
Licensing and Regulatory Committee

23rd January 2024

Name of Cabinet Member:

Not Applicable

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Chief Legal Officer

Ward(s) affected:

Not applicable

Title:

Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Fee Review 2024

Is this a key decision?

No - although the proposals affect more than two electoral wards, the impact is not expected to be significant.

Executive summary:

To inform members of a review of the current fees in relation to the licensing of Taxis and Private hire drivers, vehicles and operators and following the required consultation process, seek approval to adopt the proposed new fees and charges.

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 Chief Legal Officer to make the necessary arrangements to advertise the applicable proposed fee variations; and
- (C) Note that if any formal objections are received in response to the statutory notice that a further report will be presented on the 12th of March 2024.

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 2024

1 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 In relation to drivers licence fees, Section 53(2) states; A district council may demand and recover for the grant to any person of a licence to drive a hackney carriage, or a private hire vehicle, as the case may be, such a fee as they consider reasonable with a view to recovering the costs of issue and administration.
- 1.3 Section 70 states; A district council may charge such fees for the grant of vehicles and operators licences as maybe resolved from time to time and as may be sufficient to cover the cost of :
- 1. Carrying out inspections of hackney carriages and private hire vehicles for the purpose of determining whether any such licence should be granted or renewed
 - 2. The reasonable cost of providing hackney carriage stands
 - 3. Any reasonable administrative or other costs in connection with the foregoing and with the control and supervision of hackney carriages and private hire vehicles.
- 1.4 A fee review was undertaken on the 5th of December 2022, to address proposed charges made for the processing and issuing of licences to drivers and operators to reflect the changes and associated costs. These charges were implemented on the 8th of February 2023.
- 1.5 Fees should be reviewed on a regular basis, and a such a cost analysis has been completed looking at current fees and overall costs. Consequently, it is recommended that fees for the coming year be adjusted to accurately reflect the cost of the service.
- 1.6 Before the fees are set, the local authority must publish in a newspaper circulating in the area, details of the proposed variation and set a period of not less than 28 days for the receipt of any objections to the proposal.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 2.1 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 Chief Legal Officer to make the necessary arrangements to advertise the applicable proposed fee variations; and
 - (C) Note that if any formal objections are received in response to the statutory notice that a further report will be presented on the 12th of March 2024.

2.2 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	675	595	715	630	40	35
Driver Renewal	315		335		20	
Additional Driver Licence	315		331		16	
Driver Re-Grant	335		352		17	
New Vehicle	255		270		15	
Vehicle Renewal	220		240		10	
Vehicle Re-Grant	240		250		10	
Vehicle Transfer	30		32		2	
Vehicle Registration Change	40		42		2	
New & Renewal Operator	2200		2300		100	
Operator Re-Grant	2240		2350		110	

Ancillary Fees	Current Charge £	Proposed Charge £	Increase £
DBS/DVLA Enquiry	65.00	70.00	5.00
Hackney Carriage Road Knowledge Test	55.00	60.00	5.00
Driver Training Course (initial applicants only)	110.00	115.00	5.00
3 Yearly Driver Refresher Training (Mandatory)	55.00	60.00	5.00
Vehicle MOT Inspection	60.00	65.00	5.00
Vehicle MOT Inspection (re-test)	30.00	32.50	2.50

2.3 It is proposed that there will be no change to any other Licences and charges at this time and the above changes are summarised in Appendix A.

2.4 These fees will be reviewed annually.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

3.1 The statutory notice requires a 28 day consultation period. Any objections received will be considered at a Licensing & Regulatory Committee meeting on the 12th of March 2024 before the proposed fee changes are approved. If no objections are received the proposed fee changes will be approved and effective from 1st of April 2024.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

4.1 If this report is approved, the proposed 2024 changes in drivers' licence fees and vehicle tests/re-tests will be advertised in a local newspaper setting out the variation proposed, and public notices will be displayed in Council Offices and on the Council website for a 28-day period. These notices will describe the way objections can be received. Any objections received will be considered at the subsequent Licensing & Regulatory Committee meeting to be held on the 12th of March 2024. If no objections are received, the proposed fees will come into force on the 1st of April 2024.

5. Comments from Chief Operating Officer (Section 151 Officer) and Chief Legal Officer

5.1. 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. Fee revisions are explained in paragraph 2.2 of this report, with a detailed list of proposed fee changes shown in Appendix A.

5.2. Legal Implications

5.2a 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.

5.2b 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.

5.2c 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 and public are given an opportunity to object to any item on the proposed fee table.

5.2d 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.

5.2e Running parallel with the public notice of the proposed changes, will be an official notification via text message to the trade informing them of the consultation, the proposed fees, and how to make objections within the 28-day consultation period.

6. Other implications

6.1. How will this contribute to the One Coventry Plan?

Ensuring that the public are safe by assessing drivers are fit and proper and vehicles safe.

6.2. How is risk being managed?

Ensuring that established procedures are followed.

6.3. What is the impact on the organisation?

None

6.4. Equalities / EIA?

Not Applicable

6.5. **Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment?**

None

6.6. **Implications for partner organisations?**

None

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

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Contributor/approver name	Title	Service	Date doc sent out	Date response received or approved
Contributors:				
Names of approvers for submission: (officers and members)				
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Thomas Robinson/Usha Patel	Governance Services Officer	Law and Governance	05/01/2024	05/01/2024
Debbie Cahalin-Heath	Strategic Manager – Regulation and Communities	Regulatory Services	22/12/2023	03/01/2024
Davina Blackburn	Strategic Lead – Regulation and Communities	Regulatory Services	22/12/2023	22/12/2023
Cath Crosby	Finance Manager	Streetscene & Regulatory Service	05/01/2024	11/01/2024
Julie Newman	Chief Legal Officer	Law and Governance	05/01/2024	08/01/2024

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Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Licensing Proposed Fee Structure 2024 – 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	95	95	100	100
DBS / DVLA Cost	65	65	70	70
Driver Training	110	110	115	115
Road Knowledge Test (HC only)	55	-	60	-
Driving / wheelchair assessment	100	75	105	80
Licence (3 year)	250	250	265	265
Total	£675	£595	£715	£630

Cost for Driver Licence Renewal

	Current cost	Proposed cost
DBS / DVLA Cost	65	70
Licence (3 year)	250	265
Mandatory CSE Refresher Training	55	60
Total	£370	£395

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)	65	70
Additional Licence (3 year)	250	265
Total	£315	£335

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

	Current cost	Proposed cost
DBS / DVLA Cost	65	70
Licence (3 year)	270	285
Mandatory CSE Refresher Training	55	60
Total	£390	£415

Vehicles both Hackney Carriage and Private Hire

Cost for New Vehicle Licence

	Current cost	Proposed cost
Licence	255	270
Taxi Test	60	65
Total	£315	£335

Cost for Vehicle Licence Renewal

	Current cost	Proposed cost
Vehicle Licence	220	230
Taxi Test	60	65
Total	£280	£295

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

	Current cost	Proposed cost
Vehicle Licence	240	250
Taxi Test	60	65
Total	£300	£315

Operators

Cost for Operators (New and Renewal)

	Current cost	Proposed cost
Operator's Licence	2200	2300
Total	£2200	£2300

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

	Current cost	Proposed cost
Operator's Licence	2240	2350
Total	£2240	£2350

N.B. – Enhanced Disclosure Barring Service checks (DBS's) may be requested by the Taxi Licensing Office at anytime, if it is believed necessary, and the new pricing will be as in the above tables. Licensed hackney carriage and private hire drivers are required to undertake six-monthly DBS's unless they have subscribed to the DBS Update Service at a cost of £13 per annum.