

## REGULATORY AND APPEALS COMMITTEE 27 JULY 2009

<b>Title of paper:</b>	Hackney carriage and private hire licence fee increase	
<b>Director(s)/ Corporate Director(s):</b>	Michael Williams Corporate Director Community and Culture	<b>Wards affected:</b> All
<b>Contact Officer(s) and contact details:</b>	Jim Mortell 0115 9156543 <a href="mailto:jim.mortell@nottinghamcity.gov.uk">jim.mortell@nottinghamcity.gov.uk</a>	
<b>Other officers who have provided input:</b>	Ann Barrett 0115 9154526	
<b>Relevant Council Plan theme(s):</b>		
Choose Nottingham		X
Respect for Nottingham		X
Transforming Nottingham's Neighbourhoods		
Supporting Nottingham People		X
Serving Nottingham Better		X
<b>Summary of issues (including benefits to customers/service users):</b>		
<p>The increase in licence fees is primarily to :-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. allow sufficient funding to cover the cost of a PATRA trainee, who is providing administrative duties associated with the application process,</li> <li>2. continue with the Taxi Marshalling scheme to support hackney carriage operations investigate the possibility of introducing a 'text' pick up point and</li> <li>3. develop/expand a concierge system for private hire operations at pubs and clubs.</li> <li>4. the intention to increase licence fees will be advertised in a local newspaper allowing for any objections to the proposals to be submitted and considered before final determination.</li> </ol>		
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>		
<b>1</b>	To authorise the Corporate Director to advertise the proposed increase in annual licence fees as outlined in paragraph 1.4 for all applications submitted on, or after, Monday 07 September 2009.	
<b>2</b>	If any objections are received after advertising the proposals in recommendation 1 the Chair, Vice Chair and opposition spokesperson of this Committee be authorised to consider the objections and either ratify the increases proposed in this report, or modify the proposals as they believe appropriate and amend the date for implementation of the proposals as necessary.	

# 1 **BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The Taxi Licensing function is self financing and needs to cover any outgoing costs from licence fees. In order to cover the costs of utilising the services of a PATRA trainee and continuing the experimental Taxi Marshalling scheme, (which has been co-sponsored by the Business Improvement District (B.I.D.)) it is necessary to increase the licence fees for licences for hackney carriage/private hire vehicle, drivers and operators. The last increase in licence fees was in January 2007.
- 1.2 The Taxi Marshalling scheme, was introduced in December 2008 and has been received well by both the trade and the public. The scheme operates on a Friday and Saturday evening, although can be utilised to support events held in the City Centre on other days. The Marshalls are provided by Titan Security Ltd and are supported by use of Community Protection Officers (CPO's) on an overtime basis. The purpose of the scheme is to provide a secure and safe environment for passengers waiting for hackney carriages whilst ensuring that only the vehicles licensed to do so pick up at the ranks. It is proposed to investigate/develop a concierge service for private hire vehicles which will in essence be similar to the Taxi Marshalling scheme for hackney carriages, but tailored for pubs and clubs which choose to utilise the services of private hire vehicles. Similarly a texting service is to be investigated which will allow passengers to be picked up at a pre-designated point, allowing Officers patrolling the area to ensure that vehicles are licensed and responding to bookings made via an operator.
- 1.3 The Taxi Licensing Section is utilising the services of a Positive Action Training Recruitment Agency (PATRA) trainee to assist with the administrative function of the Section. The cost for a trainee is approximately £13,000 per year.
- 1.4 The existing licence fees are listed below, with the proposed licence fee being shown at the side of the existing fees. The annual licence fees are shown minus additional costs such as vehicle examinations, criminal record bureau checks, driver vehicle licensing agency checks, topography and drive assessments.

<b>Type of licence</b>	<b>Current fee</b>	<b>Proposed fee</b>	<b>% increase</b>
Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Drivers Licence (initial/renewal)	£80.00	£87.00	8.7
Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Vehicle Licence	£195.00	£210.00	7.6
<b>Private Hire Operators Licence</b>			
Between 1 – 24 vehicles operated	£300.00	£320.00	6.6
Between 25 – 74 vehicles operated	£1,500.00	£1,600.00	6.6
Between 75 – 124 vehicles operated	£2,500.00	£2,700.00	8.0
Between 125 – 199 vehicles operated	£3,500.00	£3,700.00	5.7

Between 200 – 274 vehicles operated	£4,500.00	£4,800.00	6.6
In excess of 275 vehicles operated	N/A (new band)	£6,000.00	N/A (new band)

## **2 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS (INCLUDING OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION)**

- 2.1 To cover the costs of operating the Taxi Licensing Service and to allow sufficient funding to continue with the Taxi Marshal scheme
- 2.2 Trade representative views have not been received at the time of the uploading of this report. Any comments received will be reported verbally at the meeting..

## **3 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED IN MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 Not continuing with the Taxi Marshal scheme was considered, but rejected as it is felt that the scheme has been very successful in operation and will compliment the Councils award of Beacon Status for 'After Dark: Managing the Nighttime Economy.'

## **4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING VALUE FOR MONEY)**

- 4.1 The cost of operating the Taxi Marshal scheme and subsequent investigations for a concierge/text service is expected to be in the region of £40,000. It is not possible to be more precise with the estimates as this will be the first full year of operation/investigations.
- 4.2 The anticipated additional income from the licence fee increase is expected to be approximately £50,000. although there may be additional income from new applications for vehicles/drivers/operators licences

## **5 RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES (INCLUDING LEGAL IMPLICATIONS, CRIME AND DISORDER ACT IMPLICATIONS AND EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS)**

- 5.1 It is believed that providing a safe and controlled waiting environment for private hire and hackney carriage customers will assist in reducing public disorder within the City Centre and also assist in preventing illegal plying for hire.
- 5.2 The Marshalling scheme for hackney carriages is operated by a combination of Community Protection Officers and Security Industry Association accredited Marshals provided by an external company.

## **6 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS OTHER THAN PUBLISHED WORKS OR THOSE DISCLOSING CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT INFORMATION**

- 6.1 None

## **7 PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS REPORT**

- 7.1 None

