

Cheltenham Borough Council
Director of Environment – 1 August 2018
Revised Fees for Knowledge Test

Accountable member	Councillor Andrew McKinlay, Cabinet Member for Development and Safety
Accountable officer	Mike Redman, Director of Environment
Ward(s) affected	None
Key/Significant Decision	No
Executive summary	<p>In March 2018, Cabinet approved changes to the council's taxi and private hire licensing policy including changes to the council's fitness assessments for taxi and private hire drivers.</p> <p>As part of the implementation of the new policy requirements, the previous written knowledge test has been replaced with a practical training day.</p> <p>The change from a written assessment to a practical training day has necessitated the need to also review the fees that apply.</p> <p>This report seeks approval from the Director of Environment to adopt the revised fees.</p>
Recommendations	<p>The Director of Environment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Development and Safety, is recommended to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adopt the revised fees as set out in this report; and 2. Delegate authority to the Licensing Team Leader to take all the necessary steps to implement the approved revised fees.

Financial implications	<p>No finance implications arising from this report.</p> <p>Contact officer: Andrew Knott, Andrew.Knott@publicagroup.uk</p>
Legal implications	<p>There are no legal implications arising from this report.</p> <p>Contact officer: Vikki.fennell@teWKesbury.gov.uk, 01684 272015</p>
HR implications (including learning and organisational development)	<p>No HR implications arising from this report.</p> <p>Contact officer: Clare Jones, Clare.Jones@publicagroup.uk</p>
Key risks	As outlined in Appendix 1
Corporate and community plan Implications	N/A

Environmental and climate change implications	None
Property/Asset Implications	None

1. Background

- 1.1 In March 2018, Cabinet approved changes to the council's taxi and private hire licensing policy including changes to the council's fitness assessments for taxi and private hire drivers.
- 1.2 The decision in March included a change to the way the council administers its assessment with regards to the fitness and propriety of licence applicants and holders.
- 1.3 Before the policy change, the council's local knowledge assessment consisted exclusively of a written test. Through the policy change, the local knowledge assessment will be changed to incorporate a practical training day followed by a written test. The training day will incorporate equality & diversity, customer service skills, safeguarding and law & conditions.
- 1.4 Licence applicants and holders paid a fee of £77 for sitting the written knowledge test. The fee is set at a level where the council is able to recover its costs.
- 1.5 The change from a written test to a practical training day has necessitated the need to also review the fees that apply.

2. Knowledge Test Fees

- 2.1 The proposed revised fees and charges are:

Attendance – full day's training	£77.00	Unchanged
Resitting written assessment	£35.00	A reduced fee for licence holders who have not passed the written assessment but where they choose not to attend the full day's training again.
Upgrade from private hire to hackney carriage	£40.00	A reduced fee for licence holders who want to sit the written assessment in order to change their licence from private hire to hackney carriage.

- 2.2 Every licence holder or applicant who attends the training will be required to pay the £77 fee. Where an attendee has attended the training day but failed the written test, they can retake the test and just pay the proposed £35, unless they want to attend the whole day's training again in which case the usual £77 fee will apply.
- 2.3 Licence holders who wish to change a private hire licence to a hackney carriage licence, will be required to only pay the proposed £40. The fee covers the cost of licence holders taking the enhanced test.

3. Constitution

- 3.1 The council's constitution delegates authority to the relevant Director to increase or reduce non-statutory fees and charges during the year in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member (rule 12.3).

4. Reasons for recommendations

- 4.1 To ensure that the fees applicable to the knowledge test are set at an appropriate level to ensure to council is able to recover its costs.

5. Alternative options considered

- 5.1 The Director of Environment can resolve not to approve the revised fees. However, this will not enable the council to administer the training day and assessment on a cost-neutral basis as prescribed in statute.

6. Consultation and feedback

- 6.1 Consultation has been undertaken with finance, One Legal, HR and Cabinet Member for Development and Safety.

7. Performance management –monitoring and review

- 7.1 The level of the fees will be monitored to ensure that they are set at an appropriate level taking into account the cost to the council of administering the knowledge test and where appropriate adjusted accordingly.

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Appendices	1. Risk Assessment
Background information	1. Council Constitution 2. Cabinet agenda, decisions and minutes - Tuesday, 6th March, 2018 3. Licensing Policy, Guidance and Conditions for Private Hire and Taxis Operating within the Borough of Cheltenham

The risk				Original risk score (impact x likelihood)			Managing risk				
Risk ref.	Risk description	Risk Owner	Date raised	Impact 1-5	Likelihood 1-6	Score	Control	Action	Deadline	Responsible officer	Transferred to risk register
	If the revised fees are not adopted, the council risks operating the assessment otherwise than in accordance with general statutory requirements.	Director of Environment	July 2018	2	3	6	Accept	Adopt revised fees.		Licensing Team Leader	
<p>Explanatory notes</p> <p>Impact – an assessment of the impact if the risk occurs on a scale of 1-5 (1 being least impact and 5 being major or critical)</p> <p>Likelihood – how likely is it that the risk will occur on a scale of 1-6 (1 being almost impossible, 2 is very low, 3 is low, 4 significant, 5 high and 6 a very high probability)</p> <p>Control - Either: Reduce / Accept / Transfer to 3rd party / Close</p>											