

## ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

<b>Meeting:</b>	Licensing Board
<b>Date:</b>	13 February, 2013
<b>Title:</b>	Licensing Service – Proposed fee increase
<b>Directorate:</b>	Neighbourhood and Adult Services

### 5. Summary

This report outlines the proposed licensing fee increases to be effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013.

### 6. Recommendations

- (i) That Members approve the proposed fee structure for non-statutory licensing fees at the rate of increase indicated.
- (ii) That Members direct officers to undertake the necessary consultation with the hackney carriage and private hire trade associations and place a notice in the local press outlining the proposed fee increases in relation to Private Hire/Hackney Carriage Vehicles and Private Hire Operators.
- (iii) That a further report be presented for consideration and determination of the private hire/hackney carriage vehicle and private hire operator fees to the Licensing Board held on 10 April 2013 following the end of the consultation period.

### 7. Proposals and Details

The proposed increase in licensing fees reflects the direct costs involved in maintaining the current level of administrative and enforcement services. The increase is necessary to ensure the cost of delivering services is met within budget.

The increase represents a 2.7% (rounded up/down to the nearest pound) increase in fees commencing in the financial year 2012/13. This is in line with most recently published CPI figure in December 2012.

The fees for administering the Licensing Act 2003 are not included as they are set by central government and are standard throughout the country. However there is a change to the legislation via the Police, Crime and Social Responsibility Act which will come into force at some point in 2013 which will allow the local authority to set the fees based on full cost recovery. Members will be asked to consider a report on this when more is known about the exact date of implementation.

The fees outlined in Appendix A are those that it is proposed to increase by 2.7% (rounded up/down to the nearest pound).

## **Vehicles**

In relation to Private Hire/Hackney Carriage Vehicles the testing is carried out by Translinc who have yet to indicate what their increased charges will be. They will be inline with the Motoring RPI Index and these increases will be passed directly onto the trade.

## **Sex Establishments**

The fee for this licence has not been subject to the increase of 2.7% as a report outlining changes to the proposed licensing of these premises including fee structure will be brought to Licensing Board sometime in 2013.

## **General**

We are currently working on procedures within the office including administrative procedures which will require a full costing out of how much it costs to process particular applications. This is quite a lengthy process and needs to be very thorough in order to avoid any possibility of a legal challenge. Indications are that particularly in relation to driver applications the true cost of processing appears to be much higher than the increases proposed.

Due to the current economic climate these types of fee increase are not being proposed, however members may be requested to review such fees in future.

## **8. Finance**

Local Authorities can only set fee levels (where they are non-statutory and not prescribed) which are reasonable and proportionate to the costs incurred in providing a licensing service, in terms of administration processes and enforcement responsibilities.

## **9. Risks and Uncertainties**

Failure to recover an appropriate level of revenue from licensing fees would result in the cost of service provision being greater than the income received. This would mean the service could not be delivered in budget which could lead to a reduction in the levels of services provided, especially in terms of enforcement.

## **10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

Failure to recover funding sufficient to meet the costs of the service could result in the section failing to deliver its statutory functions. The setting of fees, as part of the budget setting process, forms part of the Councils Service and Financial Planning framework which supports the delivery of cost effective and efficient services.

The setting of fees as part of the budget setting process is consistent with the Corporate Plan's cross cutting themes of sustainable development and fairness as it ensures the delivery of a cost effective licensing service. It also ensures that the Council continues to maintain its statutory functions and undertakes enforcement to support the delivery of safe and sustainable communities in Rotherham.

## **11. Background Papers and Consultation**

Consultation will take place with the private hire and hackney carriage trades will take place in relation to the setting of the fees for vehicles and operators only. Any comments received will be submitted in a report to Licensing Board on 10 April 2013.

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APPENDIX A

**Rotherham Borough Council – Proposals for Licensing Fees 2013/14**

**Fees proposed to increase by 2%  
(rounded up to nearest £)**

(i) Private Hire/Hackney Carriage Licensing

	<u>Present Fees</u>	<u>Proposed Fees</u>
<b>Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Drivers</b>		
1 to 3 years	£150	£154
Up to 1 year	£ 82.00	£84.00
Knowledge Test	£16.00	£17.00
DVLA Record Check	£10.00	£10.50
Replacement Badge	£18.00	£19.00
Criminal Records Bureau Enhanced Disclosure	£44.00	£44.00

**Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Vehicles**

Application Fee (vehicles under the age of 5 licensed for 1 full year)	£109.00	£112.00
Application Fee (vehicles over the age of 5 licensed for 6 months)	£54.50	£56.00

**Inspection Fees – charged by Translinc – 1.7% increase (rounded up to nearest pound  
Fee**

New Applications/Renewals/Replacement Vehicles Including issuing of MOT Certificate where applicable	£78 (£77 in 2012/13)
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6 month test (old intermediate) £66 (£65 in 2012/13)

Missed Appointment £50 - **unchanged**  
(unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated)

Full Retest £78 (£77 in 2012/13)  
(where use of smoke meter/brake tester/headlight beam tester is required)

Partial Retest £37 - **unchanged**  
(all items except those which are identified as free within VOSA Guidelines)

Vehicle Plates £31.00 £32.00  
**(vehicles under the age of 5 licensed for 1 full year)**

Vehicle Plates £15.50 £16.00  
**(vehicles over the age of 5 licensed for 6 months)**

Transfer of Vehicle Licence £41.00 £42.00  
(from one owner to another)

Approval of trailer for attachment to vehicle £36.00 £37.00

Approval of advertisement £37 per advert £38 per advert

Hackney Carriage Door Sign £6.00 £7.00

### **Private Hire Operators**

1 to 3 vehicles	£138	£142
4 to 20 vehicles	£185	£190
21 to 40 vehicles	£438	£449
Over 40 vehicles	£644	£661

	<u>Present Fees</u>	<u>Proposed Fees</u>
<b>Miscellaneous</b>		
Copy of Licence	£18.00	£18.50
Request for Information from File		£10 as per DP Act 1998 per request
<b>Other Licences/Registrations</b>		
(ii) Approved Premises (Marriages/Civil Partnerships) (3 years)	£1500	£1539
Transfer	£30.00	£31.00
Variation	£275	£286
(iii) <u>Small Bus Permits</u>	£ 23.00	£24.00
<u>Sex Shops</u>	£7635	£7635
(iv) <u>Motor Salvage Operators</u>		
3 year Registration Grant/ Renewal	£98.00	£100.00
Certified Copy of Register (each copy up to a max of 5)	£15.00	£15.50
Copy of Database	£9.00	£9.50

Public Access to Register

Free

Free

**Other Miscellaneous**

Photocopying

£0.25 per sheet

£0.26 per sheet

