
Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licence Fees Consultation Responses – Supporting Information

1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1 The Council is required to set fees in respect of the licensing of private hire vehicles and hackney carriages, and private hire operators. As part of this, section 70 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 requires all licensing authorities to publish a notice regarding any variation to the fees charged by the Council for vehicle and operator licences.
- 1.2 A new set of fees was presented to the Committee at the last meeting in November, where it was agreed to proceed with the statutory consultation process, with any objections received to be brought back before the Committee for further consideration.
- 1.3 This report requests allow Members to consider the seven responses received during the 28 day consultation period concerning the proposed fees for hackney carriage and private hire vehicle and operator licensing, and to set a date on which the variation to the fees, with or without further modification, shall come into force.

2. Supporting Information

- 2.1 The Joint Public Protection Committee is required by the Inter-Authority Agreement that set up the Public Protection Partnership shared service to recommend a draft set of fees and charges to each of the member Councils.
- 2.2 At the meeting of the Joint Public Protection Committee in December 2017 (when it considered the 2018/19 fees and charges) a number of matters were decided. It was agreed that as a matter of principle, all fees and charges should be set on the basis of full cost recovery. In 2018/19, the rate for the service was set at £55 per hour as the basis of cost recovery. It was also agreed that there should be a move to align fees across the former Bracknell licensing regime and the former Wokingham/ West Berkshire fee structure where appropriate.
- 2.3 In July 2018 the Joint Public Protection Committee received a further report asking it to consider the basis for setting fees and charges and the application of full cost recovery. That methodology was approved by the Committee. Based on these decisions, work has been carried out by officers to update and align fee structures to take effect from April 2019.
- 2.4 In respect of all discretionary fees and the hourly rate, an inflationary rise of 2.5% has been applied. This inflationary rise will balance the increase in cost of service provision such as the cost of living salary rise.
- 2.5 The Committee were advised at the meeting of 19 November 2018 that the existing fees structure was set based upon an hourly rate closer to £35 per hour, which was not reflective of the actual costs associated with delivering the service. The new

fees also take into account more accurate assessments of the amount of time invested to run the service.

2.6 Officer comments on the points raised within the objections are included within section 6 of this report.

3. Options for Consideration

3.1 There are no alternative options, as the consideration of the objections and setting of the fees are legal requirements as outlined above. Members may choose to modify the proposed fees at this stage, subject to the financial implications as identified above.

4. Proposals

4.1 Officers recommend that the objections are considered and the fees are set, with or without modification. These will then be put forward to Full Council as part of the Council's budget setting process.

5. Conclusion

5.1 In accordance with the relevant legislation, the Council is required to consider the objections received and set a date on which any variation to the fees, with or without modification, shall come into force.

6. Consultation and Engagement

6.1 The legal requirements in relation to amending fees are set out at section 70 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. This section confirms that when they wish to vary the fees charges for vehicle or operator licences, Councils must publish a notice within a local newspaper and a copy of that notice must be deposited at the offices of the Council.

6.2 A public notice was published in the Newbury Weekly News on 20 December 2018 and a copy of this notice was available on the Council's public notice board from that date until 17 January 2019.

6.3 Seven objections were received during the consultation period, and these can be found at Appendix H.

6.4 The officer observations on some of the points raised within the objections are as follows:

- Fare increases. The Council sets fares that can be charged for hackney carriage journeys within West Berkshire. Prices for journeys taken in private hire vehicles are not set by the Council and are to be negotiated between the customer and the service provider. The Council can review the hackney carriage fare tariff if there is a call for this.
- Increases outside any percentage that is allowed. There are no maximum percentages governing increases. Councils can set fees at the level they deem appropriate as long as they have been advertised and approved via the appropriate channels and processes.

- Why has the same fee structure been adopted as another Council? The Public Protection Partnership is a shared service that operates across West Berkshire, Wokingham and Bracknell Forest Council areas. The Licensing function is operated by the same team across these three areas and hence why the costs encountered in running the service are equal across the PPP.
- Method of consultation. The fees increase has been advertised in line with the statutory requirements. It is important to note that the letters/emails mentioned within the objections are not a legal requirement, and come with associated costs. One comment suggests that the Council should follow the provisions within Section 70 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. As per section 6.1 of this report, this is the section of legislation that details how the Council varies fees and it is confirmed that the requirements of that section have been met.
- Fees charged by other authorities. As the fees proposed have been calculated based upon the costs encountered in providing the service, it is not strictly relevant what other authorities are charging, however, benchmarking information is provided for reference at Appendix F and Appendix G.
- Financial hardship. As mentioned above, the fees have been set on a cost recovery basis, and to be set any lower would equate to a Council subsidy on the issuing of licences. The fees are the same for all businesses, large or small, and simply look to cover the cost of the licensing function.

Background Papers:

None

Yes: No:

The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval

Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council

Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position

Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission or associated Task Groups within preceding six months

Item is Urgent Key Decision

Report is to note only

Wards affected:

All

Officer details:

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Appendix D

Existing and proposed licence fees

Type of vehicle licence	Existing / £	Proposed / £
Hackney Carriage Vehicle	161.00	282.00
Private Hire Vehicle Licence	161.00	282.00
Private Hire Vehicle Licence with dispensation	207.00	328.00
Temporary vehicle licence	162.00	226.00

Type of operator licence / £			
Existing			
1-4 vehicles (5 years)	545.00		
5-9 vehicles (5 years)	870.00		
9+ vehicles (5 years)	1356.00		
Proposed /£			
	1 year licence	3 year licence	5 year licence
1 vehicle:	183.00	439.00	559.00
2-5 vehicles:	318.00	772.00	923.00
6-10 vehicles:	533.00	1,279.00	1,845.00
11-15 vehicles:	738.00	1,773.00	2,768.00
16-20 vehicles:	999.00	2,400.00	3,690.00
More than 20 vehicles:	1,204.00	2,889.00	4,529.00

Appendix E

Historical fees – vehicles and operators

Vehicle fees by year

Year	Private hire vehicle / £	Hackney carriage vehicle / £
2011	141.00	150.00
2012	148.00	157.00
2013	148.00	157.00
2014	148.00	157.00
2015	148.00	157.00
2016	148.00	157.00
2017	148.00	157.00
2018	161.00	161.00

Operator fees by year

Year	1-4 vehicles / £	5-9 vehicles / £	9+ vehicles / £	Length of licence
2010	163.00	261.00	407.00	1 year
2011	168.00	269.00	240.00	1 year
2012	176.00	282.00	439.00	1 year
2013	176.00	282.00	439.00	1 year
2013	176.00	282.00	439.00	1 year
2015	176.00	282.00	439.00	1 year
2015	528.00	846.00	1317.00	5 years
2016	528.00	846.00	1317.00	5 years
2018	545.00	870.00	1356.00	5 years

Appendix F

Benchmarking information - vehicles

Council	Hackney carriage vehicle / £	Private Hire vehicle / £
PPP proposed fee	282.00	282.00
West Berkshire / Wokingham existing	161.00	161.00
Bracknell Forest	276.00	276.00
Slough	220.00	220.00
Wycombe	258.00	253.00
White Horse	120.00 - 395.00*	185.00 - 250.00*
Surrey Heath	295.00	265.00
South Oxfordshire	85.00 - 300.00*	85.00 - 210.00*
Reading	336.00 or 145.00 for electric	299.00 or 145.00 for electric
Basingstoke	168.00	168.00
Cherwell	350.00	240.00
Hart	237.00 or 118.50 for wheelchair accessible vehicles	237.00
RBWM	315.00	255.00

* Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire fees vary with age of vehicle and tax band

Appendix G

Benchmarking information – Operator licence fees

1 Year	Wokingham / West Berkshire	Bracknell	Slough	Wycombe	Vale of White Horse	Surrey/Heath	South Ox	Reading	Basingstoke & Deane	Cherwell	Hart	Windsor & Maidenhead	
	N/A	1 Vehicle - £179	1 Vehicle - £137	1 Vehicle - £120	N/A	1 Vehicle - £95	N/A	1 Vehicle - £317	N/A	N/A		1-5 Vehicles - £286	
	N/A	2-9 Vehicles - £310	Up to 5 Vehicles - £275	2-5 Vehicles - £185	N/A	More than 1 Vehicle - £215	N/A	2-5 Vehicles - £900	N/A	N/A		6 - 10 Vehicles - £440	
	N/A	6-10 Vehicles - £520	Up to 15 Vehicles - £390	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	6 - 10 Vehicles - £1159	N/A	N/A		11-15 Vehicles - £615	
	N/A	11-15 Vehicles - £720	Up to 25 Vehicles - £595	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	11-15 Vehicles - £1827.50	N/A	N/A		16-20 Vehicles - £790	
	N/A	16-20 Vehicles - £975	Up to 35 Vehicles - £835	6-10 Vehicles - £235	N/A	N/A	N/A	16-20 Vehicles - £2006.50	N/A	N/A		21-30 Vehicles - £1035	
	N/A	20+ Vehicles - £1175	Up to 45 Vehicles - £1070	11-20 Vehicles - £290	N/A	N/A	N/A	21-25 Vehicles - £2595	N/A	N/A		30+ Vehicles - £1420	
	N/A		Up to 55 Vehicles - £1310	21-40 Vehicles - £470	N/A	N/A	N/A	26-30 Vehicles - £2695	N/A	N/A			
	N/A		Up to 65 Vehicles - £1550	50+ Vehicles - £700	N/A	N/A	N/A	31-35 Vehicles - £3033	N/A	N/A			
	N/A		Up to 75 Vehicles - £1790	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	36-40 Vehicles - £3878	N/A	N/A			
	N/A		Up to 85 Vehicles - £1990	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	41-45 Vehicles - £4305.50	N/A	N/A			
	N/A		Up to 90 Vehicles - £2395	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	45+ Vehicles - £4796.50	N/A	N/A			
		100 and over Vehicles - £2395	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	N/A				
3 Years	N/A	1 Vehicle - £428	N/A	N/A	1-2 Vehicles - £432	N/A	1-2 Vehicles - £150	N/A	N/A	N/A		1-5 Vehicles - £795	
	N/A	2-9 Vehicles - £753	N/A	N/A	3-4 Vehicles - £550	N/A	3-4 Vehicles - £250	N/A	N/A		6 - 10 Vehicles - £1320		
	N/A	6-10 Vehicles - £1248	N/A	N/A	5-14 Vehicles - £888	N/A	5-14 Vehicles - £400	N/A	N/A		11-15 Vehicles - £1945		
	N/A	11-15 Vehicles - £1720	N/A	N/A	15+ Vehicles - £956	N/A	15+ Vehicles - £560	N/A	N/A		16-20 Vehicles - £2370		
	N/A	16-20 Vehicles - £2341	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		21-30 Vehicles - £3105		
	N/A	20+ Vehicles - £2819	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		30+ Vehicles - £4200		
	5 Years	1-4 Vehicles - £545	1 Vehicle - £671	1 Vehicle - £411	1 Vehicle - £480	N/A	1 Vehicle - £425	N/A	N/A	New up to 5 Vehicles - £400	New 1 Vehicle - £120	N/A	N/A
		5-9 vehicles - £670	2-5 Vehicles - £1194	Up to 5 Vehicles - £825	2-5 Vehicles - £740	N/A	More than 1 Vehicle - £1075	N/A	Renewal up to 5 Vehicles - £295	Renewal up to 5 Vehicles - £295	Renewal 1 Vehicle - £95	N/A	N/A
		9+ vehicles - £1399	6-10 Vehicles - £1956	Up to 15 Vehicles - £1080	6-10 Vehicles - £940	N/A	N/A	N/A	New over 5 Vehicles - £920	Additional Vehicle - £20	Additional Vehicle - £20	N/A	N/A
		N/A	11-15 Vehicles - £2712	Up to 25 Vehicles - £1785	11-20 Vehicles - £1170	N/A	N/A	N/A	Renewal over 5 Vehicles - £575	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
		N/A	16-20 Vehicles - £3670	Up to 35 Vehicles - £2505	21- 50 Vehicles - £1890	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
		N/A	20+ Vehicles - £4419	Up to 45 Vehicles - £3210	50+ Vehicles - £2090	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
N/A			Up to 55 Vehicles - £3930	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
N/A			Up to 65 Vehicles - £4850	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
N/A			Up to 75 Vehicles - £5370	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
N/A			Up to 85 Vehicles - £5790	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
N/A			Up to 90 Vehicles - £7005	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
N/A			100 and over Vehicles - £7155	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	