

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET

4 December 2014

Report by Chief Officer – Legal & Procurement

CHARGING FOR SERVICES 2015/16

**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. The purpose of this report is to submit for approval the proposed licensing fees and charges for 2015/16.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

2. It is recommended that the Cabinet:-
- (a) Alters charges for 2014/15 in accordance with the table in Appendix 1. The increases are approximately 2% in line with inflation over the intervening period since the last increase; and
  - (b) For a 12 month period, delegate power to the Chief Officer (Legal and Procurement) or Principal Solicitor in conjunction with the Chair of the Licensing Committee to reduce Taxi and taxi related licence fees and charges, (if necessary and as directed by the Licensing Committee), to promote the use of wheelchair accessible vehicles for the purpose of meeting the Council's equality outcomes.

**BACKGROUND**

3. Fees and charges in respect of licensing service were last increased in 2012/13. The licensing section of legal services currently administers approximately 1,300 licences across various Civic Government and miscellaneous licensing categories. In terms of Civic Government legislation, the licensing service must recover all the costs of providing the service through the fees charged. This requirement ensures that council tax payers, through mainstream revenue budgets are not being asked to subsidise the service. However, total licensing income is not permitted to exceed the total cost of the service.

**REPORT**

- 4.
- (a) Legal Services has not received any adverse comments regarding charging levels. Options of temporary, 1, 2 and 3 year licences were recently introduced in order to reduce the burden of payment for applicants and the use of the one year licence has become popular, probably due to the reduced outlay for applicants.
  - (b) Licensing is a regulatory function of the Council imposed on it by various statutory provisions and as such, the Council is unable to choose whether or not to provide this service.

- (c) The purpose of licensing is to protect the public by regulating certain activities and making sure that those activities are carried out by appropriate persons in accordance with the terms of their licence.
- (d) As the licensing section has recovered its costs in full for the period 2013/14 it is recommended that no increase be made for 2014/15.
- (e) Overall, the service aims to balance all costs of licensing to maximise the utilisation of the staff, minimise costs and maximise service availability.
- (f) The Council's Equality Mainstreaming Report and Equality Outcomes 2013-2017 contain a specific Intermediate Outcome which aims to make wheelchair users confident of being able to hire a wheelchair accessible taxi at a fair cost when they need one. The Legal Services section is presently aiming to facilitate this through discussions and consultation which is ongoing. To allow some flexibility in achieving this, the Cabinet is asked to delegate power to the Chief Officer (Legal and Procurement) or Principal Solicitor in conjunction with the Chair of the Licensing Committee to reduce charges in respect of taxi related licences and charges. This delegation will be temporary for a 12 month period.

## **FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY**

5. It is anticipated that the changes applied at present will allow the Council to continue to recover the costs of licensing in full from licensing fees and charges. Legal Services continuing to update and seek efficiencies in licensing where appropriate.

## **IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSALS**

6. There are no implications in terms of staffing, property, legal, IT, equalities and sustainability.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

7. It is recommended that the Cabinet:
- (a) Alters charges for 2014/15 in accordance with the table in Appendix 1. The increases are approximately 2% in line with inflation over the intervening period since the last increase; and
  - (b) For the a 12 month period, delegate power to the Chief Officer (Legal and Procurement) or Principal Solicitor in conjunction with the Chair of the Licensing Committee to reduce Taxi and taxi related licence fees and charges, (if necessary and as directed by the Licensing Committee), to promote the use of wheelchair accessible vehicles for the purpose of meeting the Council's equality outcomes.

## **REPORT AUTHOR**

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## APPENDIX 1

### Charging Classification and Policy for 2015/16

	<b>Service</b>	<b>Current Charge 2014/15</b>	<b>Proposed Charge 2015/16</b>	<b>Proposal</b>
	<b>Licensing</b>			
1.	Taxi Operator's Licence 1 yr/(Temp) 2 yrs 3 yrs	£144 £289 £347	£147 £295 £354	change
2.	Taxi Driver's Licence 1 yr/(Temp) 2 yrs 3 yrs	£ 83 £167 £200	£ 85 £170 £204	change
3.	Private Hire Operator's Licence 1 yr/(Temp) 2 yrs 3 yrs	£129 £260 £310	£132 £265 £316	change
4.	Private Hire Driver's Licence 1 yr/(Temp) 2 yrs 3 yrs	£ 79 £158 £189	£ 81 £161 £193	change
5.	Street Trader's Licence 1 yr/(Temp) 2 yrs 3 yrs	£154 £244 £373	£157 £249 £380	change
6.	Window Cleaner's Licence 1 yr/(Temp) 2 yrs 3 yrs	£168 £337 £404	£171 £344 £412	change
7.	Public Entertainment Licence 1 yr/(Temp) 2 yrs 3 yrs	£239 £482 £578	£244 £492 £590	change
8.	Public Entertainment Sunbed Licence 1 yr/(Temp) 2 yrs 3 yrs	£239 £482 £578	£244 £492 £590	change
9.	Market Operator's Licence 1 yr/(Temp) 2 yrs 3 yrs	£239 £482 £578	£244 £492 £590	change
10.	Late Hours Catering Licence 1 yr/(Temp) 2 yrs 3 yrs	£168 £337 £404	£171 £344 £412	change
11.	Second Hand Dealer's Licence 1 yr/(Temp) 2 yrs 3 yrs	£154 £224 £373	£157 £229 £380	change

12.	Indoor Sports Entertainment Licence 1 y /(Temp) 2 yrs 3 yrs	£174 £351 £420	£177 £358 £428	change
13.	Skin Piercing 1 yr/(Temp) 2 yrs 3 yrs	£239 £482 £578	£244 £492 £590	change
16.	Theatre Licence (1 year)	£131	£134	change
17.	Vehicle Inspection Fee (Admin) (Annual)	£ 24	£ 25	change
18.	Vehicle Partial Retest Fee (Admin)	£ 10	£ 10	no change
20.	ID Badge Replacement	£ 10	£ 10	no change
21.	Vehicle Substitution Fee	£ 50	£ 51	change
22.	Licence Variation Fee	£ 50	£ 51	change
23.	Front Vehicle Licence Plate Inserts	£ 7.35	£ 7.50	change
24.	Rear Vehicle Licence Plate Inserts	£ 8.40	£ 8.60	change
25.	Number Plate Bracket Kit	£ 8.40	£ 8.60	change
26.	Number Plate Bracket Rigid Bridge Kit	£ 3.70	£ 3.80	change
27.	Number Plate Platform Kit Flat	£ 5.25	£ 5.35	change
28.	Platform Flexiplate Kit Size 2	£ 7.35	£ 7.50	change
29.	Platform Flexiplate Kit Size 4	£ 8.40	£ 8.60	change
30.	Strapping Accessory Kit	£ 5.25	£ 5.35	change
31.	Quick Release Button & Key Set	£ 1.20	£ 1.25	change
32.	No Smoking Sticker	£ 2.10	£ 2.20	change
33.	Tariff Sheet	£ 3.15	£ 3.25	change
34.	Taxi Driver Test	£ 30	£ 31	change
35.	Taxi/Private Hire Booking Offices 1 yr /(Temp) 2 yrs 3 yrs	£239 £482 £578	£244 £492 £590	change
36.	Knife Dealer's Licence 1 yr /(Temp) 2 yrs 3 yrs	£ 96 £192 £231	£ 98 £196 £236	change
37.	Notification of changes and alterations Civic Government Licences	£ 15	£ 15	no change
38.	Monthly or part monthly licences in respect of private hire and taxis to be charged at 1/12 <sup>th</sup> of the yearly rate.			

\* Charging Recovery Policy is to recover full cost.

\* Classifications is Statutory Charge

\* Charges over £50 are rounded