

## AGENDA

### GENERAL LICENSING COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Tuesday, 12 September 2017

Time: 7.00 pm

Venue: Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT

Membership:

Councillors Cameron Beart (Chairman), Tina Booth, Roger Clark, Mark Ellen, Paul Fleming, June Garrad, Lesley Ingham (Vice-Chairman), Prescott, Ben Stokes and Anita Walker.

Quorum = 3

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Pages

1. Emergency Evacuation Procedure

The Chairman will advise the meeting of the evacuation procedures to follow in the event of an emergency. This is particularly important for visitors and members of the public who will be unfamiliar with the building and procedures.

The Chairman will inform the meeting whether there is a planned evacuation drill due to take place, what the alarm sounds like (i.e. ringing bells), where the closest emergency exit route is, and where the second closest emergency exit route is, in the event that the closest exit or route is blocked.

The Chairman will inform the meeting that:

(a) in the event of the alarm sounding, everybody must leave the building via the nearest safe available exit and gather at the Assembly points at the far side of the Car Park. Nobody must leave the assembly point until everybody can be accounted for and nobody must return to the building until the Chairman has informed them that it is safe to do so; and

(b) the lifts must not be used in the event of an evacuation.

Any officers present at the meeting will aid with the evacuation.

It is important that the Chairman is informed of any person attending who is disabled or unable to use the stairs, so that suitable arrangements may be made in the event of an emergency.

2. Apologies for Absence and Confirmation of Substitutes
3. Minutes

To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 27 October 2016 (Minute Nos. 965 – 969) as a correct record, and to accept the Minutes of the following Licensing Sub-Committees:

10.30am 30 September 2016 (Minute Nos. 905 – 911)  
2.30pm 30 September 2016 (Minute Nos. 912 – 918)  
2.30pm 31 October 2016 (Minute Nos. 974 – 978)  
3.30pm 31 October 2016 (Minute Nos. 979 – 983)  
2pm 20 April 2017 (Minute Nos. 1295 – 1299)  
9.30am 24 July 2017 (Minute Nos. 118 – 122)  
11am 24 July 2017 (Minute Nos. 123 – 127)  
2pm 24 July 2017 2pm (Minute Nos. 128 – 133)  
3.30pm 24 July 2017 (Minute Nos. 134 – 139)

4. Declarations of Interest

Councillors should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves or their spouse, civil partner or person with whom they are living with as a spouse or civil partner. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

The Chairman will ask Members if they have any interests to declare in respect of items on this agenda, under the following headings:

(a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) under the Localism Act 2011. The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared. After declaring a DPI, the Member must leave the meeting and not take part in the discussion or vote. This applies even if there is provision for public speaking.

(b) Disclosable Non Pecuniary (DNPI) under the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council in May 2012. The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared. After declaring a DNPI interest, the Member may stay, speak and vote on the matter.

(c) Where it is possible that a fair-minded and informed observer, having considered the facts would conclude that there was a real possibility that the Member might be predetermined or biased the Member should declare their predetermination or bias and then leave the room while that item is considered.

**Advice to Members:** If any Councillor has any doubt about the existence or nature of any DPI or DNPI which he/she may have in any item on this agenda, he/she should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer, the Head of Legal or from other Solicitors in Legal Services as early as possible, and in advance of the Meeting.

5. Public Session

The Council operates a scheme of public speaking at meetings of the General Licensing Committee. Requests to speak at the meeting must be registered with Democratic Services by 4.30pm on Friday 8 September 2017 and must be related to an item on the agenda. Each speaker has a maximum of three minutes to speak.

**Part B Minutes for the General Licensing Committee to decide**

6. Revised Taxi Fees and Charges

1 - 16

To consider the revised Taxi Fees and Charges.

**Issued on Monday, 4 September 2017**

The reports included in Part I of this agenda can be made available in **alternative formats**. For further information about this service, or to arrange for special facilities to be provided at the meeting, **please contact DEMOCRATIC SERVICES on 01795 417330**. To find out more about the work of this Committee please visit [www.swale.gov.uk](http://www.swale.gov.uk)

Chief Executive, Swale Borough Council,  
Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT

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<b>General Licensing Committee Meeting</b>		<b>Agenda Item: 6</b>
<b>Meeting Date</b>	12 September 2017	
<b>Report Title</b>	Hackney Carriage Revised Fees and Charges	
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cllr Alan Horton, Cabinet Member for Safer Families and Communities	
<b>SMT Lead</b>	Mark Radford	
<b>Head of Service</b>	Mark Radford	
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Della Fackrell	
<b>Key Decision</b>	Yes	
<b>Classification</b>	<b>Open</b>	
<b>Forward Plan</b>	<b>Reference number:</b>	
<b>Recommendations</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To approve the modified proposed fees and charges detailed in this report in paragraph 3 and Appendix II with effect from 18 September 2017.</li> <li>2. To approve the proposal to review the taxi fare tariff</li> </ol>	

## **1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary**

- 1.1 This report is the final part of the consultation process to review Taxi Fees and Charges.
- 1.2 The Committee are requested to review the consultation responses shown in Appendix I and summarised in this report in Paragraph 3 and Appendix II to agree the modified proposed revised fees and charges and future work to consider the current taxi fares following the responses.

## **2 Background**

- 2.1 A review as part of the Council's normal business and transformation programme took place. Proposed revised Taxi Fees and Charges were put to Council on 23 November 2016 as part of the council wide review of fees and charges. This review followed up on an initial benchmarking exercise undertaken by the Transformation Team which indicated that a more detailed analysis was required. Further work has been undertaken to ensure that the charges proposed reflect the actual costs incurred in providing the service.
- 2.2 The initial report outlined that several new charges were being considered for elements of the service that the council does not currently charge for. It also noted that within the wider context of Kent fees and charges the proposed increases, whilst reflecting the true costs to the Council, would be comparable with the Kent average.

- 2.3 The report stated that specific consultation was required on changes to the taxi charges.
- 2.4 It also confirmed that the proposals would be considered by Scrutiny Committee on 16 November 2016 before submission to Council on 23 November 2016.
- 2.5 During the Scrutiny meeting on 16 November 2016 concern was raised that the increases may result in the increase being reflected on the cost to the customer. The Cabinet Member for Safer Families and Communities explained that the maximum fare was set and an operator could charge up to, but not beyond that maximum.
- 2.6 It was also explained at this meeting that the Transformation team had identified areas in Licensing fees that had been undercharging for some years and the current proposed increases were necessary to provide an effective and efficient service.
- 2.7 The Scrutiny Committee agreed that an increase was appropriate to meet costs.
- 2.8 All of the proposed Fees and Charges for the taxi licensing service have been considered on the basis of running a professional and thorough service to ensure the safety and integrity of Swale taxis. This is particularly important from a safeguarding perspective and the service has been refocused around this purpose of safe cars, safe drivers and safe journeys. It is inevitable as a consequence that we need to be charging additional and higher fees to provide this enhanced service.
- 2.9 A new computer system has been purchased and populated with the necessary driver and operator data. The Licensing department is in the final stages of setting up the required template documents and will be further developing the system with document management software.  
Establishing new working practices and systems requires investment in staff and equipment.
- Once the transformation is complete however it is anticipated that the more effective and efficient Licensing function will yield savings. If that is the case we expect to be able to reflect this in future reviews.
- 2.10 To reinforce the emphasis on public safety the revised service will also be carrying out increased compliance checks which previously have been at the minimum level. This will incur a cost to the service in officer time and communication so is also reflected in the proposed fees and charges.

### **3 Proposals**

- 3.1 During the consultation, many comments were received. These are listed in Appendix I. These comments have been further categorised in to the themes shown in the table over the page:

**Table 1: Fees and Charges response themes**

<b>Fees and Charges response to consultation August 2017</b>	
A - Themes directly linked to Fees and Charges	
1	Economic Climate
2	Cost of running service (system and resources)
3	Specific fees
B - Themes indirectly linked to Fees and Charges	
4	Fare increase
5	Consultation process for fees and charges
6	Taxi ranks
7	New proposed policy

3.2 The themes have been separated in to two types of themes. The first (A) are those that are directly linked to the fees and charges consultation and are reflected in the following paragraphs in this report.

The second (B) are those that are related to concerns raised on other elements of the taxi licensing function and will be included in a separate consultation process.

3.3 Following the consultation, officers have reconsidered the proposed fees and charges and suggest making the following modifications in response to the feedback which are also shown in a table format in Appendix II.

### **3.3.1 Dual badge for One Year**

This licence is issued to provide a probationary licence to new drivers, current drivers who only want to pay for one year or for drivers over the age of 70 or with medical conditions that require a yearly medical.

Following the consultation, officers have reviewed the requirement for this licence and consider that it is no longer necessary for new or existing drivers. It was felt to aid a probationary period for new drivers but any breaches to the policy and conditions will result in penalty points, statutory revocations or suspension. We therefore propose that this licence is only available to drivers that have a statutory need for a yearly licence due to age or medical restrictions.

### **3.3.2 Charges that relate to replacements/updates**

These charges are: Dual Driver Badge replacement,  
Change of address,  
Replacement paper licence.

Following the consultation comments we propose to modify this charge to £10.00 per item to better reflect the work required. The cost for a replacement vehicle plate will remain at £15.00 due to the additional cost of the plate.

### **3.3.3 Plate deposit**

Currently we take a deposit of £100.00 for a plate which is refundable when the plates are returned and no longer required.

We propose to modify this charge to a set non-refundable fee of £50.00 for the plate which will only be issued once. An individual driver will receive a unique number which they will retain for the rest of their time in business. The plate will be transferrable with the Change of Ownership fee. This will reduce the amount the drivers will need to pay up front and save the council processing time in refunding the deposit.

### **3.3.4 Change from Private Hire to Hackney Carriage and Change from Hackney Carriage to Private Hire**

We have reviewed the process and calculations for both of these functions and have found there is no discernible difference in the tasks so it is not justifiable to have different charges. Therefore the proposal is to set the fee at £80 for both.

- 3.4 We have also reviewed the following fees that have either increased or are new and consider that the amount that was proposed is correct for the following reasons:

#### **3.4.1 Dual Badge for one year**

This fee was significantly under charged previously for the work and resources required to deliver a thorough process and record the details on an appropriate system. This fee is however recommended under section 3.3.1 to be removed save for statutory requirements.

#### **3.4.2 Dual Badge for three years**

This charge was much more realistic so has only required a small increase for it to meet the costs involved.

#### **3.4.3 Knowledge test and Knowledge test re-sit**

This fee has only increased by a small amount but is no longer refundable against the issue of the first badge. It is a cost to the council to facilitate the Knowledge tests which we currently offer on a monthly basis. In comparison to some of our neighbouring authorities this is much more frequent than is offered by them. We are able to offer this regular service at the moment but clearly this takes officer time to deliver. An online test is being considered which will enable us to continue to offer the monthly opportunity which is better for taxi operators and drivers.

We currently restrict the number of re-sits that potential drivers can take to three, by introducing this fee it will allow them to take as many as they require. This is assisted by an online test which will have a larger pool of questions.



### **3.4.4 Vehicle licence for one year**

Following a breakdown of the costs to deliver this licence which was also compared against other local councils it was found that it had been significantly undercharged. This new fee is still below some neighbouring authorities so we are confident that this is at the correct level and covers the costs of administering the process.

### **3.4.5 Change of Ownership of the Licensed Vehicle**

This is a new fee that is required to cover officer time and a small charge for consumables.

### **3.4.6 Private Hire Operator Licence valid for 5 years**

This fee has been significantly undercharged for many years. The current fee equates to £20.00 per year and the proposed fee equates to £86.00 per year. The £86.00 per year is a realistic charge to cover the cost of yearly compliance checks with the operators by the Licensing Officers. In addition to this is the cost of administration, system and support costs.

This amount is still lower than the majority of the neighbouring authorities but we consider that the revised charge sufficiently covers the cost of producing and maintaining this licence.

## **4 Alternative Options**

- 4.1 If the modified proposals are not considered suitable then members could revert to the original proposed Fees and Charges. Members could also make any other modifications having considered representations as they think appropriate. These could be trialled through the next 12 months to then review them again in readiness for the 2018/19 budget.
- 4.2 The proposed fees could be considered to be brought in on a phased basis. This is not recommended as the taxi Licensing function is improving but is not as effective and efficient as the transformation team have considered it could be. The increase is therefore necessary to facilitate this change. This loss could be recouped by adding to future years but bringing the increases in in smaller amounts.

## **5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed**

- 5.1 A formal consultation has taken place and began in June 2017.
- 5.2 This included writing to all drivers and operators to explain the consultation process. They were advised that any objection to the revised published fees and charges proposed must be put in writing setting out the reason for any objection. Objections had to be received within 28 days from the publication of the notice to be considered, therefore by 19 July 2017.

- 5.3 A public notice outlining the proposed fees was published from Wednesday 21 June 2017 in the Faversham News, Sheerness Times Guardian and Sittingbourne News Extra. It was also available on Swale Borough Council's website and at Swale House, Sittingbourne to provide maximum notice of these proposed changes and allow people to make objections should they wish to.
- 5.4 For any objection made and not withdrawn, the council were required to set a further date, not later than two months after the completion of the 28 day consultation period, when the licence fees proposed will come into force with or without modifications, as decided by the Council after consideration of the objections. This date is therefore 18 September 2017 as the consultation closed on the 19 July 2017.
- 5.5 The taxi policy is being reviewed and will take in to account the comments that have been submitted through the Fees and Charges consultation process. Once the final draft is complete the Licensing team will meet with the drivers and operators to discuss the proposed policy before it goes through the official consultation process. Following the consultation a final draft will be brought to the Licensing Act 2003 Committee for approval.
- 5.6 Another of the key elements raised during this consultation was the request for the taxi fares to be reviewed. We would therefore request that Committee authorise the Licensing section to begin a review of the taxi fare tariff.

## 6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The service is an important regulatory function undertaken to ensure safety of the private hire and hackney carriage vehicles used in the Borough and supports the achievement of corporate priorities, including "A council to be proud of".
Financial, Resource and Property	In implementing the new charges the income level will support the service in delivering its duties and satisfy the requirements to cover the costs of providing the service..
Legal and Statutory	All proposals for charges reflect the relevant legislation.
Crime and Disorder	None identified at this stage
Environmental Sustainability	None identified at this stage
Health and Wellbeing	Arrangements to recognise and consider less able members of the community.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	The main purpose of our policy is to deliver a safe taxi service to the public.
Equality and Diversity	Where there are underlying policy issues to any proposed changes in charges, these will be supported by a service equality impact assessment, and any necessary mitigation undertaken.
Privacy and Data Protection	None identified

## **7 Appendices**

7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: Fees and Charges consultation comments
- Appendix II: Proposed Fees and Charges table - modified

## **8 Background Papers**

8.1 None

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## APPENDIX I – FEES AND CHARGES CONSULTATION COMMENTS

Date	From	Verbatim comments received	Theme
21/06/17	Respondent 1	The increases in charges do not appear in proportion to the current cost of living	1
21/06/17	Respondent 1	you also haven't provided your own costs as allegedly the department is run as a non profit making part of the council i wonder if you would be so kind as to provide the departments costs to run over the period since the last increase.	2
21/06/17	Respondent 1	The increase in Vehicle licence from £160 to £290 highly excessive. Please could you advise the reason for the increase of £130 per vehicle, as across the estate, which I believe to be currently in the region of 230 vehicles, this alone amounts to £29,900.	2
21/06/17	Respondent 1	It also appear that there is an excessive amount of work to change a Hackney vehicle to a Private Hire Vehicle to incur a charge of £70	3
21/06/17	Respondent 1	though conversely it is more expensive to change a Private Hire Vehicle to a Hackney incurs a £90 charge. One would imagine that the cost of installing a meter and Top sign, re-colouring of the vehicle and removal or placing of graphics etc is still a cost to be incurred by the operator, so I can see no costs that the council would incur here, as all inspections are carried out at the cost of the operator.	4
21/06/17	Respondent 1	The cost of providing a licence for an operator increasing from £100 to £430 is more than excessive.	FOI 168
21/06/17	Respondent 1	Please supply a breakdown of costs of running the Taxi licensing department in Swale for the period since the last increase	FOI 168
21/06/17	Respondent 1	Please supply a breakdown of projected costs for the forthcoming 2 years for the Taxi Licensing department in Swale	FOI 168
21/06/17	Respondent 1	Please confirm the exact number of Private Hire and Hackney Vehicles currently licensed in Swale	FOI 168
21/06/17	Respondent 1	Please advise the number of Private Operators operating in Swale that would require an operators licence	FOI 168
21/06/17	Respondent 1	Please advise the number of team members and the roles carried out within the Licensing team and the hours that each role is provided with on a weekly basis	FOI 168
21/06/17	Respondent 2	These new council charges seem excessive and I feel that a substantial fare increase will be necessary.	4
05/07/17	Respondent 3	I Object to the proposed fee change increases on the following grounds  1. The decisions are an imposition on the local industry and have been proposed in the absence of consultation (since October 2015 (Last Taxi liaison meeting)) with Swale Taxi and Private Hire operators.	5
05/07/17	Respondent 3	The level of proposed raise is disproportionate and introduces many entirely new charges.	3
05/07/17	Respondent 3	The introduction of a new charge for knowledge test re-sits and increase on the initial test will further damage recruitment efforts at a time when numbers of new driver entry is critically low (30% pass rate for knowledge tests). Several alternatives to the test have already been proposed that would save money and council human resources.	3
05/07/17	Respondent 3	Operators with a 10 car fleet will pay an extra £1300 per year at a time that SBC have made efficiencies in licensing functions.	2
06/07/17	Respondent 4	Why haven't we been informed of the price increases before they were decided upon and how did you cost out these prices. We would also like to know how these amounts have been decided and emailed over to us.	5
06/07/17	Respondent 5	I would like to request a copy of the taxi/Private hire licencing accounts for the	FOI 204

## APPENDIX I – FEES AND CHARGES CONSULTATION COMMENTS

		last 5 years under the freedom of information act	
06/07/17	Respondent 5	under the freedom of information act, and a breakdown of cost's associated with issuing the following: Dual Driver Licence 1 year Dual Driver Licence 3 year Vehicle Licence 1 year 6 Month test vehicle over 5 years Change of ownership of licenced vehicle Change from PH to HC Change from HC to PH PH operator's Licence Change of address Replacement Paper Licence Certificate Any other licence fees in relation to operators fees	FOI 204
06/07/17	Respondent 5	I would also like to request all income and expenditure associated with taxi and private hire licencing, including the last 7 years figures for any surpluses or deficits which may have been carried over from one year to another.	FOI 204
06/07/17	Respondent 5	I do not see any proposed increases in fees across any other licencing, if everything is now under one department how can you expect the taxi trade to subsidise the cost of all licencing.	FOI 204
06/07/17	Respondent 6	I want to formally object to the increase in the taxi badge fees. I work for Sittingbourne cabs badge number 2191 Patrick ferguson. I feel the increase is extremely unfair! It costs so much already to get our badges and station right ect and with the amount of taxis out there it's hard to earn a living as it is.	6
06/07/17	Respondent 7	In light of those proposed changes, please take note of my clear opposition until such time when justifiable reasons and majority acceptance can be reached.	2
06/07/17	Respondent 4	Why haven't we been informed of the price increases before they were decided upon	5
06/07/17	Respondent 4	how did you cost out these prices. We would also like to know how these amounts have been decided and emailed over to us.	2
06/07/17	Respondent 4	We are all struggling for drivers and these cost increases won't do anything to encourage drivers to go for their badges,	2
11/07/17	Respondent 4	of copies of the last two years accounts for the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licencing department to substantiate the proposed massive increase in charges for this department.	2
11/07/17	Respondent 8	Having been a taxi driver and not receiving a increase in fares since late 2013, I can not see any justification in such an extortionate raise in price!	4
11/07/17	Respondent 8	The dept has made significant changes in how the department is run on a daily basis and streamlined the operation and probably made drastic savings in running costs.	2
11/07/17	Respondent 8	Your own local policy states that new drivers can not obtain a 3 year licence and you have put an extra cost of £195 over three years on the price, making it even harder for driver recruitment.	7/3
11/07/17	Respondent 8	Paper hackney licence replacement £10.50. Plastic printed Hackney licence replacement £9.50. £1 more for a piece of a4 paper against a plastic card that costs more. It appears that figures were just plucked from the air.	2
12/07/17	Respondent 9	having lowered the cost of hackney badge because of less administration involved now you feel the need to more than double the cost???	2
12/07/17	Respondent 9	I feel the rise from £160 to £290 for the annual plate is far to excessive ,you say you have compared other districts when making these proposals yet when	2

## APPENDIX I – FEES AND CHARGES CONSULTATION COMMENTS

		in the past we as taxi drivers have approached the hackney department regarding types /lifespan of vehicles etc in swale compared to other districts it has fallen on deaf ears	
12/07/17	Respondent 9	the increase on operators license it's just ridiculous. I would like to suggest that if you can really justify these rises with evidence to back it up that they should at the very least be introduced over a 3 -5 year period to give everyone concerned a chance to absorb these extra costs	2
13/07/17	Respondent 10	rises that in some cases exceed 100 percent,or more than 40 times the rate of inflation we have nota rise on the taxi meter in four years and the number of fares we carry carry has declined because of the increase in taxis on the road in the swale area.	4
13/07/17	Respondent 10	the cost of fuel, insurance and vehicle maintenance has risen substantially. As a consequence, the average wage for a driver is working out at about £5.50 an hour, well below the national minimum wage....it is now reaching the stage where I can get more money on Jobseeker's Allowance then in my car.	1
13/07/17	Respondent 10	This is a increase overall of £63,000 and £27,000 of that from the p.h side so what warrants this cost as the work load has gone down and the cost as we have to print of all the paperwork you do not send letters out anymore it is all emails .	2
13/07/17	Respondent 11	I'm disappointed that sbc are proposing to increase our prices especially as this add insult to injury as sbc decided to use our money to invest in vehicles for Africa to run and uber style service under cutting our prices by at least 50% and effecting our incomes during daytime massively yet you still believe it's appropriate to increase our costs?	
13/07/17	Respondent 11	Hopefully you can forward me any information and explain why you and sbc are happy to allow these things to happen we had enough to worry about with the upcoming degeneration about to destroy the infrastructure and bring the town to gridlock.	2
13/07/17	Respondent 12	the cost of a renewal driving license increasing from £50 to £125 for one year. I understand prices increase but this is a 125% increase. Myself amongst other drivers struggle to earn a living now and this increase in cost puts.considerable strain on us.	2
13/07/17	Respondent 12	I also wish to see what improvements are due to be implemented with the fees such as the sheerness train station and bridge road.rank boxes being repainted and signposted and enforced. Perhaps a high street taxi rank in sheerness which is a ongoing request.by drivers as most people are unaware of the current one behind the old library .	6
14/07/17	Respondent 13	WHAT IS YOUR JUSTIFICATION IN THESE INCREASES OF EPIC PROPORTIONS IN ONE FOUL SWOOP. BEFORE YOU SAY ITS TO BRING OUR COUNCIL FEES IN LINE WITH OTHER COUNCILS STOP AND THINK	2
14/07/17	Respondent 13	THESE INCREASES SHOULD NOT BE BROUGHT IN AT SUCH EXTORTIONATE LEAPS PHASING IN OVER A COUPLE OF YEARS MAYBE BUT THIS IS ALSO DEPENDANT ON WHAT YOU CAN PROVIDE OUR TRADE TOO.	1
14/07/17	Respondent 13	WE HAVE HAD PATHETIC INCREASES ONLY ON STARTING RATE OF 10P PER JOB DESPITE LEAPING COSTS OF INSURANCES PARTS SERVICING ETC IT COSTS 20.00 PE METER TO UPDATE THE METERS AND WE HAVE INCREASES OF 10P PER JOB WETHER 1 MILE OR A 100 THAT IS 200 JBS JUST TO COVER METER INCREASE THESE ARE NOT WHAT YOU CAN REALLY CLASS AS INCREASE CERTAINLY NOT BY YOUR INCREASES TO US.	4
14/07/17	Respondent 13	TO PROTECT OUR TRADE WHICH IS PART OF OUR FEE I DO HOPE YOU ARE GOING TO PREVENT UBER SETTING UP SHOP IN SWALE AS THEY WILL USE UNLICENCED ,UNINSURED AND NON POLICE CHECKED DRIVERS SEE TRADE	

## APPENDIX I – FEES AND CHARGES CONSULTATION COMMENTS

		PAPERS OR NATIONAL NEWS.THEY WONT BE PAYING YOUR INCREASES AND THAT WILL RESULT IN NO COUNCIL DEPARTMENT REQUIRED REDUNDANCIES IN YOUR OFFICE TOO	
14/07/17	Respondent 13	WE NEED INCREASE IN FARESAND THEY SHOULD BE IMPLEMENTED FOR AT LEAST 1 YEAR BEFORE WE ARE SUBJECTED TO ANY INCREASES FROM YOURSELVES. THE LAST MAJOR HIKE IN PRICES WE HAD WAS MANY YEARS AGO GUESS WHAT THAT ALSO WAS BECAUSE COUNCIL FORGOT TO INCREASE FARES YET AGAIN !! SO WE GOT A 50% INCREASE NOTGOOD FOR ELDERLY CUSTOMERS AND ALSO NOT GOOD FOR TRADE A MAJOR INCREASE OF THAT SIZE CAUSES TROUBLE CUSTOMERS THINK WE ARE RIPPING THEM OFF CHARGING WRONG RATE IT'S A SHOCK ALL IN ONE HIT . WE NEED YEARLY INCREASES PLANNED DISCUSSED AND IMPLEMENTED NOT TO BE FORGOTTEN FOR SEVERAL YEARS THEN HUGE INCREASE THE PULIC HAVE BUDGETS TOO .OR ELSE IT WILL DO MORE HARM TO OUR BUSINESSES RATHER THAN HELP	4
14/07/17	Respondent 13	FIGURES THAT COVER TAXI LICENCING OFFICE IM REQUESTING THEM AGAIN YOU CAN SEND BY EMAIL	2
14/07/17	Respondent 13	I THEREFORE OPPOSE YOUR INCREASES UNTIL WE HAVE HAD AN INCREASE IN FARES FOR A YEAR WITH AGREEMENT FOR SET DATES FOR YEARLY INCREASES THEN THE COUNCIL TO SHOW THEIR DEPARTMENT FIGURES AND A SUGGESTION FROM COUNCIL OF INCREASES ON FEES ON A 3 YEAR PLAN NOT IN ONE HIT	4
17/07/17 Duplicate of 11/07/17	Respondent 4	We feel that this increase is well out of proportion to standard increase and because it has not been reviewed for 5 years we feel that putting it up in one go will cause a lot of hardship and possibly unemployment to a lot of people and companies.  As you say, this is a non profit service, please could you email over copies of the last two years accounts for the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licencing department to substantiate the proposed massive increase in charges for this department.	Dup of 11/7
17/07/17	Respondent 14	The prices have not been increased by the same percentage across the board. Some prices have not changed, some have more than doubled, another has been increased by £330 a year. Can you please explain why the charge to private hire a car has increased so much more than any other charge. I'm not aware of additional administration being incurred when private hiring a vehicle.	2
17/07/17	Respondent 14	why there is a charge of £60 charge every six months on a vehicle over FIVE years old, when the plate that is issued has a one year expiry date on it. What is the additional £60 charge for?	3
17/07/17	Respondent 14	Now that we either print off and fill in paperwork (at our own cost) or fill it in online means we are picking up additional charges instead of the council. You are no longer printing and posting the forms to us, so it should be cheaper.	2
17/07/17	Respondent 14	I have spoken to a local Councillor and they explained that Swale is classed as a deprived area, just like Thanet. In Thanet there is NO maximum age on vehicles. If a vehicle can pass the council's Hackney test they don't have to change it. If the vehicle has been maintained to an excellent standard and could pass the test, why should we have to replace it?	7
18/07/17	Respondent 5	the reason for the fee increase and the justification for a 100% to 400% increase on fee's, since the hackney department have automated all applications and correspondence via email & the swale borough council website, putting everything online including booking appointments and paying fees online, how does this incur higher admin cost's.	2
18/07/17	Respondent 5	saving money in admin cost's & licencing officers, isn't the local council only	2



## APPENDIX I – FEES AND CHARGES CONSULTATION COMMENTS

		allowed to charge for admin cost's for licencing and not make a profit, so if this statement is true how can a obvious benefit of transferring all licencing to one department bring more admin charges.	
18/07/17	Respondent 5	If the proposed fee increase is implemented the cost's to operators and owners would need to be recouped by means of a price increase on taxi meters, which has not increased I believe since 2013, the situation in the Taxi service at this time is very hard for operators with Uber on our doorstep and just recently Arriva with there Arriva click app running a home pick up taxi service!	4
18/07/17	Respondent 15	I do not believe that the increases are justified how can you warrant an increase of over 100% on some of the fees? Is this an underhand way to squeeze the taxi driver and companies out? Even the rate of inflation is not anywhere near this colossal increase,	1 & 2
18/07/17	Respondent 15	If this proposal was decided back in November 2016, why has it taken so long to become public that this was the council's intention.	5
18/07/17	Respondent 15	I have already requested a copy of the last two years completed accounts and cannot wait to see how much of a loss the hackney carriage office has been running at that these increases will bring it up to non profit balance.	2
19/07/17	Respondent 16	although im in favour of increases over a period of time i dont agree with an increase of hackney plates from £160 to £290 pounds in one go and a badge for 1 year going from £50 to £115. Even allowing for inflation over 5 years it shouldnt be this amount. I think this is totally unacceptable at this time. You as a council are doing less for your money and putting the onus on us taxi drivers. you are not printing anything or posting anything so you are saving money thats why i think these rises are all wrong.	2
19/07/17	Respondent 17	the outrageous increases proposed for hackney renewals and badges without dialogue with the trade will have a detrimental effect on the business. What you are doing is driving the industry into the hands of Uber and similar outfits. Which, as you know are completely deregulated and Swale can have no input into any kind of standards if Uber get a foothold in the borough. Reasonable costs, reasonable regulation, nobody has a problem with. If you try to over regulate and raise our costs by 100 times inflation then this is what you will have –	5
19/07/17	Respondent 17	I think it's important that we have regular meetings with the licensing team in order that we are not all blind-sided by announcements in the press and that we can work together more effectively in the futire	5

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## APPENDIX II – PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES TABLE (modified)

	Existing Fees	Proposed Fees for 2017/18	Modified following consultation	Frequency
<b>Dual Driving Licence (Hackney Carriage and Private Hire)</b>				
Dual Badge for 1 year	£50.00	£115.00	Delete this licence	Frequent
Dual Badge for 1 year for medical or over 70 years of age			£50 per year (this avoids them being disadvantaged.)	Occasional
Dual Badge for 3 years	£120.00	£150.00		Frequent
Knowledge Test – Initial	£20.00 (refunded against first badge)	£25.00		Frequent
Knowledge Test – Re-sit	£0.00	£25.00		Frequent
Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) search fee	£44.00 every three years or £13.00 per year if signed up to the DBS online service.	£44.00 every three years or £13.00 per year if signed up to the DBS online service.		Frequent
Dual Driver Badge replacement	£5.00	£9.50	£10.00	Occasional
<b>Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Licence</b>				
Vehicle Licence for 1 year	£160.00	£290.00		Frequent
6 monthly check for when vehicle is between 5 and 10 years old.	£60.00	£60.00		Frequent
Plate deposit which is refundable when plate no longer required	£100.00	£100.00	£50.00 non-refundable plate fee. Plate number only issued once.	Occasional
Licence and plate for temporary hire vehicle	£40.00	£40.00		Occasional
Replacement plate	£15.00	£15.00		Occasional
Change of ownership of the licensed vehicle	£0.00	£35.00		Frequent
Change from Private Hire to Hackney Carriage	£0.00	£90.00	£80.00	Rare
Change from Hackney Carriage to Private Hire	£0.00	£70.00	£80.00	Rare
<b>Private Hire Operator Licence</b>				
Private Hire Operator Licence valid for 5 years	£100.00	£430.00		Occasional
<b>Additional Costs</b>				
Change of Address	£0.00	£10.00		Occasional
Replacement Paper Licence certificate	£0.00	£10.50	£10.00	Occasional

### Key

Frequent	Weekly to Monthly
Occasional	2 Monthly to 3 monthly
Rare	More than 3 monthly

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