

Licensing & Regulatory Committee

25 June 2019

**Name of Cabinet Member:**

Not applicable

**Director Approving Submission of the report:**

Deputy Chief Executive, Place

**Ward(s) affected:**

Not applicable

Title:

**Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Fee Review 2019 – Taxi Licensing Mini Review**

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**Is this a key decision?**

No

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**Executive Summary:**

In 2015 the introduction of the Deregulation Act changed the timescales for the issue of licences to drivers of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles from annual renewals to three yearly renewals. It also amended the renewals of Private Hire Operators Licences to five yearly only.

A fee review was undertaken on 25 August 2015 to address the charges made for the processing and issuing of licences to drivers and operators to reflect the changes and associated costs.

This review resulted in an overall (pro rata) reduction in fees over the new respective licence periods.

Subsequently a review of the impact of the changes within the Taxi Licensing Office was undertaken resulting in an overall reduction in administrative staff and the introduction of a new role to provide support across the service.

Following this a further review of fees has been undertaken to reflect the staffing changes and current costs.

**Recommendations:**

It is recommended that the Licensing & Regulatory Committee:

- (A) approve, subject to consideration of any comments received, the proposed fee changes detailed in Appendix A;
- (B) authorise the Executive Director of Place to make the necessary arrangements to advertise the applicable proposed fee variations;

(C) note that if any formal objections are received in response to the statutory notice that a further report will be presented on the 20 August 2019. Together with the 28-day consultation running alongside sent to the trade and other stakeholders via a survey.

**List of Appendices included:**

***Appendix A – Proposed fee changes***

**Other useful background papers:**

None

**Other Useful documents**

None

**Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?**

No

**Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?**

No

**Will this report go to Council?**

No

**Report title:**

**Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Fee Review 2019 – Taxi Licensing Mini Review**

**1. Information / Background**

- 1.1 The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 provides that the City Council may charge as fees the reasonable cost of administering and enforcing the hackney carriage and private hire licensing function. The fees charged by the Taxi Licensing Office are intended to enable the service to operate on a self-financing basis.
- 1.2 A review of fees was carried out in 2015 and before that in 2009, which involved assessing the resources used for each activity represented by a fee. Any increased costs to taxi licensing since 2015 have been managed within available resources.

**2. Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Licensing & Regulatory Committee:

- (A) approve, subject to consideration of any comments received, the proposed fee changes detailed in Appendix A;
- (B) authorise the Executive Director of Place to make the necessary arrangements to advertise the applicable proposed fee variations;
- (C) note that if any formal objections are received in response to the statutory notice that a further report will be presented on the 20 August 2019. Together with the 28-day consultation running alongside sent to the trade and other stakeholders via a survey.

- 3.1 It is proposed to increase charges for the fees as indicated in the tables below;

Licence Fee	Current Charge		Proposed Charge		Increase	
	Hackney Carriage	Private Hire	Hackney Carriage	Private Hire	Hackney Carriage	Private Hire
	£	£	£	£	£	£
New Applicant Driver Licence	518	458	585	515	67	57
Driver Renewal	223		310		87	
Additional Driver Licence	223		260		37	
Driver Re-Grant	243		330		87	
New Vehicle	217		275		58	
Vehicle Renewal	187		245		58	
Vehicle Re-Grant	207		265		58	
New & Renewal Operator	1668		2000		332	
Operator Re-Grant	1708		2040		332	

A detailed breakdown of these is attached at Appendix A

<b>Ancillary Fee</b>	<b>Current Charge</b>	<b>Proposed Charge</b>	<b>Increase</b>
	£	£	£
DBS/DVLA Enquiry	53.00	60.00	7.00
Hackney Carriage Road Knowledge Test	40.00	50.00	10.00
3 Yearly Driver Refresher Training (Mandatory)*		50.00	50.00
Vehicle MOT Inspection	47.00	55.00	8.00
Vehicle MOT Inspection (re-test)	21.00	27.50	6.50

\* New Requirement

3.2 There would be no change to any other licences and charges.

3.3 The above changes are summarised in Appendix A.

3.4 These fees will be reviewed annually, and proposed changes discussed at Taxi Forum Meetings.

#### **4. Financial implications**

The proposed fee structure has been designed to enable the continued operation of the Taxi Licensing Office on a self-financing basis. Future fee revisions and staffing levels will be routinely re-evaluated in line with any further legislative changes and financial considerations. Any shortfall in licensing income during the implementation period will be managed within existing resources. Fee revisions are explained in section 3 with a detailed list of proposed fee changes shown in Appendix A.

#### **5. Legal implications**

5.1 Under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, the City Council can only charge a level of fees which is sufficient to cover the reasonable costs of administering and enforcing the hackney carriage and private hire licensing function.

5.2 The 1976 Act lays down a statutory procedure for varying fees for Hackney Carriage Proprietors (i.e. vehicle) licences, Private Hire Vehicle licences and Private Hire Operators' licences. This procedure involves giving public notice of the proposed changes and a 28-day objection period. If objections are made, these must be considered by the Committee before the proposed fees, relating to those types of licences, can be implemented.

5.3 The above statutory procedure does not apply to varying fees for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire drivers' licences. However, it is considered simpler and fairer if the whole proposed fee table including drivers' licence fees, is advertised and the trade or public are given an opportunity to object to any item on the proposed fee table.

5.4 The issue of Hackney Carriage/Private Hire licences and the amount of any charge for their issue is excluded from being an 'executive function' by Regulation 2(6) and Schedule 1 of the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000.

5.5 Co-jointly running with the public notice of the proposed changes will be undertaken a survey sent to the trade and other interested stakeholders.

#### **6. Timescale**

6.1 If this report is approved, the proposed 2019 changes in drivers' licence fees and vehicle tests/re-tests will be advertised in the Coventry Telegraph on the 4 July 2019. Any objections and the results of the survey received can be considered at your meeting on the 20 August 2019. If no objections are received, the proposed fees will come into force on the 30 August 2019.

#### **7. Other implications**

None

- 7.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan/scorecard) / organisational blueprint or Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy**  
Ensuring that the public are safe by assessing drivers are fit and proper and vehicles safe.
- 7.2 How is risk being managed?**  
Ensuring that established procedures are followed.
- 7.3 What is the impact on the organisation?**  
None
- 7.4 Equalities / EIA**  
Not applicable
- 7.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment**  
None
- 7.6 Implications for partner organisations?**  
None
- 7.7 Human Rights Act Implications**  
None

**Report author(s):****Name and job title:**

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**Directorate:**

Place Directorate

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Enquiries should be directed to the above person.

<b>Contributor/approver name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Directorate or organisation</b>	<b>Date doc sent out</b>	<b>Date response received or approved</b>
<b>Contributors:</b>				
Sarah Elliott	Head of Fleet, Waste Management & Taxi Licensing	Place Directorate	12/06/2019	12/06/2019
<b>Names of approvers for submission:</b> (officers and members)				
Legal: Roy Hammond	Licensing & Enforcement Solicitor	Place Directorate	12/06/2019	17/06/2019
Director Place: Andrew Walster	Director of Streetscene & Regulatory Services	Place Directorate	12/06/2019	13/06/2019
Usha Patel	Governance Services Officer	Place Directorate	12/06/2019	13/06/2019
Cath Crosby	Lead Accountant – Business Partnering	Place Directorate	12/06/2019	13/06/2019

**Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Licensing Proposed Fee Structure 2019 – Proposed Fee Increases**

**Drivers both Hackney Carriage (HC) and Private Hire (PH)**

**Cost for New Applicant’s Driver Licence**

	Current cost		Proposed cost	
	Hackney Carriage	Private Hire	Hackney Carriage	Private Hire
Application	65	65	85	85
DBS / DVLA Cost	53	53	60	60
Driver Training	100	100	100	100
Road Knowledge Test (HC only)	40	-	50	-
Driving / wheelchair assessment	90	70	90	70
Licence (3 year)	170	170	200	200
<b>Total</b>	<b>£518</b>	<b>£458</b>	<b>£585</b>	<b>£515</b>

**Cost for Driver Licence Renewal**

	Current cost	Proposed cost
DBS / DVLA Cost	53	60
Licence (3 year)	170	200
Mandatory CSE Refresher Training	-	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>£223</b>	<b>£310</b>

**Cost for Additional Driver Licence (where a driver already has a HC or PH licence and requires the other licence PH or HC in addition)**

	Current cost	Proposed cost
DBS / DVLA Cost (only if within 6 months of current licence expiring)	53	60
Additional Licence (3 year)	170	200
<b>Total</b>	<b>£223</b>	<b>£260</b>

**Cost for Driver Licence Re-Grant (grant licence within 6 months of licence expiring)**

	Current cost	Proposed cost
DBS / DVLA Cost	53	60
Licence (3 year)	190	220
Mandatory CSE Refresher Training	-	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>£243</b>	<b>£330</b>

## Vehicles both Hackney Carriage and Private Hire

### Cost for New Vehicle Licence

	Current cost	Proposed cost
Licence	170	220
Taxi Test	47	55
<b>Total</b>	<b>£217</b>	<b>£275</b>

### Cost for Vehicle Licence Renewal

	Current cost	Proposed cost
Vehicle Licence	140	190
Taxi Test	47	55
<b>Total</b>	<b>£187</b>	<b>£245</b>

### Cost for Vehicle Licence Re-Grant (grant licence within 90 days of licence expiring)

	Current cost	Proposed cost
Vehicle Licence	160	210
Taxi Test	47	55
<b>Total</b>	<b>£207</b>	<b>£265</b>

## Operators

### Cost for Operators (New and Renewal)

	Current cost	Proposed cost
Operator's Licence	1668	2000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1668</b>	<b>£2000</b>

### Cost for Operators Re-Grant of Licence (Grant licence within 6 months of licence expiring)

	Current cost	Proposed cost
Operator's Licence	1708	2040
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1708</b>	<b>£2040</b>

**N.B. – DBS's may be requested by the Taxi Licensing Office at anytime and the new pricing will be as in the above tables.**