

Item

ANNUAL REVIEW OF LICENSING FEES AND CHARGES - 2019/20



To:

Licensing Committee

28 January 2019

Report by:

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Wards affected:

All

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Cambridge City Council, as the Licensing Authority, is responsible for processing and issuing licences for a wide range of activities.
- 1.2 The Council needs to demonstrate that the fees it charges for such licences have been set in accordance with the law and best practice, so as to recover its allowable costs in administering the various licensing regimes for which it is responsible.
- 1.3 Fees should be set so as to avoid either a surplus or a subsidy where possible and adjusted, if necessary, in succeeding years to achieve and maintain the correct balance.
- 1.4 This report sets out the revised fees and charges for licences and associated items, which it is proposed should be made with effect from 1st April 2019. The approved charges will be submitted to Full Council to note on 21st February 2019.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are recommended to approve the level of fees and charges with effect from 1st April 2019, as set out in Appendix A of this report, and to request officers to communicate the charges to the businesses, taxi trade and public.

3. Background

- 3.1. Cambridge City Council is required to review any charges which it makes for licences and other associated items, from time to time. Council policy provides that an annual review of these fees and charges will be undertaken.
- 3.2 The Council must seek to recover the costs associated with processing applications for licences as well as the administration and monitoring of compliance with conditions. The fees charged should be capable of withstanding legal challenge, should the need arise.
- 3.3 It is not permitted to make a surplus, nor to subsidise, licence holders, and so where necessary fees are adjusted in succeeding years to achieve and maintain the correct balance.
- 3.4 The cost to the Council of this work is regularly checked and real time costs are used in compiling the figures. Where it is possible to reduce costs by use of more efficient working this is reflected in the charges made.
- 3.5 A recent review of the legal opinion, has confirmed that decisions regarding the Licensing Fees and Charges are for the Licensing Committee to consider.
- 3.6 The proposed charges for 2019/20 are set out in Appendix A.
- 3.7 Where changes to fees are indicated, these have been made with specific reference to the costs involved in the work required, rather than on the basis of a standardised approach.

Fees for Animal Welfare Licensing

- 3.7 The fees for the majority of Animal Welfare Licensing were adopted by Licensing Committee on 1st October 2018, following on from the Animal

Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018 taking effect on 1st October 2018. There has been no change since this time and so fees falling under this legislation are not due to be increased.

- 3.8 In contrast the fees for both zoos and dangerous wild animals have not changed regime and have increased by 2%, in line with the rate of inflation.

Fees for Skin Piercing Registrations and Sex Establishment Licensing

- 3.8 Fees for skin piercing practices and sex establishments have increased by 2%, in line with the rate of inflation. No change in the processing or monitoring of these licences and registrations is planned for next year.

Fees for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licensing

- 3.9 For the majority of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licensing fees, there is an increase due to the rate of inflation which has been applied to staff salaries. A significant amount of work has been undertaken with Business Process Re-engineering and it is proposed that, when the changes are implemented, monitored and reviewed, there may be efficiencies in processes.
- 3.10 The charge for the DVLA Data Check, which has remained static since 2015, has increased in line with the charges made by the third party company that undertakes this work. The City Council had been undercharging on this item for the past twelve months and, whilst is not seeking to recover these costs retrospectively, will be charging the correct amount from 1st April 2019.
- 3.11 In the consultation undertaken, the current fee for a change in vehicle ownership was incorrectly stated as £80 (rather than £70); as such a 2% rise would have meant a proposed fee of £82. The correct fee is currently £70 and hence with a rise in line with inflation means it will be £72.

Fees for licences and permits issued under the Licensing Act 2003

- 3.12 Fees for licences issued under the Licensing Act 2003 are currently fixed by central government and are included for information only. Cambridge City Council is not permitted to deviate from these figures.

Fees for licences and permits issued under the Gambling Act 2005

3.14 Fees for permits issued under the Gambling Act 2005 are currently fixed by central government and are included for information only.

Cambridge City Council is not permitted to deviate from these figures.

3.15 In contrast licences issued under the Act are subject to maximum levels as laid down by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport. Having reviewed these fees there are no proposed changes.

3.29 Fees for street trading licences

3.30 City Centre Management administer the fees for street trading licences. The current fees have been reviewed and officers have confirmed there are no proposed changes to the street trading pitch licences for 2019/20

4. Implications

(a) Financial Implications

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The charges are set to recover the Council's allowable costs.

(b) Staffing Implications

Nil.

(c) Equality and Poverty Implications

Nil.

(Text).

(d) Environmental Implications

Nil.

(e) Procurement Implications

Nil.

(f) Community Safety Implications

Nil.

5. Consultation and communication considerations

- 5.1 Under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, the Council is required to consult on any changes to the fees and charges in respect of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licensing.
- 5.2 A 28 day public consultation took place from 26th October 2018 to 22nd November 2018. All licence holders received a copy of the letter attached as Appendix B. The consultation was also advertised by public notice in Cambridge News in addition to being posted on the Cambridge City Council Taxi Licensing Facebook page.
- 5.3 No responses were received to the consultation.

6. Background papers

Background papers used in the preparation of this report:

- (A) Calculation Spreadsheets

7. Appendices

- (A) Table of Proposed Fees and Charges 2019-2020
- (B) Fee Setting Letter to Taxi Licence Holders

8. Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact: Karen O'Connor, Team Manager (Commercial & Licensing), tel: 01223 - 457083, email:

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