

COMMITTEE:	GENERAL LICENSING COMMITTEE
DATE:	14 SEPTEMBER 2015
TITLE:	PROPOSED TAXI LICENSING FEES 2015
PURPOSE:	TO RECEIVE THE SUPPORT OF THE COMMITTEE REGARDING THE TAXI LICENSING FEES FROM 1 OCTOBER 2015
AUTHOR:	HEAD OF REGULATORY DEPARTMENT

1.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 1.1 The Council is required to review its fees in respect of taxi licensing (i.e. hackney carriage licences, private hire vehicle licences, private hire operator licence and driver licences) on a regular basis. This Committee decided on 24 June 2013 that taxi licensing fees would be reviewed annually.
- 1.2 Sections 53 and 70 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 provide that fees may be charged at a level sufficient to cover reasonable costs. **This Committee decided on 24 June 2013 that taxi licensing fees must be increased to achieve full cost recovery.**
- 1.3 Taxi licensing fees were increased by 25% in 2013 and were increased by 19.78% in 2014 to achieve full cost recovery.

2.0 FINANCIAL ASSESSMENT & PROPOSAL FOR 2015-16

- 2.1 The Treasurer's Department have calculated that the amount which the Council is permitted to recover the cost of providing the taxi licensing function in 2015/16 is £141,626.
- 2.2 The actual income from taxi licensing for 2014/15 was £127,848. There is therefore a projected income shortfall of £13,778 (£141,626 - £127,848) for 2015/16.
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| Recoverable costs | = | £141,626 |
| Income received | = | <u>£127,848</u> |
| Shortfall | = | £ 13,778 |
- 2.3 To achieve full cost recovery the fees must therefore be increased by 10.78%.
- 2.4 The full list of current and proposed fees is attached to this report. (See Appendix A.) Please note, not all fees are subject to the statutory consultation.
- 2.5 This Committee were informed on 22 June 2015 that a new fee structure would be necessary by 1 October 2015 as a result of the Deregulation Act 2015 and the introduction of 3 and 5 year licences.

3.0 CONSULTATION

- 3.1 The proposed fees have been consulted upon internally with the Head of Finance who supports increasing the fees to achieve full cost recovery.

- 3.2 A public notice was placed in the local press on 20 August 2015 and a copy made available for inspection in Siop Gwynedd Caernarfon, Pwllheli and Dolgellau in accordance with the statutory requirements. (See Appendix B.)
- 3.3 The consultation will come to an end on 17 September 2015.
- 3.4 In addition to the statutory requirements a copy of the public notice has been made available on the Council's website and the taxi trade were informed of the consultation by letter on 14 August 2015. A total of 505 letters were sent. The trade were reminded in this letter that there was an opportunity to submit formal representations during the consultation period. (See Appendix C.)
- 3.5 To date (07/09/15) the licensing unit have received one letter objecting to the fee increase. The writer objects to the further increase in fees. (See Appendix D.)
- 3.6 Based upon the response level to previous consultations regarding Taxi Licensing Fees, the Licensing Unit do not anticipate it will receive many further responses to this consultation.
- 3.7 The Head of Regulatory has considered the need to achieve full cost recovery for the service and the objection received. If any additional objections are received before the end of the consultation period they will also be taken into consideration.

4.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 That the Committee support the intention to increase the Taxi Licensing Fees to the levels shown in Appendix A, in order to achieve full cost recovery, before they are approved by Head of Regulatory for implementation from 1 October 2015.