

Consultation Response – Animal Welfare

1 **From:** pjerry11
Sent: 03 January 2016 15:34
To: Licensing@thurrock.gov.uk
Subject: Consultation on Licensing Fees for 2016/2017
FAO: Paul Adams
Principle Licencing Officer
Further to your letter dated 30th November 2015, I write as requested with my comments to your proposed licence fee increase.
Firstly, how do you justify an increase in excess of 80%? I currently pay £150.00 per year, an increase to £271 + vet fees is astronomical. Under the terms of the licence issued to me, you have limited my earning potential to £70.00 per day. I have no way of increasing this unless I raise my prices which will effectively drive me out of business. You need to bear in mind that there are some days when my earnings are considerably less. It only takes someone to have time off ill, an impromptu holiday or a sudden loss of work and I am out of pocket until I can find another client to fill that place. People looking for a holiday boarder or someone to walk their dog or provide daycare, don't wait around for you until you have a place for them. They look elsewhere and the opportunity to earn has gone. I cannot pass on an 80% increase to my customers, they will simply stop utilising my service. I am not a shop or kennel that has the potential for infinite customers. As a home boarder, I am currently permitted to have 5 dogs at any one time. Will you allow me the opportunity to increase my earning potential or is putting me out of business really the only option you can see? Surely this will not help with your deficit.
Secondly, you speak of the cost of providing the service to me. The service consists of a 10 minute visit, once a year, made by two council employees. Two people. Maybe a saving could be made by only one person attending my home and therefore only one wage. Why two people to do the job of one when there is an issue with deficit? How many people does it take to type my name and address on a certificate and print it off? I am struggling to understand how such a service warrants such a hefty increase. Each year we are told of yet another cost that is going to be applied to our business running costs and yet nothing changes in the service we receive. Nothing changes in the service we can provide as the restrictions still apply. Each year we are expected to pay more and receive nothing in return.
Lastly, I have never received a vet visit. I have been told that it isn't needed as I am a small boarding establishment. How much more am I expected to find per year to cover the cost of a vet visit? Please could you advise so I can determine whether running a business at a loss is really worth the trouble.

I look forward to hearing from you.
Yours sincerely
Paula Perry
Country Walks

2 **From:** kymm edwards
Sent: 29 December 2015 14:47
To: Licensing@thurrock.gov.uk
Subject: Consultation on licensing fees for 2016/2017

Dear Mr Adams,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on proposed increase of licensing fees.

45 % increase for animal boarding and less than 18 % for sex establishments I am lost for words !

In these hard times, whilst I accept in some areas small recovery is apparent I find it very hard to accept such a huge proposed hike in the fee for my cattery. Also why there is such a difference between the licenses ?

Thank you for your attention.
Kind regards
Kymm Edwards

3 **From:** dawn jones
Sent: 24 December 2015 11:58
To: Licensing@thurrock.gov.uk
Subject: FAO paul adams relicence fee proposed price increase

Dear Paul

I am writing to you with regards to the proposed price increase for the license fee 2016/17.

Firstly I would like to question that the letter indicates that the rises are only for businesses falling under the `Animal Welfare` umbrella and sex establishments, it doesn`t state whether any establishments or activities requiring a licence are being increased.

We are all small businesses and I feel an 80% increase in the cost of any service with no choice of changing service provider is entirely unfair. In this instance we would be justified in asking to see evidence that the costs of the animal welfare licensing administration has escalated to an 80% rise and to question why as we have seen no change in the service received over the years.

There are two vague outlines in the letter sent out by yourselves as to possible reasons for a price increase but not an actual explanation. In view of the fact that the price increase is unreasonable we would be entitled to a full explanation as we are going to be covering these costs.

The other point that needs to be raised is the +vet fee, on your website it states that the vet fee is an additional charge after the vet inspection has taken place, if

required. The issue with this extra cost is who decides whether a vet visit is required and what are the deciding factors? This is yet another cost which can be imposed on us with us having no prior knowledge of the actual cost or why it has been decided that the visit is `required`.

All these extra costs and increased costs seriously put pressure on small businesses, at a time when we need support from local authorities and so would appreciate your help in understanding this matter.

Regards

Dawn Jones

Wonderland Pets

4 **From:** thetrophshop
Sent: 27 December 2015 10:57
To: Licensing@thurrock.gov.uk
Subject: license fee

Good Morning Paul,

Hope you had a nice Christmas .

I am writing to you with regards to the proposed price increase for the license fee 2016/17.

Firstly I would like to question that the letter indicates that the rises are only for businesses falling under the `Animal Welfare` umbrella and sex establishments, it doesn't state whether any establishments or activities requiring a licence are being increased.

As a small local business I feel an 80% increase in the cost of any service with no choice of changing service provider is entirely unfair. In this instance I feel I am justified in asking to see evidence that the costs of the animal welfare licensing administration has escalated to an 80% rise and to question why as I have seen no change in the level of service received over the years. I understand that services will occasionally but this is normally in accordance with inflation, 80% is not in line with this.

There are two vague outlines in the letter sent out by yourselves as to possible reasons for a price increase but not an actual explanation. In view of the fact that the price increase is unreasonable I feel I am entitled to a full explanation as to what has increased so greatly your end seeing as I going to be covering these costs.

The other point that needs to be raised is the additional vet fee, on your website it states that the vet fee is an additional charge after the vet inspection has taken place, if required. The issue with this extra cost is; who decides whether a vet visit is required and what are the deciding factors? This is yet another cost which can be imposed on us with us having no prior knowledge of the actual cost or

why it has been decided that the visit is `required`. We had an issue with the vet you used and the decision was made that a vet visit was no longer required, why has this changed now?? I can understand that if an establishment is mistreating animals then a Vet visit may be required but who would make that decision? surely not members of the public as we have had two complaints in seven years and both were completely unfounded and we have letters from yourselves confirming this. So if I was to get a vet charge following one of these ludicrous complaint then I would consider the charge to be met by you or the member of the public making the complaint.

All these extra costs seriously put pressure on small businesses baring in mind I already have to pay TWO lots of business rates totaling over £10,000 and I don't even get my bins emptied for that, all this at a time when we need support from local authorities and so would appreciate your help in understanding this matter.

Regards

Ian Divers
Trop Shop

5 **From:** Cath Lumley
Sent: 22 December 2015 20:55
To: Licensing@thurrock.gov.uk
Cc: cathlumley@blueyonder.co.uk
Subject: Thurrock License renewal charges April 2016

FAO Paul Adams

I am writing to you with regards to the proposed price increase for the license fee 2016/17.

We are all small businesses and I feel an 80% increase in the cost of any service with no choice of changing service provider is entirely unfair. In this instance we would be justified in asking to see evidence that the costs of the animal welfare licensing administration has escalated to an 80% rise and to question why as we have seen no change in the service received over the years.

There are two vague outlines in the letter sent out by yourselves as to possible reasons for a price increase but not an actual explanation. In view of the fact that the price increase is unreasonable we would be entitled to a full explanation as we are going to be covering these costs.

The other point that needs to be raised is the +vet fee, on your website it states that the vet fee is an additional charge after the vet inspection has taken place, if required. The issue with this extra cost is who decides whether a vet visit is required and what are the deciding factors? This is yet another cost which can be imposed on us with us having no prior knowledge of the actual cost or why it has been decided that the visit is `required`.

As a very small home boarder I feel that £150 is ample payment for the service that I get from the council license department. I am in full support of being checked before you give the license as I know there are many home boarders and 'Doggy day care' businesses in Thurrock that do not even have a license and their trading standards are 'unscrupulous' to say the least. I also feel that there should be a sliding scale in terms of the fee, based on what the company actually does.

As a home boarder the dogs live in my own home as part of my family and daily life. They are treated like one of my own dogs. I understand that you would and should check on this though. Moving to pet shops, I feel that they should have a slightly more in depth inspection so that small furies and reptiles etc are properly cared for and safe and secure. Kennels should have a much more thorough inspection and therefore a high fee would be applicable. Some kennels have 50-100 individual kennels and each would need to be checked for cleanliness and safety from hazards.

Zoos? Not even sure why they have been charged £150 but clearly should be much higher up the sliding scale.

Lastly, are other license holders, off licences, bars, pubs having an equally 'possible' substantial increase? Sex shops have been put on the same list as 'animal' businesses. Weird but I'm sure there is a link there somewhere :-)

All these extra costs and increased costs seriously put pressure on small businesses, at a time when we need support from local authorities and so would appreciate your help in understanding this matter.

So, in short, my feelings as a small local business that uses the license for 10/15% of my business is that an increase of more than 10% would be extreme and very unwelcome.

I also feel that licensees would drop off and you would just have many businesses running without any form of license and therefore no record or trail should the local public need any assistance.

Please keep the license cost as it is (small increase accepted for 2017).

We at Dogtopia have spoken with other responsible small animal businesses in the area and all current licensees are in agreement that a substantial increase would potentially be crippling.

Regards

Cath Lumley

Dogtopia Pet Services

6

24, Corringham Rd
Ref: Petshop licence Fee Stanford-le-Hope
Essex
29/12/15

Dear Sir,

As an established business for the last 24 yrs and have always agreed in principle to a licensing fee of some sort we feel the proposed fee is ridiculous. A rise with inflation is fine but just because you do not have enough pet shops in Thurrock selling animals is not the problem of the pet shops already established in the area. Besides the idea of having a licence premises to sell animals was for the well being of the animals and controlling of diseases. By increasing the fee to this amount in our opinion will not make it viable for shops to sell animals thus forcing Pets to be sold at peoples

back door and by the internet with no Council control of the well being of the animals and no vet inspect if you feel this is OK then fine increase the fee but don't be surprised when you have no shops in Thurrock selling animals or is that what you want then you can wipe your hands clean a problem does arise
ie. Rabies
Distemper
myxomatosis
Cot flu etc

Yours faithfully
Muz Mrs Early
(EtrB Pets)

P.s. Please could you reply to this letter on our email
colin@tdclaw@hve.co.uk
So we know you got this letter