



Ward: All in Worthing

Key Decision: No - Not Executive

Approval of Licensing Fees 2024/25

Report by Director for Sustainability & Resources

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 Licensing Fees should be set by the Licensing Committee as it is not an executive function of the Council.
- 1.2 Councillors are asked to note that one response was received following the Council placing a notice in a local newspaper setting out the changes to the vehicle and operator fees and inviting representations on those changes within 28 days.
- 1.3 The Licensing Committee is requested to recommend to Council that it formally ratifies the fees.

2.0 Content

- 2.1 The Committee approved the fees and charges on 27th November 2023 and it was agreed that the Council would place a notice in a local newspaper setting out the changes to the vehicle and operator fees and invite representations on these.
- 2.2 One representation was received following the advertisement in the local newspaper.
- 2.3 The representation raised concern regarding the fee increase given the economic circumstances. They noted the increase in fees last year and highlight that a further increase seems quite burdensome. They request that consideration is given to a more gradual or moderate increase to fees be considered.

- 2.4 The proposed fee increases can be seen at Appendix 1 for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire. The yearly increases for hackney carriages and private hire vehicles respectively are £16.50 (5.37%) and £15.50 (5.9%) respectively and three year driver licences have increased by £9.00 (3.19%). Prior to last year there had been no review in fees for a number of years and following an increase in costs the summary account has resulted in a net budget deficit of £60,944 which is required to be recovered. Summary account information can be found at Appendix 2.
- 2.5 The proposed fee increases are considered to be moderate and it is anticipated that without the fee increase the net deficit will increase meaning that the taxi licensing service is not operating on a self financing, year-by-year basis. The Council has the discretion to set fees for these services on a cost recovery basis with appropriate adjustments for any over or under spend from the previous year. In the event that any one of these best estimates proves to be too wide of the mark revised fees will be calculated in order to comply with the statutory requirements and these would be brought back to the Licensing Committee.

3.0 Legal

- 3.1 Licensing fees must be charged in accordance with the requirements of the particular legislation and the relevant caselaw.

4.0 Financial implications

- 4.1 Setting of discretionary fees and charges is delegated to the Head of Service in consultation with the Head of Finance and the Licensing & Control Committee.
- 4.2 The proposed change to fees set out in Appendix 1 is expected to result in a small increase in annual discretionary fee income compared to 2023/24. This is in line with the inflationary increase to the budget and with the intention of beginning to recover the net budget deficit outlined at paragraph 2.4.

5.0 Recommendation

- 5.1 Note that one response was received following the Council placing a notice in a local newspaper setting out the changes to the vehicle and operator fees and inviting representations on those changes within 28 days.
- 5.2 Having considered the response and the current financial situation of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire summary account that the Licensing and Control Committee continue with the proposed fees.
- 5.3 The Licensing and Control Committee is requested to recommend to Council that it formally ratifies the Licensing Fees in Appendix 3 and that they shall come into effect on 1 April 2024

Background Papers:

[Open for business LGA guidance on locally set licence fees](#)

[Worthing Licensing and Control Committee 27th November 2023 Agenda and Minutes](#)

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Worthing Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Fees 2024/25

Appendix 2 - Worthing Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Summary Accounts

Appendix 3 - Worthing Licensing Fees and Charges

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Schedule of Other Matters

1.0 Council Priority

1.1 Matter considered and will have a positive impact on Council Priorities.

2.0 Specific Action Plans

2.1 Matter considered and no significant issues identified.

3.0 Sustainability Issues

3.1 The proposal will result in a reduction in use of natural resources.

4.0 Equality Issues

4.1 Matter considered and no significant issues identified.

5.0 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)

5.1 Matter considered and no significant issues identified.

6.0 Human Rights Issues

6.1 Matter considered within the body of the report.

7.0 Reputation

7.1 Matter considered within the body of the report.

8.0 Consultations

8.1 Matter considered and no consultation requirements identified

9.0 Risk Assessment

9.1 Matter considered and no significant issues identified]

10.0 Health & Safety Issues

10.1 Matter considered and no significant issues identified

11.0 Procurement Strategy

11.1 Matter considered and no significant issues identified

12.0 Partnership Working

12.1 Matter considered and no significant issues identified