

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

LICENSING & APPEALS COMMITTEE

21 March 2011

Report of the Central Services Director

Part 1- Public

Delegated

1 PROPOSED REFUNDABLE CHARGE TO BE LEVIED ON REQUESTS FOR DRIVER APPLICATION PACKS

1.1 Background

1.1.1 My report regards a proposal to levy a refundable charge (on submission of a completed application) for a driver (Hackney and/or private hire) application pack.

1.1.2 We have seen an increase in the number of driver application packs being requested. The application packs are relatively substantial, the production of these packs has a cost implication in the actual cost to print and the officer time involved.

1.1.3 Over recent months we have recorded that we are only receiving a maximum of 50% of application packs given out, being completed. This would suggest quite a wastage and cost to the Council in preparation and actual cost in sending these out.

1.2 Proposal

1.2.1 If Members are minded, it is proposed that from 1 April 2011 a charge will be made of £20 inclusive of VAT per application pack requested.

1.2.2 The £20 will then be deducted from the driver fee when a completed application is received.

1.2.3 It is believed that the fee will 'focus minds' and only those serious in completing an application will apply for one, thus minimalising wastage and costs. The charge will be deducted from the fee when a completed application has been submitted.

1.2.4 Other local authorities within Kent make a similar charge for application packs. This system has been proven to reduce "false" application pack requests being made and such action by local authorities is welcomed by the trade.

1.3 Legal Implications

- 1.3.1 I have consulted my colleagues in Legal Services on the contents of this report, their comments are as follows;
- 1.3.2 The Council has discretion under s.70 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 to charge the reasonable cost of preparing and issuing the Driver Application Packs.

1.4 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.4.1 The proposed charge for an application pack will not generate an income, which is not the intention. The charge will cover the costs of abortive application packs sent out and will hopefully reduce the number of speculative requests.

1.5 Risk Assessment

- 1.5.1 There are no identified risks associated with this proposal.

1.6 Equality Impact Assessment

- 1.6.1 See 'Screening for equality impacts' table at end of report

1.7 Recommendations

- 1.7.1 It is recommended that Members endorse the refundable charge of £20 per application pack being charged from 1 April 2011.

Background papers:

contact: Katie Iggulden

Nil

July Beilby

Central Services Director

Screening for equality impacts:		
Question	Answer	Explanation of impacts
a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community?	No	All new applicants regardless, will be treated the same

Screening for equality impacts:		
Question	Answer	Explanation of impacts
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality?	N/A	
c. What steps are you taking to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		

In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above.