

LICENSING COMMITTEE

27 January 2020

10.30 - 10.45 am

Present: Councillors Bird (Chair), Massey, McPherson, Moore, Page-Croft and Sargeant

Officers

Environmental Health Manager: Yvonne O'Donnell

Team Leader (Environmental Health and Licensing Support): Wangari Njiiri

Legal Adviser: Shirley Tracey

Committee Manager: James Goddard

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

20/1/Lic Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Gehring, McQueen, Pippas and Thittala.

20/2/Lic Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

20/3/Lic Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 September 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

20/4/Lic Public Questions

There were no public questions.

20/5/Lic Annual Review of Licensing Fees and Charges 2020-21

The Committee received a report from the Environmental Health Manager.

The report advised that Cambridge City Council (as the Licensing Authority) was responsible for processing and issuing licences for a wide range of activities.

The Council needed to demonstrate that the fees it charged for such licences had 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 was responsible.

Fees should be set to avoid either a surplus or a subsidy where possible and adjusted, if necessary, in succeeding years to achieve and maintain the correct balance.

The Officer's report set out the revised fees and charges for licences and associated items, which it proposed should be made with effect from 1 April 2020.

In response to Members' questions the Environmental Health Manager said the following:

- i. A number of fees were set nationally by Central Government. There had been suggestions these should be set locally not nationally.
- ii. Each element had its own cost centre. Officers reviewed costs for each process and what could be charged.
- iii. The Taxi Trade periodically submitted Freedom of Information requests regarding charges.
- iv. The Council had evidence as an audit trail to show the costs incurred to administer taxi licensing etc and so justify fees charged.
- v. The current precedent set through courts/case law was that licensing authorities could charge to ensure compliance (eg through inspections) but not for enforcement.
- vi. The Council kept fee costs unchanged this year. Officers were awaiting the outcome of the Wakefield Case to see if this had implications for future fees and training.
- vii. The Council complied with fee charges set out in current legislation. The Council reviewed fee charges annually. Depending on the outcome of the Wakefield case, fees may change in future.

The Committee:

Resolved (unanimously) to approve the level of fees and charges with effect from 1 April 2020, as set out in Appendix A of the Officer's report, and to request officers to communicate the charges to members of the public, businesses and taxi trade.

The meeting ended at 10.45 am

CHAIR

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