Renewal Application | £244 for one year |

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Private Hire Operator Licence

| | Proposed Cost |
|--|----------------------|
| Initial application for 5 year licence | £530 for five years |
| Renewal for 5 year licence | £514 for five years |
| Initial application for 3 year licence | £364 for three years |
| Renewal for 3 year licence | £348 for three years |
| Initial application for 1 year licence | £200 for one year |
| Renewal for 1 year licence | £187 for on year |

Private Hire Driver Licence

| | Proposed Cost |
|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Knowledge Test | £51.50 |
| EQUO Online Test | £66 per test |
| Fee on initial application | £204 for three years |
| Total New Licence | £321.50 |
| On Renewal | £112 for three years |
| Total Renewal Licence | £112 for three years |

Private Hire Vehicle Licence

| | Proposed Cost |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| New and Renewal Application | £244 for one year |

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Additional Costs

| | Proposed Cost |
|---|---------------|
| DBS application | £40 |
| DBS administration fee | £50 |
| Change from Hackney Carriage to Private Hire | £78 |
| Change from Private Hire to Hackney Carriage | £99 |
| Replace Vehicle Plate | £26 |
| Replace Driver Badge | £11.50 |
| Vehicle test/re-test/partial re-test to be paid direct to the garage so not set by Sevenoaks District Council | |
| Change of Ownership of licensed vehicle | £77 |
| Copy of existing paper licence | £13.50 |
| Change of address details for a replacement licence | £13.50 |
| Change of name for a vehicle or operator licence | £13.50 |
| Change of name and address for a driver badge | £24 |
| Vehicle exemption certificate | £50 |
| General Admin Fee | £50 |
| Medical fee to be paid directly to GP or other medical practitioner | |

Replacement Vehicles

If a vehicle licence is surrendered within 6 months of issue, a refund of £60 will be issued.

If a licensed vehicle is replaced temporarily for up to 2 months because of damage to it then the fee will be £95 to licence the replacement vehicle.

Vehicle garage test costs will be taken separately (see fees above)

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52. Department For Transport Statutory Taxi & Private Hire Guidance Feedback and Subsequent Amendments to Policy

Members considered a report which set out amendments to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire policy, following consultation.

Following queries, Members were advised that data on refusals would be retained for 25 years on the National Register of Taxi and Private Hire Licence Revocations and Refusals (NR3) which was commissioned by the Local Government Association. Taxi licensing was exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, therefore background information retained on NR3 would be taken into account to assess the fit and proper status of a driver.

It was clarified that operators were not required to have the enhanced DBS checks but an annual basic DBS check. Should any operators also drive, they would be required to have the enhanced DBS check. Drivers would be encouraged to sign up to the online DBS service when they were next due their three yearly DBS check meaning it would take up to three years for all drivers to be signed up to the online service.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That

- a) responses regarding implementation of changes following issue of Department for Transport's Statutory Guidance as set out in Appendix A and B, be noted; and
- b) it be recommended to Council that the changes to the Sevenoaks District Council Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Licensing Policy shown as set out in Appendix C, be approved.

53. Work Plan

The work plan was noted with the addition of an item on the Gambling Act 2005 - Gambling Policy Statement at the next meeting on 17 June 2021.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 5.39 PM

CHAIRMAN

