



ST HELENS
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Licensing and Environmental Protection Committee

29 April 2021

Report Title:	Licensing Fees
Cabinet Portfolio	Safer, Stronger Communities
Cabinet Member	Cllr Jeanie Bell
Exempt Report	No
Reason for Exemption	N/A
Key Decision	No
Public Notice issued	N/A
Wards Affected	All Wards
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Borough priorities	Ensure children and young people have a positive start in life	
	Promote good health, independence and care across our communities	
	Create safe and strong communities and neighbourhoods for all	X
	Support a strong, thriving, inclusive and well-connected local economy	
	Create green and vibrant places that reflect our heritage and culture	
	Be a responsible Council	

1. Summary

1.1 To seek Members' approval of the proposed Licensing Fees for 2021/2022.

2. Recommendations for Decision

2.1 Licensing & Environmental Protection Committee **is recommended to:**

i) Approve the introduction of the new fees.

3. Purpose of this Report

- 3.1 Sections 53 and 70 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 provide that the Council may adopt reasonable fees for the licensing of hackney carriage and private hire vehicles, drivers and operators, and may vary those fees in accordance with certain statutory provisions.
- 3.2 Any fees for hackney carriage/private hire driver's licences must be reasonable and should not exceed the cost of issue and administration of licences. The Council may charge fees for the grant of vehicle and operators' licences, including the reasonable costs of inspecting hackney carriage and private hire vehicles to determine whether a licence should be granted/renewed, the reasonable costs of supervision and control of hackney carriage and private hire vehicles, and the reasonable cost of providing hackney carriage stands (ranks).
- 3.3 The current hackney carriage and private hire licensing fees were adopted in March 2019 for the period April 2019 to March 2020. This followed consultation and a detailed review of relevant expenditure.
- 3.4 Due to the impact of the COVID19 pandemic fees for 2020/21 remained the same as 2019/20. St Helens licensed drivers who live and work in the Liverpool City Region have also recently been able to apply for two special grants to a total value of £300.

3.5 Proposed Fees

Fee Area	20/21 £	21/22 £	VAT
New Hackney Carriage / Private Hire Driver Licence (3 years)	195	195	OS
Renewal of Driver Licence (on or before expiry)	175	175	OS
Hackney Carriage / Private Hire Driver Licence (1 year)	88	90	OS
Renewal of Driver Licence (on or before expiry)	65	69	OS
Contract Drivers (3 year Licence) plus DBS & DVLA costs as advertised NB: This licence is free if licensed with St Helens.	55	60	OS
Replacement lost or damaged Driver Licence or Badge	25	25	OS
Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Enhanced Check	54	70	OS
*If subscribed to online service – (2 per year)	0	20	OS
Driver & Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) History Check (annually)	6	7	OS
Essential Skills Assessment	0	30	OS
Resit	25	30	OS
Essential Skills Assessment - Group Coaching Session (optional)	Na	42	OS
Essential Skills Assessment - 1:1 Coaching Session (optional)	Na	75	OS
12 months Hackney Carriage / Private Hire Vehicle Licence	265	265	OS
6 months Hackney Carriage / Private Hire Vehicle Licence	165	170	OS
Replacement Plate	14	14	OS
Replacement Plate Holder & Fittings Pack	21	21	OS
Internal Identification - Window Badge	11	11	OS
Replacement Vehicle Stickers (pack)	15	15	OS
Temporary Transfer	58	58	OS
Change to Personalised Number Plate	57	57	OS

Application for Commercial Advertising on Vehicle (administration fee)	45	45	7.50
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<u>Private Hire Operator (5 year licence)</u>			
Licence for 1 vehicle	600	600	OS
Vehicles (2-5)	925	925	OS
Vehicles (6-15)	1,399	1,399	OS
Vehicles (16-30)	1,820	1,820	OS
Vehicles (31-60)	2,247	2,247	OS
(61-100)	2,730	2,730	OS
101+	3,570	3,570	OS
Additional Premises	550	550	OS
Additional Name to Operator Licence	40	40	OS
<u>Private Hire Operator (1 year licence)</u>			
Licence for 1 vehicle	135	135	OS
Vehicles (2-5)	195	195	OS
Vehicles (6-15)	295	295	OS
Vehicles (16-30)	375	375	OS
Vehicles (31-60)	460	460	OS
(61-100)	570	570	OS
101+	730	730	OS
Additional Premises	550	550	OS
Additional Name to Operator Licence	45	45	OS
Solicitor and Road Traffic Accident written enquiry response (subject to approval of data release) - Hourly Rate (if applicable).	68	68	11.33
Administration Fee	45	45	7.50

4. Background/Reasons for the recommendations

- 4.1 Members will note there is limited change to the current licence fees and these have only been made in areas where it was deemed necessary. The licensed trade has suffered badly during the COVID19 pandemic and all authorities in the region lost approximately 20-25% of their drivers and vehicles.
- 4.2 These fees have been held or costed at a reasonable increase in order to stabilise the industry on its full return. With the country slowly returning to a more normal footing, it is anticipated that numbers within the industry will once again rise.
- 4.3 Members will note that the fees for DBS checks have increased, which is due to the increased work associated with this area and the requirement to complete two checks per year. Applicants have been advised in writing to move to the online DBS service which will make the required checks significantly cheaper.
- 4.4 Members will also note that a fee of £30 has been reintroduced for the Essential Skills Assessment. This is still considered to be a very reasonable fee, as other licensing authorities have imposed charges between £40-£50 per course. This is another area which is changing significantly, and the resources required to deliver these changes requires funding. The Government is asking Authorities to deliver more training courses so it is likely that further fees may be required when these courses come online.
- 4.5 Any change to taxi licensing fees for vehicle and operator licences under Section 70 of the Act must be advertised for a period of 28 days. The advertisement of intended fees was published in the St Helens Star on 1 April 2021 and all responses will be presented to the Committee for consideration.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 Members are recommended to grant approval to the Licensing Manager to introduce the revised fees for taxi licensing with immediate effect.

6. Implications

- 6.1 Legal Implications – The power to charge/vary fees is set out in Sections 53 and 70 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.
- 6.2 Community Impact Assessment (CIA) Implications - NA
- 6.3 Social Value - NA
- 6.4 Sustainability and Environment - NA
- 6.5 Health and Wellbeing - NA
- 6.6 Equality and Human Rights – NA
- 6.7 Customers and Resident – NA.

6.8 Asset and Property - Nil

6.9 Staffing and Human Resource - Nil

6.10 Risks - Nil

6.11 Finance – Fee calculations have been conducted on 2019 taxi levels similar to other authorities, as we are unable to gain an accurate picture of the future of taxi numbers. There is a risk that numbers may not return to pre-Covid levels which could result in a potential budget pressure of approximately £40,000.

6.12 Policy Framework Implications – NA

7. **Appendices**

7.1 None