

Report to Senior Leadership Team

Subject: Appointment of Additional Technical Administration Assistant in Licensing.

Date: 14th September 2012

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Purpose of the Report

To seek approval for the establishment of an additional administration assistant to help administer a 3 fold increase in taxi licence applications.

Background

There has been a significant increase recently in the numbers of taxi licence applications at Gedling Borough Council as shown in the following table.

Licence Type	Financial Year 10/11	Financial Year 11/12	Financial Year 12/13 Week 23	Full Year Projection 12/13
Vehicle Licence (HC & PH)	877	1000	558	1261
Drivers Licence	538	826	407	920

The main reason for this increase is that Hackney Carriage Licensees in one area are now able to operate as private hire vehicles anywhere in the country. It is difficult to fully account for why Gedling has suddenly had such a significant increase in the numbers of such applicants. Enquiries with taxi drivers have suggested that the quality service we have historically provided is one factor but another is that their insurance costs are likely to be considerably lower than if they were insured by a City authority. In addition we do not require our drivers to carry out a knowledge test; this is clearly an attraction.

Although measures have been introduced to reduce some of the demand and to correspondingly reduce workload by requiring more upfront information from applicants, this has just meant that the increased demand has levelled off to maintain the current trend and this is expected to continue in the future.

The increased workload cannot be accommodated further within existing resources. There are currently 166 (at the time of writing) drivers awaiting licences and because of the demand the authority has been unable to carry out any compliance or enforcement activity, as the officer has been fully occupied administering the increased workload from applications.

The ongoing increased income is detailed in the following table. It should be noted that income in 2011/12 was already up on the previous year as a consequence of increased applications.

	2011/12 Original Budget	2011/12 Actuals	2012/13 Original Budget	2012/13 Projected Income
Driving license fee	£30,000	£53,620	£44,100	£65,100
Vehicle license fee	£66,000	£81,940	£77,700	£104,400
Total	£96,000	£133,560	£121,800	£169,500

Proposal

It is proposed that a full-time Technical Administration Assistant be appointed to deal with the administration of the application process and liaison with taxi drivers. The post holder will also support the administration of the Environment and Licensing Committee. This will enable service to be provided to taxi drivers that would be expected and enable compliance work to be undertaken to further protect the travelling public. It is proposed that the post be appointed at Band 4 based on the use of a generic Band 4 Administration Assistant job description, to be confirmed by personnel, also with a view that it would be suitable for internal appointment. A job description is enclosed.

Financial Implications

Budget Implications for Public Protection and Community Portfolio

	2012/13 (wef Dec 12)	2013/14 Ongoing
<u>Expenditure Impact</u>		
Cost of 1 FTE Band 4	£7,200	£21,400
Training Costs	£1,000	£1,000
Offset by:		
Reduction in Overtime	(£4,000)	(£5,000)
<u>Income Impact</u>		
Additional Income from volume increase from Original Estimate	(£47,700)	(£47,700)
Net Total Budget Impact	(£43,500)	(£30,300)
Additional Income already approved at Qtr 1 Monitoring	(£18,000)	
Net Additional Budget Virement Required	(£29,700)	

Recommendation

That SLT endorsed the structural changes set out in the report.

That the relevant Portfolio Holders be asked to approve the budget virements as outlined in the report.

That the Chief Executive be asked to approve the staffing structure changes outlined in the report, subject to approval of the budget virement by the Portfolio Holders.