

**TO: REGULATORY COMMITTEE – 27 JUNE 2006**

**SUBJECT: HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING**

**FROM: MEMBERS' SERVICES**

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**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To confirm proposals to introduce driving tests for applicants for hackney carriage and private hire drivers licences.
- 1.2 To consider the level of fees for some services.
- 1.3 Agree arrangements for the testing of vehicles.

**2. BACKGROUND**

**2.1 Driving Tests**

- 2.1.1 In April 2005 the Committee agreed a number of initiatives. One such initiative was the introduction of driving tests for new applicants for drivers licences. At that time it was proposed that the Licensing Enforcement Officer, who was qualified to undertake such tests, would do so and a fee be charged to the applicant to cover his time. However, it is now clear that the Licensing Enforcement Officer would not have time to carry out the tests. A number of local authorities in the area and throughout the country are using the Driving Standard Agency (DSA) to carry out the tests. Details of the tests will be available at the meeting. A charge of £58 is payable to the DSA and the applicants would pay this sum direct to the agency. This could be used for new applicants and for existing drivers where complaints have been received about their standard of driving.

**2.2 Fees**

- 2.2.1 The fee for the transfer of a vehicle licence was fixed at £45 with effect from the 1 July 2006. Although it was not mentioned on the list of fees approved by the Council there was an additional fee to applicants of £40 for the inspection of the vehicle. The vehicles were inspected at the County Council garage in Montague Road, Warwick who invoiced the Council for the cost.
- 2.2.2 In cases of transfers of vehicles in future the applicant would arrange for its own inspection at one of the appointed garages and will pay the inspection fee (2.3 below). The transfer fee can therefore now remain at £45 which will include the administrative costs and the cost of issuing new plates.
- 2.2.3 Licences and vehicles are sometimes transferred from one person to another. In such cases there is no inspection costs and new plates do not have to be made. However, there are, of course, administrative costs involved in issuing the new paper licences. It is suggested that a charge of £20 be made for this type of transfer.

- 2.2.4 A number of requests are received for replacement badges, paper licences and vehicle plates. There is a cost to the Council of issuing these replacements and it is suggested that the following charges be confirmed:-

Replacement driver's badge	£5
Replacement driver's of vehicle paper licences	£5
Replacement plate	£25

### 2.3. Vehicles

- 2.3.1 In April 2005 the Committee agreed a system whereby when vehicles were inspected for the purposes of their fitness to be hackney carriages or private hire vehicles they would also be given an MOT test. It was assumed at the time that the County Council garage in Montague Road, Warwick would introduce facilities for carrying out MOT testing. They have not as yet introduced such facilities and as an alternative an advertisement was placed in the local paper inviting garages who had MOT testing facilities to apply to be a testing station for the Council. Three garages have agreed to carry out the testing at the same cost as the County Council garage. The garages will not only carry out the standard MOT inspection as to the fitness of the vehicle but will also look other matters specific to taxis and private hire vehicles such as the cleanliness and condition of the bodywork and seats.
- 2.3.2 It is proposed therefore that applicants for new licences, annual inspections for existing vehicles or for the transfer of licences would make their own arrangements with these garages for the vehicle to be inspected. The garages would then forward certificates to the Council to show whether or not the vehicle passed. The fee for the inspections for new licences and the annual inspections will be paid by the Council initially as it is part of the licence fee fixed for 2006/7. In future years the fee for the licence can be reduced and the applicants can pay the fee to the garages direct. Applicants for the transfer of licences will pay the Council the licence fee of £45 and will also pay the garages their fee direct. If the vehicle fails the test and it is necessary for a re-test the applicant will be expected to pay the re-test cost.

## 3. DECISIONS REQUIRED

- 3.1 Members are asked to agree that with effect from 1 July 2006 all new applicants for hackney carriage and private hire drivers licences be required to pass a DSA driving test before a licence is issued.
- 3.2 The Council be asked to confirm the fees as set out in the report.
- 3.3 Members are asked to confirm the proposals for the use of garages for the inspection of hackney carriage and private hire vehicles as set out above.

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS**  
NIL

<b>Areas and the District Affected:</b>	All
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Yes
<b>Included in Forward Plan:</b>	No

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