



Outcome of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Operators and Vehicle Licence Fees Consultation

Background

In accordance with Section 70 (1) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, the Council is required to undertake a statutory 28 day consultation when variations to operators and vehicle licence fees are proposed.

The proposed fees for 2022/23 were discussed at the Joint Public Protection Committee meeting held on the [13th September 2021](#). The Joint Public Protection Committee (JPPC) is required by the Inter-Authority Agreement (IAA) that set up the Public Protection Partnership (PPP) shared service to recommend a draft set of fees and charges to each of the member Councils which includes Bracknell Forest Council.

At the meeting of the Joint Public Protection Committee in December 2017 it was agreed that as a matter of principle all fees and charges should be set on the basis of full cost recovery. For 2021/22 the full costs of the service, including internal support service re-charges and the current establishment lists were updated which resulted in a new rate of £59 p/h. It is proposed to maintain the hourly rate at £59p/h for 2022/23.

Bracknell Forest Council's Licensing and Safety Committee considered the draft fees at a meeting held on the [21 October 2021](#). It was noted at the Committee that there had been an overall reduction in the fees. This was due to the fact that the new IT system being implemented in the new year would allow for significant efficiencies to be made in some areas, and these efficiencies would be passed on to the trade. In addition Members of the taxi trade had fed back that they had concerns about the additional cost of mandatory safeguarding and disability training. This training would be delivered by Officers in the 2022/23 year and the cost would therefore be included in the annual fee.

It should be noted that at the October Licensing and Safety Committee meeting Members reconsidered the time allocation and or fees for five services at the request of the trade. These were:

- Transfer of vehicle to new owner
- Change of vehicle
- Disclosure and Barring Service Check (DBS)
- Change of vehicle registration
- Age of vehicle Inspection – initial & renewal

The Officers proposals to retain all but the Transfer of Vehicle to New Owner fee (which was reduced by an hour) was accepted by Members at the October Licensing and Safety Committee

The proposed fees that are required to be consulted on under the legislation are set out below:

Hackney carriage vehicle new / renewal	£266.00/ £236.00
Private hire vehicle new / renewal	£266.00/ £236.00
Home to School vehicle new / renewal	£148.00
Private hire vehicle with dispensation / renewal	£266.00/ £236.00
Temporary Vehicle Licence (issued up to 3 months Maximum)	£236.00

Private hire operator licence		
Number of vehicles	New	Renewal
1	£443.00	£325.00
2	£516.00	£398.00
3	£590.00	£472.00
4	£664.00	£546.00
5	£738.00	£620.00
6	£811.00	£693.00
7	£885.00	£767.00
8	£959.00	£841.00
9	£1,033.00	£915.00
10	£1,106.00	£988.00
11	£1,180.00	£1,062.00
12	£1,254.00	£1,136.00
13	£1,328.00	£1,210.00
14	£1,401.00	£1,283.00
15	£1,475.00	£1,357.00
16	£1,549.00	£1,431.00
17	£1,623.00	£1,505.00
18	£1,696.00	£1,578.00
19	£1,770.00	£1,652.00
20	£1,844.00	£1,726.00
20+	£1,844.00	£1,726.00
Variation to licence	£59.00	£59.00

The Licensing and Safety Committee agreed that in respect of the remainder of the fees (other than those listed above) they would be recommending the new fees to the Executive.

Who and How we Consulted

- The consultation ran from 10 November 2021 to 08 December 2021.
- A public notice was placed in the Bracknell News (Wednesday, 10 November 2021) and on the Public Protection Partnership's website on the same day.
- A copy of the notice was emailed individually to all licensed Hackney Carriage Proprietors for their comments.

What you Told Us

We received two individual response from a members of the trade (Response 1 and Response 2).

In addition we received 54 identical responses all with the same content albeit that some made reference to a 62 mile journey to Newbury and that, following a dialogue with Officers, replaced that with a reference to a 36 mile round trip to Theale.(Response 3)

A Summary of the comments received are set out below.

Response 1

Raising the fees for operators and drivers in this economic climate is not the right thing to do, most businesses are struggling prices are going through the roof on everything meaning the taxis in this borough have taken a massive hit.

We have already lost a number of excellent drivers as some of them have found other careers and will not return.

People can no longer afford to take taxis and so the foot fall for taxis is no longer there. If you increase the licensing fees for operators and drivers businesses will suffer they may even close.

Respondent noted that the proposal is to consolidate the fees for the taxi Licence's but commented that if there is an increase it could push some drivers over the edge.

Response 2

The prices are increasing on the fees that the council are charging for the operator license & DBS, it is very hard to make a living.

Things are starting to go slow again, there's not much work left & Uber is killing us.

If you can't reduce your prices on these fees I strongly urge you not to put these prices up please as we are struggling

The trade objected to the increase in licensing fees for:

- 1) DBS Checks
- 2) Age of vehicle check
- 3) Refund Charge

They also raised concerns about the 62mile round trip to Newbury/ 36 mile round trip to Theale presumably to facilitate the in person checks required for the DBS checks.

What Happens Next?

Section 70 (1) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 sets out the requirements when variations to operators and vehicle licence fees are proposed. This legislation also prescribes the statutory consultation process that must be followed and the procedures for ensuring that objections are properly considered.

Members agreed at the 21 October 2021 Licensing and Safety Committee that if any objections to the *proposed charges for operators and vehicle licence fees* were

received, they be considered by the Committee at the meeting on [03 February 2022](#) and that any ensuing changes would then be recommended to full Council for approval. Council will agree the fees and charges at the [meeting](#) on the 23 February 2022.

Some of the comments received relate to fees outside of this statutory consultation on *proposed charges for operators and vehicle licence fees*. Officers have written to the respondents and explained to them that Executive will be considering the budget proposals at their meeting on the 14 December 2021. If they would like to comment on the annual budget proposals (including those elements of the fees that do not form part of this consultation) they will be able to do so on the 15th December using this link <https://beta.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/consultations>.