

**REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT &
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

1 SUMMARY

The Committee has delegated powers to the Director to increase fees in line with inflation. The proposals in this report recommend an increase in excess of inflation for sex establishment licences.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is RECOMMENDED that the fee for an application for a sex establishment licence be increased from £1500 to £2000 (non-refundable), with a further £2000 (increased from £1600) payable on the grant of such a licence.

3 BACKGROUND

At the meeting of 30th November 2001, the Licensing Committee considered a report by the Director of Development and Environmental Services which, amongst other things, made the above recommendation. At that meeting, the Committee decided to defer the decision in order to enable the Director to submit further information regarding costs of administering such applications. This report seeks to provide the requisite information.

4 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

There are a variety of officers that are involved with the consideration of a sex establishment licence application before it reaches the Committee stage. In addition the Committee has indicated that it would prefer all such applications to appear before them for the purpose of determination.

The application initially arrives at the Department and reaches the Licensing Team, where it is receipted and consultation begins. The administration process with this type of application is particularly onerous, as there are a number of rules regarding the advertising of the application, which the Team ensure have been complied with. In addition, these applications tend to generate a large number of telephone calls, letters of objection and even petitions, all of which need to be answered and all valid objections then passed on to the applicant. These applications invariably generate media interest and enquiries from

elected members, all of which need to be responded to in full. These administration processes are estimated at around twelve hours per application – amounting to £425.

The consultation process is particularly wide with officers from at least three service areas in the Department being consulted, often resulting in visits as well as the submission of written reports to the Licensing Team. The consultation process necessitates at least six hours work per application and is estimated at £210.

The co-ordination of the political and legal aspects of the application necessitates substantial involvement of the Service Manager in the Food and Licensing Section. He will meet at least once with the Assistant Director and will also hold several meetings with the Licensing Officer and the City Secretary's legal team. He will also liaise with the media and elected members as necessary. It is estimated that this substantial amount of work by senior officers would amount to £1035.

The Committee tends to meet for an average of five hours per application and costs around £410 per hour, leading to a cost of £2050.

Finally, in the event of a licence being granted, there will be a need for ongoing monitoring which is estimated at a cost of approximately £240 per year.

These costs amount to a total of £4000.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The recommendations will more than fully take into account the costs to the City Council of administering such applications.

6 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Legal implications will be reported at the meeting.

7 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

None.

8 List of background papers other than published works or those disclosing confidential or exempt information

None.

9 Published documents referred to in compiling this report

Licensing Committee minutes dated Friday 30 November 2001,

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