

## **GENERAL PURPOSES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE – 10 FEBRUARY 2023**

### **FEES AND CHARGES FOR 2023-2024 - LICENSING SERVICE**

#### **1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1.1 That Members agree the recommended fees for the financial year 2023/24 as set out in Appendix A

#### **2. INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 As part of the annual review of budgets, decisions are required to agree any non-statutory fees and charges for the forthcoming financial year

#### **3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Council has a statutory responsibility for the administration and enforcement of a wide range of licences, registrations and permits. Many of these schemes allow the Council to charge a fee, payable by an applicant for a licence, permit or registration, in order to cover the costs of the administration of those licence types.
- 3.2 The key principle for setting Licensing fees, is that they should be reasonable and relate to the costs of performing the function, including staffing, administration, testing, inspections, hearings, regulation and appeals.
- 3.3 The basis in setting these fees is generally to ensure cost recovery, or as close to it as possible.
- 3.4 Fees are set under the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005 and the Council has no discretion in amending these. Gambling premises licence fees are capped and permit and lottery fees are fixed amounts. The fee regimes for both have not been revised since the implementation of both Acts in 2005 and 2007 respectively.
- 3.5 However, the Council is able to set fees for a number of other licence types; animal welfare (boarding breeding, riding and pet shops), Piercing (tattoo, acupuncture and skin piercing) and pleasure boats (boatmen and vessels), taxis (drivers, vehicles and operators), residential caravan sites and scrap metal dealers (site and collectors).

#### **4. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 4.1 The setting of discretionary fees for Licensing is not a Portfolio Holder decision and fees and charges must be formally approved by the Council's General Purposes and Licensing Committee before they may be implemented. In addition, any proposed increase to taxi licensing fees must be advertised and consulted on.
- 4.2 The taxi trade has experienced a number of financial pressures in the past few years with the effect of the pandemic, increase in fuel prices, higher insurance premiums and the recent cost of living rise. In May 2022, following consultation with the trade and the public, Members approved an increase in the taxi tariff fares. A comprehensive review is currently taking place of the taxi licensing policy which will include the consideration of the fee structure and therefore no further changes to the taxi and private hire fees are proposed until this work has been completed.

## **5. CONCLUSIONS**

- 5.1 Fees and charges have been increased in line with inflation where appropriate and to cover the cost of administering the licensing scheme. They will take effect from 1 April 2023.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Any financial implications have been reported for budgetary control and as part of the financial plan.

## **7. CRIME & DISORDER, ENVIRONMENTAL AND EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 None

## **8. APPENDICES**

Appendix A. Proposed fees for 2023/24

### **For further information contact:**

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### **Background Papers:**

None