

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Customer, Democratic and Legal Services	Licensing & Safety Committee	22/11/06

ANNUAL REVIEW OF LICENCE FEES

PURPOSE OF REPORT`

1. To present to members, proposals for implementing the annual review of fees for the year 2007/8.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

2. This report is relevant to one of the following key priorities of the Council, ie our customers and our capacity to deliver.
3. Fees must be reasonable and should be sufficient to cover the costs involved but the impact of any increase upon the livelihood of those affected has to be taken into account. The aim is to increase fees by approximately 3% in line with inflation for the next financial year in order to maintain the standard of service.

RISK ISSUES

4. The issues raised and recommendations made in this report involve risk considerations in the following categories

Strategy		Information	
Reputation		Regulatory/Legal	
Financial	4	Operational	
People		Other	

5. It is important that when setting the level of fees, the cost of administering the Licensing Section is covered.

BACKGROUND

6. Licensing fees were last increased on 11 May 2006.
7. Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle fees have previously been reduced for wheelchair accessible vehicles as an incentive to operator and drivers to use accessible vehicles. It is suggested that this continues in respect of 12 month licences until legislation dictates that all hackney carriage vehicles must be wheelchair accessible.
8. In addition a surcharge of £77 was levied in the previous two financial years to recover the cost of the "unmet demand" survey which was the subject of a previous report to this Committee. This will be the last instalment of the surcharge.

9. There is a requirement for all Criminal Records Bureau checks to be renewed every three years and we are required to set in place a procedure for renewal of these checks. To cover the cost payable to the CRB of £36 per check "taxi" fees have additionally been increased to cover the cost of a rolling programme of renewals (it is anticipated that 52 CRB checks will be carried out during this financial year)
10. It has been noticeable that a number of applicants for driver's licences have made appointments for knowledge tests before they have an understanding of what is required. Knowledge tests take an average of 45 minutes and badly prepared applicants waste a considerable amount of officer time.
11. To address this problem the knowledge test part of the driver's fee has been taken out of the application fee and it is proposed that a separate fee is charged with an additional fee if a re-test is needed.
12. Certain fees are set by statute and cannot be increased by this Committee, these include premises and personal licences and other related licences under the Licensing Act 2003, Lotteries and Gaming Machine Permits.
13. The Gambling Act will take effect during this financial year and at this time the fee levels have not been set by Government. It is not certain at this time what effect this will have on the licensing budget.
14. A comparison chart of other neighbouring authorities is attached to assist the Committee in reaching a decision.
15. The proposed increase in fees must be advertised and any representations must be considered by this Committee.

COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES

16. Not applicable

COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

17. The proposed increase in fees outlined in the report for Hackney and Private hire vehicles is in line with the provision made for 2007/8. As the £77 surcharge has been previously agreed for a three year period, it is recommended that this charge remains to cover the cost of the survey.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

18. That members consider adopting the new licence fees as set out in the table accompanying this report.

ANDREW DOCHERTY
DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMER, DEMOCRATIC AND LEGAL SERVICES

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Keith Ogden	5163	20 November 2006	LEGREP/93698LM

	CHORLEY (Existing)	CHORLEY (Proposed)	BOLTON	SOUTH RIBBLE	PRESTON
Hackney Carriage 12 months	£392.00 * +	£404.00 * +	—	£206.00	£85.00 new £89 renewal
Hackney Carriage 6 months	£206.00 +	£212.00 +	£94.00		
Hackney Carriage 4 months	£142.00 xx +	£150.00 xx +	—		
Private Hire Vehicle 12 months (new)	£200.00	£210.00	—	£180.00	£92.00
Private Hire Vehicle 12 months (renewal)	£190.00	£200.00			£78.00
Private Hire Vehicle 6 months (new)	£115.00	£120.00	£94.00		
Private Hire Vehicle 6 months (renewal)	£105.00	£110.00			
Private Hire Vehicle 4 months	£72.00 xx	£80.00 xx			
Private Hire Operator 12 months	1 vehicle £200	1 - 5 vehicles £250	1 vehicle £130	£160.00	1 - 5 vehicles £196
	2 - 5 vehicles £232	6 - 10 vehicles £300	2 - 5 vehicles £216		6 - 19 vehicles £215
	6 - 10 vehicles £280	11 + vehicles £350	6 - 10 vehicles £310	Fees	20-49 vehicles £233
	11 + vehicles £315		11-15 vehicles £410	unchanged	50-74 vehicles £265
			16-20 vehicles £479	from	75+ vehicles £318
			21-25 vehicles £590	April	
			26-30 vehicles £681	2003	
		31-35 vehicles £773			
Drivers Badge 12months Grant	£59.00 including knowledge test	£45.00 + £20 for knowledge test	£121.00	£47.00	£57+ £20 for knowledge test
Drivers Badge Renewal	£42.00	£45.00	£36.00		

+ Plus surcharge of £77 to cover cost of survey

* Reduced by £40.00 in respect of wheelchair accessible vehicles

xx Only applicable for vehicles over 8 years old