

LICENSING COMMITTEE

11 January 2017

Present: Councillor K Crout (Chair)
Councillor J Fahmy (Vice-Chair)
Councillors S Bolton, J Connal, A Dychton, K Hastrick, M Hofman,
Ahsan Khan, B Mauthoor, M Mills, A Rindl, G Saffery and
D Scudder

Officers: Environmental Health and Licensing Section Head
Environmental Health Manager (Commercial)
Senior Licensing Officer (AY)
Licensing Enforcement Officer
Senior Solicitor
Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer (AG)

8 **Apologies for absence/ committee membership**

Apologies were received from Councillors Laird and Turmaine.

9 **Disclosure of interests (if any)**

There were no disclosures of interest.

10 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2016 were submitted and signed.

11 **Licensing fees and charges 2017/2018**

The Committee received a report of the Head of Community and Customer Services. The Environmental Health Manager introduced the report. He outlined the recommendations for consideration by the committee and the role of the committee in setting the fees and charges.

The Environmental Health Manager discussed the 28 day consultation period, the general principles in setting fees, the Hemmings v. Westminster City Council case and clarifying how fees would be charged separately 'on application' and 'on grant' (an addendum, outlining the new fee structure, was circulated to members). He also discussed how licensing costs had reduced (although some costs in enforcement had risen) and how the council's fees compared to other Hertfordshire local authorities.

In response to questions from members, the Environmental Health and Licensing Section Head and Environmental Health Manager:

- Advised that if an application failed, the applicant would lose the application fee.
- Clarified that the drivers licence fee cost £325 (plus a fee of £52 for a Disclosure and Baring Service check).
- Explained that it would not be possible at this time to quantify whether the new 'on application' and 'on grant' fee processes would add to administration costs. They were looking at ways to reduce the burden on officers – and would monitor over the coming year and report back to the committee.
- Advised how the increase in fees for private hire operators had been calculated. These licenses were current for 5 years; hence the cost was spread over this period.
- Informed the committee that they were confident with the revised charges for taxi licences – it had only been necessary to amend fees in this category and not in respect of other types of licenses.
- Explained that it was hoped that 'on-line' systems would reduce fees over time; such as by the use of the 'I Apply' application. Consequently, if there were no additional enforcement costs over the next year, there could be a reduction.

RESOLVED that –

1. the fees and charges set out at appendix 1 for the financial year 2017/2018 be approved.
2. authority to consider any objections arising from statutory notices pertaining to these fees and the final determination of the fees relating to those objections be delegated to the Head of Community and Customer Services in consultation with the Chair of Licensing.
3. to delegate to the Environmental Health and Licensing Section Head the authority to increase or decrease charges in respect of provision of:
 - Compulsory door signage for hackney carriages.

- Disclosure and Barring Service, and Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency, checks.
- Licence badges and plates.

Chair
Licensing Committee

The meeting started at 7.30 p.m.
and finished at 7.50 p.m.