

## Rother District Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Licensing and General Purposes Committee
<b>Date:</b>	17 April 2023
<b>Title:</b>	Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licence Fees
<b>Report of:</b>	Head of Service - Environmental Services, Licensing and Community Safety
<b>Ward(s):</b>	All
<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	To consider an increase in operator and vehicle fees.
<b>Recommendation:</b>	It be <b>RESOLVED</b> : That operator and vehicle licence fees be increased from 24 April 2023 as set out at Table C.

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### Background

1. The Council sets fees for taxi licensing.
2. Under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 sub-section 53(2), fees for hackney carriage and private hire licences have to be reasonable with a view to recovering the cost of issue, administration and enforcement of conditions, but not raising revenue. Council policy is that when setting fee levels the aim of the authority will be to try and ensure the income received equals the expenditure incurred in providing the licensing function.
3. Operator and vehicle licence fees were last increased in 2011.
4. Subsection 70(3) sets out special requirements in relation to hackney carriage and private hire operator and vehicle licences. In these cases, a notice must be published in a local newspaper stating the proposed fees and giving 28 days for objections to be received. If there are no objections the increase may be implemented, but otherwise the matter must be reported back to this Committee for consideration of the objections.
5. There were three responses to the consultation from drivers, which are set out in Appendix A.
6. Driver fees were increased on 1 April 2023.

### Reasons for the proposed increase

7. The budget for taxi licensing decreased following the creation of the shared service in 2013 and during the pandemic income reduced.
8. Officers have estimated the time involved in issuing and enforcing conditions for different licences, as set out in Appendix B.

9. The tables below set out the current budget position:

Table A	Without increase in fees	
	22/23 ESTIMATE	23/24 ESTIMATE
Salaries	47,600	48,000
Operational Costs	6,500	8,000
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>54,100</b>	<b>56,000</b>
Income	-67,000	-67,000
<b>Net cost before support services</b>	<b>-12,900</b>	<b>-11,000</b>
Support Service	70,000	70,000
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>57,100</b>	<b>59,000</b>

Table B	With increase in fees	
	22/23 ESTIMATE	23/24 ESTIMATE
Salaries	47,600	48,000
Operational Costs	6,500	8,000
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>54,100</b>	<b>56,000</b>
Income	-67,000	-75,000
<b>Net cost before support services</b>	<b>-12,900</b>	<b>-19,000</b>
Support Service	70,000	70,000
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>57,100</b>	<b>51,000</b>

**Table C - Proposed Fees 2023/24**

Type of Licence	Number per year	Current fee 22/23	Proposed fee 23/24	Proposed increase	Predicted income
Dual Driver (new-1 year)	5	£235	£260	11%	£1,300
Dual Driver (new-3 years)	10	£480	£520	8%	£5,200
Dual Driver (renewal-1 year)	8	£210	£240	14%	£1,920
Dual Driver (renewal-3 years)	40	£370	£480	30%	£19,200
HC vehicle - renewal	95	£240	£280	17%	£26,600
HC vehicle - new	24	£240	£320	33%	£7,680
PH vehicle - renewal	35	£225	£280	24%	£9,800
PH vehicle - new	5	£225	£320	42%	£1,600
PH Operator (3 years, <20 vehicles)	5	£315	£320	2%	£1,600
PH Operator (5 years, <20 vehicles)	1	£525	£520	-1%	£520
PH Operator (3 years, >20 vehicles)	0	£630	£640	2%	£0
PH Operator (5 years, >20 vehicles)	0	£1,000	£1,000	0%	£0
<b>TOTAL</b>					<b>£75,420</b>

### Conclusion

10. Operator and vehicle licence fees have not been increased since 2011. Increases are proposed that consider the time required to process and enforce conditions attached to that licence. The proposed increases in the operator and vehicle licence fees have been consulted on and Members must now consider those comments.

### Financial Implications

11. The Council must increase its income to reduce the dependence on the use of reserves to balance the budget.

### Risk Assessment

12. Failure to increase licence fees will mean the cost of providing the service will be increasingly borne by the Council Taxpayer.

<b>Other Implications</b>	<b>Applies?</b>	<b>Other Implications</b>	<b>Applies?</b>
Human Rights	No	Equalities and Diversity	No
Crime and Disorder	No	External Consultation	Yes
Environmental	No	Access to Information	No
Risk Management	No	Exempt from publication	No
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Appendices:	Appendix A - Consultation responses Appendix B - Fees calculation Appendix C - Budget since 2015/16		
Relevant Previous Minutes:	LG22/15		
Background Papers:	None		
Reference Documents:	None		

### Consultation Responses

1. Any news on the proposed fare increase, which has been proposed months ago, the cost of living is unbelievable, yet your now putting the prices up considerably, couple that with the CCTV fiasco, which we know will go ahead, irrespective of how many objections they'll be. I struggle to understand all these proposals, from people who have no idea about the job, or the costs entailed with running a taxi business, in these tough times. The last 2-3 years have been extremely tough on us, hardly any grants given out, despite money being given to local councils, but as you had furlough money, you were paid. Perhaps you could also increase the upper age limit, another issue which has been in discussion for an eternity.
2. Can I ask why the prices are going up and not down? Plates are no longer made as we just have stickers to replace, I'm very confused in these dire times.
3. I saw all of the proposal you made it and I can say I am really sorry but I'm really unhappy about outcome because with all of crisis going on, I don't feel we have got any help from Rother at all. You increase one time fare rate and even during that you took away the Sunday tariff. Now you propose to increase again with taking something else again also you want to make CCTV mandatory and force taxi drivers to pay for it but will be nice for example if you will help taxi drivers at once even by increasing years for our taxi.

Table showing hours per licence type

Type	Hours	Cost £
Driver-new-1 year	6.5	260
Driver-new-3 years	13	520
Driver-renewal-1 year	6	240
Driver-renewal-3 years	12	480
HC vehicle-new	8	320
HC vehicle-renewal	7	280
PH vehicle-new	8	320
PH vehicle-renewal	7	280
PH operator- 3 years	8	320
PH operator- 5 years	13	520
PH operator- 3 years > 20 vehicles	16	640
PH operator- 5 years > 20 vehicles	26	1040

## Budget from 2015/16

Year	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23 ESTIMATE	23/24 ESTIMATE
Salaries	56,690	51,665	43,971	49,130	48,016	32,439	42,564	47,600	48,000
Operational Costs	8,109	8,058	5,810	13,656	11,618	14,745	6,722	6,500	8,000
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>64,799</b>	<b>59,723</b>	<b>49,781</b>	<b>62,786</b>	<b>59,634</b>	<b>47,184</b>	<b>49,286</b>	<b>54,100</b>	<b>56,000</b>
Income	-79,266	-88,510	-76,510	-80,175	-89,105	-66,551	-68,172	-67,000	-67,000*
<b>Net cost before support services</b>	-14,467	-28,787	-26,729	-17,389	-29,471	-19,367	-18,886	-12,900	-11,000
Support Service	32,622	77,882	87,075	72,524	78,140	87,144	67,124	70,000	70,000
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>18,155</b>	<b>49,095</b>	<b>60,346</b>	<b>55,135</b>	<b>48,669</b>	<b>67,777</b>	<b>48,238</b>	<b>57,100</b>	<b>59,000*</b>

\*= no increase in fees