



**Oversight and Governance**

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## TAXI LICENSING COMMITTEE

Thursday 21 March 2019  
10.00 am  
Council House, Plymouth

**Members:**

Councillor Mavin, Chair  
Councillor Singh, Vice Chair  
Councillors Mrs Bridgeman, Corvid, Jordan, Mrs Pengelly and Rennie.

Members are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business overleaf.

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**Tracey Lee**  
Chief Executive

# Taxi Licensing Committee

## Part I (Public Meeting)

### Agenda

#### 1. Apologies

To receive apologies for non-attendance submitted by Committee Members.

#### 2. Declarations of Interest

Members will be asked to make any declarations of interest in respect of items on this agenda.

#### 3. Minutes

(Pages 1 - 6)

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 28 February 2019.

#### 4. Chair's Urgent Business

To receive reports on business which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be brought forward for urgent consideration.

#### 5. Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licence Fees

(Pages 7 - 96)

The Director for Public Health will submit a report for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licence Fees.

#### 6. Exempt Business

To consider passing a resolution under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the press and public from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended by the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

## Part II (Private Meeting)

### Agenda

#### Members of the public to note:

that under the law, the committee is entitled to consider certain items in private. Members of the public will be asked to leave the meeting when such items are discussed.

#### 7. Confidential Minutes

(Pages 97 - 110)

To confirm the confidential minutes of the meeting held on 28 February 2019.

## Taxi Licensing Committee

Thursday 28 February 2019

### PRESENT:

Councillor Mavin, in the Chair.

Councillor Singh, Vice Chair.

Councillors Mrs Bridgeman, Corvid, Jordan, Mrs Pengelly and Rennie.

Apology for absence: Councillor Mrs Pengelly (morning only).

Also in attendance: Sharon Day (Lawyer – AM Only), Steve Forshaw (Senior Enforcement Officer), Catherine Fox (Lawyer – PM Only), Cathy Griffin (Enforcement Officer), Andrew Hardingham (Service Director for Finance – AM only), Rachael Hind (Licensing Service Manager – AM only), David Northey, (Head of Integrated Finance – AM only, Helen Prendergast (Democratic Advisor), Mark Small (Enforcement Officer – AM only).

The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 7.40 pm.

*Note: At a future meeting, the committee will consider the accuracy of these draft minutes, so they may be subject to change. Please check the minutes of that meeting to confirm whether these minutes have been amended.*

#### 100. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made by Members in accordance with the code of conduct.

#### 101. **Minutes**

The Committee agreed that the minutes of the meetings held on 10 January and 24 January 2019 are confirmed as a correct record.

#### 102. **Chair's Urgent Business**

There were no items of Chair's urgent business.

#### 103. **Appeal Cases**

The Committee was provided with the result of an appeal case that had been submitted to the Magistrate's Court.

Members were advised that their decision had been upheld with costs being awarded to the City Council.

#### 104. **Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licence Fees**

Rachel Hind (Licensing Service Manager) advised the Committee that on Monday afternoon (25 February 2019) she had received an email with a letter sent from a legal representative of the Plymouth Licensed Taxi Association (PLTA).

The letter was received very late after the consultation period had closed, however in light of the information contained it was right to give this matter due consideration.

It was recommended that the decision on fees was deferred to allow officers to check the assertions made and provide assurance to Members to allow them to set the fees in accordance with the legal requirements.

The Committee agreed to defer the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licence Fees to a future meeting of the Committee for consideration.

*(The meeting was adjourned at 10.20am to reconvene at 2pm).*

*(Councillor Mrs Pengelly was not present for this item).*

105. **Exempt Business**

Agreed that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the press and public from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1 of Part I Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended by the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

106. **Confidential Minutes**

The Committee agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 24 January 2019 are a correct record.

107. **Review of Status of Hackney Carriage Driver Licence - DGP**

At the start of the hearing the Committee considered DP's request made by email that the hearing took place in part I and for the Taxi Licensing Officer, Mr Forshaw to act as a character reference. It also considered DP's verbal request for his character witness to be called out of order due to a prior work commitment.

The Committee determined that the hearing should be heard in part II (in private).

It noted that Mr Forshaw was presenting the report on behalf of the Taxi Licensing Department and so could not act as a character witness. He was available to answer all questions put to him.

The position of the character witness was further noted and it was agreed he could be called before the Committee heard from DP. At 14.30pm unfortunately, when CW was called he had had to leave and had left a message to be presented to the Committee.

The Committee –

- (d) considered and took into account the report from the Director of Public Health;
- (e) considered the statement and heard oral evidence from complainant one (driver) and complainant two (passenger assistant);
- (f) heard from DP;
- (g) took into account DP's statement and his oral evidence to the Committee;
- (h) noted the evidence, written and oral from the complainants.

The Committee took all the above and the report into consideration and also considered the Council's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy 2018.

The Committee resolved that it wanted to find a way to help DP realise that he had made an error of judgement in causing this incident and to find a way to help him work with the Authority rather than against it.

For that reason it resolved to suspend DP's Hackney Carriage licence for a period of five consecutive days to provide him with time for reflection and a period within which he could consider and refresh his memory with the rules and conditions of his licence.

It further resolved that a warning should be placed on DP's record that if there were to be any further contraventions, penalty points, complaints and convictions then that matter would be referred to the Committee and considered alongside the information presented today.

*(Councillor Singh left the meeting prior to the Committee making its decision on DP's review and took no further part in the meeting).*

*(Please note: there is a confidential part to this minute).*

### **Order of Business**

With the permission of the Chair, the order of the agenda was changed as reflected in the minutes.

#### **108. Application for the Grant of a Private Hire Vehicle Driver Licence - LDB**

The Committee -

- (a) considered the report from the Director of Public Health;

- (b) heard from LBD;
- (c) took the report and all that was said by LBD and his wife into account.

The Committee took all of the above and the report into consideration and also considered the Council's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy and in particular its Guidance on Relevance of Convictions and Conduct.

The Committee had considered the application on its own merits and in this instance was prepared to act outside of its policy and agreed to grant the application subject to LPD's completion on the first available date but no later than 12 months the following courses –

- Ambassador's Course;
- NVQ Passenger Transport.

*(Councillor Mrs Pengelly and Councillor Jordan left the meeting and did not participate further in the meeting).*

*(Please note: there is a confidential part to this minute).*

109. **Application for the Grant of a Private Hire Vehicle Driver Licence - HJC**

The Committee –

- (a) considered the report from the Director of Public Health;
- (b) heard from HJC;
- (c) took the report and all that was said by HJC into account.

The Committee took all of the above and the report into consideration and also considered the Council's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy and in particular its Guidance on Relevance of Convictions and Conduct.

The Committee had considered the application on its own merits and in this instance was prepared to act outside of its policy and agreed to grant the application subject to HJC passing the necessary pre requisites for the Driving Standards Test and for her completion on the first available date but no later than 12 months the following courses –

- Ambassador's course;
- NVQ Passenger Transport.

*(Please note: there is a confidential part to this minute).*

110. **Review Status of Private Hire Vehicle Driver Licence - ZGO**

The Committee was advised that ZGO was not in attendance. His representative

had been advised that the Chair of the Committee had agreed to hear the case of ZGO last and would put it back in the list to 4.30pm. The representative had also been advised that either he or ZGO could submit written representations or someone could attend on his behalf.

The Committee considered whether it should adjourn to the date of the next Taxi Licensing Committee (21 March 2019), whether it should be adjourned for a shorter period and a special committee arranged, or whether the issues contained within the report posed such a significant risk to public safety that it should proceed to hear the review.

The Committee concluded that the potential risks to public safety were so great as to outweigh ZGO's right to be heard. It noted that he had been given the opportunity to attend at the later time of 4.30pm and then again at 7pm.

The Committee –

- (a) considered the report from the Director of Public Health;
- (b) took all of the above and the report into consideration and also considered the Council's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy 2018.

The Members unanimously considered that they did not feel that either they or any of their family members would be safe travelling alone in a taxi with ZGO. Members unanimously agreed that he was no longer a fit and proper, or a safe and suitable person to hold a Private Hire driver's licence; it agreed to revoke his Private Hire driver's licence. It considered that this action was proportionate and necessary in all the circumstances.

*(Please note there is a confidential part to this minute).*

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**Plymouth City Council**

Subject: Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licence Fees  
Committee: Taxi Licensing Committee  
Date: 21 March 2019  
Cabinet Member: Cllr Sally Haydon  
CMT Member: Ruth Harrell (Director of Public Health)  
Author: Rachael Hind, Licensing Service Manager  
Contact: Tel: 01752 308794  
e-mail: [Rachael.hind@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:Rachael.hind@plymouth.gov.uk)  
Ref: RH/Fees 18/19  
Key Decision: No  
Part: I

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**Purpose of the report:**

Plymouth City Council regulates the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire industry through the licensing framework set out in the Plymouth City Council Act 1975. Fees for licences should be set at a figure which will recover the full cost of the licensing administration including enforcement, in so far as is consistent with the particular provisions which allow licence fees to be charged. The budgets for licensing are operated as two trading accounts, one for Private Hire and the other for Hackney Carriage. Within each account, the elements are separated into driver licence and vehicle licence, with an added operator element for the private hire account.

A review of the current fees has been undertaken to balance the two trading accounts and ensure there is no cross-subsidy of any of the five elements.

A report outlining a new fees structure was considered at the Taxi Licensing Committee on 10 January 2019 and the Committee approved the advertisement of the proposed fees which was published in the Herald on Tuesday 15 January 2019. All taxi drivers, vehicle proprietors and operators were written to and provided with a copy of the fees notice and were given until 30 January 2019 to make objections.

82 objections were received, which included an objection from the Plymouth Licensed Taxi Association (PLTA). The objections are included in Appendix 4.

**The Corporate Plan – 2018 – 2021:**

This report links to the delivery of the Council priorities. In particular:

**Growing Plymouth:** By economic prosperity through an efficient public transport network. A safe and vibrant leisure economy will allow Plymouth to be positively marketed as an attractive destination both nationally and internationally.

**Caring Plymouth:** Providing consumer confidence.

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**Implications for Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:  
Including finance, human, IT and land**

The Hackney Carriage and Private Hire accounts have been reviewed and the fees must be increased to ensure that any deficit is addressed. Both accounts are separate trade accounts and should be paid for from the licence fees and not from the Council's general funds. Therefore it is important that the fees are set to ensure any deficit is addressed.

The financial implication of these proposed fee increases is to ensure the Council covers the full costs of providing the service in so far as consistent with the particular provisions which allow licence fees to be charged.

The fee levels in this report have been set to ensure the Hackney Carriage Driver and Vehicle accounts are out of deficit balance by 2024 (subject to further increases in subsequent years); the Private Hire Driver and Operator Accounts both remain in a surplus position and the vehicle account returns to an acceptable surplus position by the end of the financial year 2021/22. These projections are also predicted on subsequent licence fee increases in 2019/20 and 2020/21.

**Other Implications: e.g. Child Poverty, Community Safety, Health and Safety, Risk Management:**

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 puts a statutory duty on every Local Authority to exercise its various functions with due regard to the need to do all that it reasonably can do to prevent crime and disorder in its area.

Lower income groups are a significant user of the hackney carriage and private hire trade. Increases in fee levels have an influence on fare levels. Fee levels should be reasonable so as not to adversely affect fares charged.

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**Equality and Diversity**

Has an Equality Impact Assessment been undertaken? No

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**Recommendations and Reasons for recommended action:**

The Committee resolve to:

- 1 Approve the recommended fee structure as set out in Column B of the Fees Table in Appendix one which is for the twelve months commencing on 22 March 2019 ; OR
- 2 Approve an alternative fee structure as set out in Column B of the Fees Table in Appendix two which is for the twelve months commencing on 22 March 2019.

**Reason**

This is the first year of a five year process to bring all elements of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire accounts back into balance.

If the Council does not increase the fees, both elements of the Hackney Carriage trading account which are forecasted to be in deficit by the end of the financial year (2018/19) will continue to run at a deficit. The Private Hire Operator and Drivers Licence Accounts are predicted to remain in a small surplus position; the Private Hire Vehicle licence account would continue to run at a deficit. Adopting the fee structure in recommendation one will mean that the Hackney Carriage taxi reserve account will hold an acceptable deficit in 2019/20, however the fees will have to be increased again in subsequent years to ensure the required reduction in deficit continues over the five year period.

Adopting the fee structure in recommendation one will mean that the Private Hire Driver and Operator accounts both remain in surplus position and the vehicle account returns to an acceptable surplus position by the end of the financial year 2021/22.

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**Alternative options considered and rejected:**

Consideration was given to a one year and a three year period to reduce the deficit, however this would have produced a larger increase in fee for the trade to absorb. The different options that were considered are shown in appendix one. The proposed increases to the Hackney Carriage account, will reduce the deficit over five years.

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**Published work / information:**

None.

**Background papers:**

None.

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**Sign off:**

Fin	djn.18.1 9.254	Leg	31681/ag /13.3.19	Mon Off		HR		Assets		IT		Strat Proc	
Originating SMT Member													
Has the Cabinet Member(s) agreed the contents of the report?													

## Report

### **1.0 Background Information**

- 1.1 A review of the current fees has been undertaken to address the deficits in the two trade accounts and to ensure they recover the full cost of the licensing service, so far as is consistent with the particular provisions which allow licence fees to be charged.
- 1.2 At the Taxi Licensing Committee on 10 January 2019 the Committee approved the advertisement of the proposed fees with a period for responses of 14 days. The advertisement was published in the Herald on Tuesday 15 January 2019. All taxi drivers, vehicle proprietors and operators were written to and provided with a copy of the fees notice and were given until 30 January 2019 to make objections.
- 1.3 At the Taxi Licensing Committee on 28 February 2019 the Committee agreed to defer the decision to set fees to allow officers to check the assertions made in a letter from a legal representative of the Plymouth Licensed Taxi Association (PLTA) received by email on 25 February 2019.

### **2.0 Legal Framework**

- 2.1 The Council may make a charge for the grant of the licences for drivers of Hackney Carriages and Private Hire vehicles by virtue of Section 11(2) of the Plymouth City Council Act 1975; and for the grant of Vehicle and Operators' Licences under Section 28 of the Plymouth City Council Act 1975 (the Act). The fees must be considered reasonable with a view to recovering the costs of issue and administration (including compliance) of the licence. The fees must be advertised in accordance with the provisions of the Act and if any objections are received these must be considered by the Committee for a final decision to be taken as to whether the advertised fees will be modified in light of objections, or whether the fees will be implemented as advertised. The fee structure approved by the Committee would come into effect within two months from the closing date of the advertised consultation.

### **3.0 Letter from legal representative of PLTA**

- 3.1 The last committee hearing was adjourned following receipt of a letter a few days before the hearing and outside of the consultation period, from a legal representative of the PLTA.
- 3.2 The contents of the letter have been considered in detail and further legal advice sought by the Council. The Council is satisfied that, whilst maintaining two trading accounts, there is sufficient information to ensure that, for each licence there has been no cross subsidisation and that any surpluses and deficits have been carried forward appropriately.
- 3.3 There is no legal requirement for the local authority to keep five separate trading accounts

(one for each licence), however the Council is happy to present the accounts in this way in the future. Appendix three has been restated to reflect the five classes of licence.

#### 4.0 Objections

4.1 82 objections were received within the consultation period regarding the fees increase (see appendix 4). In addition, as set out in Section 3 above, a legal challenge was received after the consultation period.

4.2 The main objections raised are: -

#### **Object to a 95% increase**

The fees are increasing by various amounts and not by 95%. Table I shows the cost increases and percentage increases of the proposed fees which were published in January. It also outlines the extra cost to the driver/proprietor per week as a result of the proposed increases.

**Table I: Recommended fees (as published) for 2019/20 with the % increases**

<b>HACKNEY</b>	<b>Current fees</b>	<b>Proposed fees</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>% increase</b>	<b>Extra cost per week</b>	<b>per month</b>	<b>per year</b>
Vehicle licence (1 year)	£210	£342	£132	62.9	£2.54	£11.00	£132
1 Year Drivers licence	£112	£165	£53	47.3	£1.02	£4.42	£53
3 Year Drivers Licence	£238	£435	£197	82.8	£1.26	£5.47	£65.67

<b>PRIVATE</b>	<b>Current fees</b>	<b>Proposed fees</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>% increase</b>	<b>Extra cost per week</b>	<b>per month</b>	<b>per year</b>
Vehicle licence (1 year)	£117	£170	£53	45.3	£1.02	£4.42	£53
1 Year Drivers licence	£82	£120	£38	46.3	£0.73	£3.17	£38
3 Year Drivers Licence	£160	£300	£140	87.5	£0.90	£3.89	£46.67
Operator application fee	£135	£135	£0	0	0	0	0
Operator fee per vehicle	£3.80	£3.80	£0	0	0	0	0

#### **The proposed fees are too high**

The majority of responses are asking if these fees can be reduced. The proposed increases have been reviewed and an alternative option was worked through (see appendix 2). However setting the fee at this alternative level would mean that whilst there is a smaller increase for the first year there is a potential for higher percentage increases in fees over the subsequent years. There is also a risk that the Council is unable to cover any unforeseen costs (from court cases for example).

**Can the fees be paid by direct debit to help with the payments?**

The Council has considered the use of a direct debit scheme to assist, however if there is not enough money in a person's bank account to cover the direct debit then the account provider may refuse to pay the bill. This would mean a licensed driver or proprietor would have a licence that had not been completely paid for. This would then involve a lot of work by the Council to chase up the payment which could then increase the cost of administration to the trade. Whilst we would like to be able to provide this service, it is not deemed to be cost effective and would result in higher costs to the trade.

**We cannot afford to pay for the increase in the fees on top of all our other business expenses**

It is appreciated that these increases are an additional cost, however the income from the licence fees must cover the expenditure required to run the service. Any expenses incurred as part of running your business may be claimed as an allowable deduction for tax purposes. Please contact the HMRC or an accountant for more information as they may be able to recover some of your overheads.

**One trade should not bail the other trade out**

The private hire and hackney carriage accounts are completely separate. This is why the fees are different as they reflect the different trade accounts.

**The 50:50 split for enforcement is not correct**

This was outlined and agreed in the Taxi Licensing Committee report dated 22 January 2015 and again in the report in 2017. Detailed analysis of the officer's time were recorded for this exercise which clearly showed the 50:50 split. This continues to be the case.

The three taxi enforcement officers undertook 487 vehicle inspections last year of which 177 (36%) were Hackney Carriage (HC) vehicles and 310 (64%) were Private Hire (PH) vehicles. There has been an increase in complaints and a number of drivers have had to attend committee for their licence to be reviewed. Officers investigated 100 complaints regarding HC drivers and 96 complaints regarding PH drivers. There are 387 HC drivers and 803 PH drivers so we are getting complaints regarding 26% of the HC drivers compared to 12% of the PH drivers. This resulted in 12 HC drivers going to committee and 10 PH drivers going to committee based on the complaints received. Test Purchase Operations are also undertaken for both trades throughout the year. However overall the enforcement officers spent 50:50 time on both trades due to the additional time spent on issues such as ranks, unmet demand surveys, fare tariffs, wheelchair exemptions.

**Further explanation on the reasons for deficit on the HC accounts**

As detailed above, the Committee report in January 2015 advised that the increased time spent on Hackney Carriages, resulted in a 50:50 enforcement split for staff salaries. However, on reviewing the fees this year, this split had not been proportioned and had been proportioned based on the 70:30 split for administration. An adjustment of £37,299 has been made to amend this error, which has resulted in the Hackney Carriage account being debited by £37,299 and the Private Hire account being credited by the same amount. Please refer to Appendix 3 which details how this has

been apportioned across the licences.

Over the last 12 months, there has been an increase on Legal costs associated with Hackney Carriage licence review committee hearings, appeals against committee decisions and also prosecutions. This includes the appeal to the Magistrates Court regarding the Taxi Licensing Policy. The Council was successful in defending this appeal and although some costs were recovered, the rest of the costs incurred have had to be charged to the Hackney Carriage accounts as it would not be appropriate to charge these to the general fund accounts.

The unmet demand survey, which is required every three years to maintain the quantity control of hackney carriages is also taking place this year which is an additional £16,000. The unmet demand survey has now been included for future projections for Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licences.

There has also been additional costs involved in 2017 and 2018 with regards to the introduction of the new Taxi Licensing Policy. This was proportioned across the hackney carriage, private hire and operator fees.

The safeguarding and ambassador courses are an additional cost across both trades. However the safeguarding course will be completed by 1 April 2019 and the Ambassador course will be completed by 31 December 2019 so these costs will be higher this year than other years. The safeguarding course will also be required every five years.

#### **Ambassador course 'is a waste of time'**

The aim of the ambassador course is to ensure all drivers create an excellent first impression of the City. Unfortunately we received 196 complaints in the last 12 months relating to taxi and private hire drivers and the majority of these complaints are regarding driver behaviour and overcharging. This creates a bad impression and damages the reputation of the trade. The feedback so far has been very positive and we hope this will help improve customer care and reduce the complaints we receive. There will also be a lot of opportunities for drivers to earn more money next year for the Mayflower 400 celebrations as it is expected that at least 500,000 more visitors to Plymouth in 2020.

#### **Will the recent Wakefield case may affect the fees?**

A recent High Court decision R (on the application of Rehman) v Wakefield MBC concerned an attempt by the council to recover enforcement costs relating to drivers via the vehicle licence fee. This was held to be unlawful. At present there is no full transcript of the judgement available and it may yet be appealed to the Court of Appeal. Plymouth City Council has acted in accordance to legal advice regarding the setting of fees and will review the transcript of the Wakefield Case when it is released.

#### **The drivers shouldn't have to pay for court cases that are lost by the Council**

The costs incurred with dealing with court cases are for either prosecutions or for appeals against Committee decisions, where a driver's licence has been revoked or suspended. The cost of the service needs to be met and must therefore be divided within the respective trades.

All drivers can appeal to the Magistrate's Court against a committee decision to suspend or revoke their licence. If a driver appeals then the Council must defend its case. The council have been found by the Magistrates Court on all our cases to have made the correct decision, however unfortunately very little or no costs are granted.

The Court must follow their guidelines on awarding costs. As these appeals are more civil in nature than criminal, the Court looks at the reasonableness of the action taken by the losing party. It also has to take account of someone's ability to pay. In prosecutions, it is different as the defendants have not had to pay any court fees and there is an element of punishment that comes into the penalties imposed which can include costs.

### **Request to see the full accounts so that these can be analysed in more detail**

The Council is prepared to make the accounts available, upon request and to answer questions on what expenditure has been included in the taxi accounts. Appendix three shows the summarised accounts with the forecast for 2018/19 which has been restated to reflect the five classes of licence. The Council has taken the opportunity to roll forward the forecast to include Month 11 (February 2019) data and Appendix three shows the accounts with the most up to date forecast.

### **Request for Devon Audit to review the taxi accounts**

Plymouth City Council are happy for Devon Audit Partnership to review the accounts and this will be arranged, however any additional costs of this will need to be charged to the taxi accounts.

## **4.3 Other matters to consider**

### **The effect of increasing the three year drivers licence fee**

It is proposed that the three year drivers licence fee should be increased to reflect the actual costs involved each year.

Given the model being using for the probable impact on licence applications covering both private hire and hackney carriage, it is anticipated (in total for both trades) that this equates to 16 days more administration. This would be just over three weeks in 2020/21.

For example if all 1,200 drivers had to be accommodated every year then this would mean there would be 387 HC drivers instead of the normal 168 renewals (219 more) and 803 PH drivers instead of the 348 renewals (455 more).

This would be a total of 674 more drivers' licences to process which would equate to an additional 37.5 days work for both trades. This is equivalent to 7.5 weeks work.

However, the Council is continuing to improve the online services and are currently working on an online booking service for drivers to make their appointments. It is hoped this will be available from April 2019. This will reduce the number of phone calls we receive from drivers who want to book or amend appointments and will automatically confirm their booking by email. This will save some of the administration officers' time and it is hoped that the additional work from any additional appointment times can be absorbed. This can be reviewed next year at the next review.



The Council is also continuing to pursue the fully integrated database package which would enable any online applications to update the database automatically without manually re-entering the data. This would then reduce the administration work further.

## **5.0 Fee Changes for 2019/20**

### **5.1 Hackney Carriage Account**

It is proposed that the Hackney Carriage licence fees are increased for drivers and vehicles and the amount of increase has been calculated by reviewing the costs involved with each licence. As stated above, all relevant surpluses and deficits have been correctly accounted for and there has been no cross subsidisation across licence types within this account.

The three year drivers badge for Hackney carriages is proposed to increase by 82.8% as the current fee does not cover the full costs involved with the issue and administration of the three year licence. There are costs involved each year to deal with the general administration and compliance matters for drivers licences. For example the proportion of costs involved with reviewing the taxi licensing policy and sending update letters and guidance to drivers of the new requirements; dealing with medical compliances and medical exemption applications regarding wheelchairs; updating drivers' information such as change of address or convictions/driving offences notifications; arranging the safeguarding and ambassador training courses. There are also costs involved with dealing with complaints and reviewing drivers licences to ensure drivers are safe and suitable to hold a licence. Therefore the proposed three year fee has increased to reflect the full costs involved. This increase equates to £1.26 pence per week.

The one year drivers badge is proposed to be increased by 47.3% to cover the costs involved with administration as listed above, which is an increase of £1.02 per week.

The vehicle licence is proposed to be increased by 62.9% (£2.54 per week) to cover the full costs involved with administering the licence; the proportion of costs involved with reviewing the taxi policy; the inspections of vehicles; provision of Hackney Carriage stands and the control and supervision of hackney carriage vehicles. The Hackney Carriage unmet demand survey is taking place this year which is an additional cost of £16,000 which will also affect the vehicle fee.

The fees proposed are for one year. The fees will be reviewed annually to reflect on each year's income and expenditure. To ensure the accounts continue to recoup the deficit over five years, a yearly percentage increase in fees will be needed.

### **5.2 Private Hire Account**

It is proposed that the private hire licence fees for drivers are increased to ensure they reflect actual costs involved. As stated above, all relevant surpluses and deficits have been correctly accounted for and there has been no cross subsidisation across licence types within this account.

The three year driver licence is proposed to be increased by 87.5% as the current fee does not cover the full costs involved in dealing with the issue and administration of the licence. There are

costs involved to deal with the general administration and compliance matters for drivers' licences. For example the proportion of costs involved with reviewing the taxi licensing policy and sending update letters and guidance to drivers of the new requirements; dealing with medical compliances; updating driver's information such as change of address or convictions/driving offences notifications; arranging the safeguarding and ambassador training courses. There are also costs involved with dealing with complaints and reviewing drivers licences to ensure drivers are safe and suitable to hold a licence. Therefore the proposed one year fee has increased to reflect the full costs involved. This increase equates to 90 pence per week.

The one year drivers badge is proposed to be increased by 46.3% to cover the costs involved with administration as listed above, which is an increase of 73 pence per week.

The vehicle licence is proposed to be increased by 45.3% (£1.02 per week) to cover the full costs involved with administrating the licence; the proportion of costs involved with reviewing the taxi policy; the inspections of vehicles; and the control and supervision of private hire vehicles.

The fees proposed are for one year. The fees will be reviewed annually to reflect on each year's income and expenditure. To ensure the Private Hire driver and operator accounts sustain their balances and the Private Hire vehicle account is brought into a balance, yearly percentage increase in fees will be needed.

## **6.0 Likely fee changes for the next five years**

- 6.1 This is the first year of a five year process to ensure all elements of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire accounts are running with a manageable surplus.
- 6.2 The fees set out in appendix one represent a larger increase for the first year however this option would have the potential to allow for smaller percentage increases in fees over the subsequent four years.
- 6.3 The fees set out in appendix two represent a smaller increase for the first year however this option would mean there is a potential for higher percentage increases in fees over the subsequent years.

## **7.0 Future Budget Risks and Management**

- 7.1 As discussed in 4.3, by increasing the cost of the three year driver licences across both trades, this is likely to affect the number of taxi appointments as drivers may choose the one year licence. The Council is increasing its online facilities and is looking at ways to set up the driving licence applications online to help reduce the administration demand. This will need to be reviewed next year to assess the progress made.
- 7.2 A recent High Court decision R (on the application of Rehman) v Wakefield MBC concerned an attempt by the council to recover enforcement costs relating to drivers via the vehicle licence fee. This was held to be unlawful. At present there is no full transcript of the judgement available and

it may yet be appealed to the Court of Appeal. Plymouth City Council has acted in accordance to legal advice regarding the setting of fees and will review the transcript of the Wakefield Case when it is released.

## **8.0 Conclusion**

- 8.1 The Committee members need to consider the objections and the recommendations within this report. The fees need to be increased to start the process to reduce the deficit over the next five years and ensure each individual licence account is running with a manageable surplus.
- 8.2 The impact of fee changes will be reviewed annually and any necessary alterations will be approved as set out in the Council's scheme of delegation.
- 8.3 It is recommended that Committee members resolve to approve the fee structure as set out in column B of the Fees Table in appendix one which is for the twelve months commencing on 22 March 2019.

## APPENDIX I

## Recommended Fees for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licences for 2019/20

## Hackney Carriage

Type	Current	A	B
		Fees required to recoup deficit over 3 years	Recommended 2019/20 fee (based on 5 year deficit recoup) with annual increases over next four years
Vehicle licence (1 year)	£210	£400	£342
1 Year Drivers licence	£112	£180	£165
3 Year Drivers Licence	£238	£480	£435
Duplicate licence	£8	£10	£10
Admin fee for Change of Licence/transfer from HC to PH	None	£20	£20
Vehicle Transfer	£30	£35	£35
Temporary licence for HC replacement vehicle (2 months)	£45	£103	£93
Change of vehicle registration number	£35	£35	£35
Drivers Test	£85	£85	£85
KOP test	£45	£72	£72
DVLA Licence Check	£18	£10	£10
New Drivers Application Fee	£45	£85	£85
Spoken English Test	None	£33	£33
Replacement ID Card fee	£10	£10	£10
Replacement Plate	£13	£13	£13
Refund Fee	£15	£15	£15

## Private Hire

	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>
<b>Type</b>	<b>Current</b>	<b>Recommended 2019/20 fee</b>
Vehicle licence (1 year)	£117	£170
1 Year Drivers licence	£82	£120
3 Year Drivers Licence	£160	£300
Duplicate licence	£8	£10
Admin fee for Change of Licence/transfer from PH to HC	None	£20
Vehicle Transfer	£30	£35
Temporary licence for PH replacement vehicle (2 months)	£45	£64
Change of vehicle registration number	£35	£35
Drivers Test	£85	£85
KOP test	£45	£72
DVLA Licence Check	£18	£10
Drivers Application Fee	£45	£85
Spoken English Test	None	£33
Replacement ID Card fee	£10	£10
Replacement Plate	£13	£13
Refund Fee	£15	£15
Replacement Door Sticker	£5	£5
Operators annual application fee	£135	£135
Operator fee per vehicle	£3.80	£3.80

**APPENDIX 2****Alternative proposed Fees for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licences for 2019/20****Hackney Carriage**

<b>Type</b>	<b>A Current</b>	<b>B Alternative 2019/20 fee based on 5 year deficit recoup (with higher annual increases for the next 4 years)</b>
Vehicle licence (1 year)	£210	£300
1 Year Drivers licence	£112	£130
3 Year Drivers Licence	£238	£330
Duplicate licence	£8	£10
Admin fee for Change of Licence/transfer from HC to PH	None	£20
Vehicle Transfer	£30	£35
Temporary licence for HC replacement vehicle (2 months)	£45	£86
Change of vehicle registration number	£35	£35
Drivers Test	£85	£85
KOP test	£45	£72
DVLA Licence Check	£18	£10
New Drivers Application Fee	£45	£85
Spoken English Test	None	£33
Replacement ID Card fee	£10	£10
Replacement Plate	£13	£13
Refund Fee	£15	£15

## Private Hire

	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>
<b>Type</b>	<b>Current</b>	<b>Alternative 2019/20 fee (with higher annual increases for the next 4 years)</b>
Vehicle licence (1 year)	£117	£145
1 Year Drivers licence	£82	£110
3 Year Drivers Licence	£160	£270
Duplicate licence	£8	£10
Admin fee for Change of Licence/transfer from PH to HC	None	£20
Vehicle Transfer	£30	£35
Temporary licence for PH replacement vehicle (2 months)	£45	£60
Change of vehicle registration number	£35	£35
Drivers Test	£85	£85
KOP test	£45	£72
DVLA Licence Check	£18	£10
Drivers Application Fee	£45	£85
Spoken English Test	None	£33
Replacement ID Card fee	£10	£10
Replacement Plate	£13	£13
Refund Fee	£15	£15
Replacement Door Sticker	£5	£5
Operators annual application fee	£135	£135
Operator fee per vehicle	£3.80	£3.80

## APPENDIX 3 – Summarised accounts for 2018/19

		18/19 Private Vehicle	18/19 Private Driver	18/19 Private Operator	18/19 Private Total
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>This includes</b>				
Staffing	Admin and enforcement staffing costs	£134,046	£37, 018	£6, 403	£177,467
Other Staff costs	Employer liability, medical expenses, clothing, training costs	£812	£1,612	£120	£2,544
Supplies and services	Advertising of public notices, computer consumables/printing and posting costs, drivers tests, DVLA checks, subscriptions.	£13,700	£13,148	£118	£26,967
Vehicle Costs	Costs associated with the van used by the enforcement officers	£1,333	£0	£0	£1,333
Legal External	External legal advisors	£1,057	£1,125	£68	£2,250
Legal Internal	PCC internal Legal Solicitors costs	£2,372	£16,470	£153	£18,995
Salary Adjustment	To adjust enforcement officer salary costs from 2015	(£31,331)	(£4,476)	(£1,492)	(£37,299)
<b>Income</b>					
Driver Licence	Fees from drivers licences	£0	(£46,675)	£0	(£46,675)
Vehicle Licence	Fees from vehicle licences	(£90,035)	£0	£0	(£90,035)
Operator Fee	Fees from operators licences	0	0	(£7,934)	(£7,934)
Licence Amendment	Fees charged for any change of driver licence, duplicate licence or vehicle transfer	(£2,407)	(£201)	£0	(£2,607)
Test Fee	Fee to pay City Bus for drivers test	£0	(£10,947)	£0	(£10,947)
Other Income	Replacement ID cards, brackets for vehicles, replacement plates, vehicle testing stations fees	(£765)	(£462)	(£1)	(£1,229)
<b>Deficit / (Surplus)</b>		<b>£28,783</b>	<b>£6,612</b>	<b>(£2,564)</b>	<b>£32,831</b>



		18/19 Hackney Vehicle	18/19 Hackney Driver	18/19 Hackney Total
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>This includes</b>			
Staffing	Admin and enforcement staffing costs	£77,931	£36,465	£114,396
Other Staff costs	Employer liability, medical expenses, clothing, training costs	£578	£1,063	£1,641
Supplies and services	Advertising of public notices, computer consumables/printing and posting costs, drivers tests, DVLA checks, subscriptions	£4,434	£4,626	£9,060
Legal External	External legal advisors	£1,571	£8,429	£10,000
Legal Internal	PCC internal Legal Solicitors costs	£442	£29,134	£29,576
Vehicle costs	Costs associated with the van used by the enforcement officers	£1,437	£0	£1,437
Unmet Demand	Unmet demand survey undertaken by private contractor every 3 years	£15,995	£0	£15,995
Salary Adjustment	To adjust enforcement officer salary costs from 2015	£34,315	£2,984	£37,299
<b>Income</b>				
Driver Licence	Fees from drivers licences	£0	(£37,010)	(£37,010)
Vehicle Licence	Fees from vehicle licences	(£73,043)	£0	(£73,043)
Licence Amendment	Fees charged for any change of driver licence, duplicate licence or vehicle transfer	(£1,514)	(£40)	(£1,554)
Test Fee	Fee to pay City Bus for drivers test	£0	£570	£570
Other Income	Replacement ID cards, brackets for vehicles, replacement plates, vehicle testing stations fees	(£1,123)	(£3,811)	(£4,934)
<b>Deficit / (Surplus)</b>		<b>£61,022</b>	<b>£41,270</b>	<b>£102,292</b>

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**Response 81 of APPENDIX 4**

<b>PLTA response to consultation</b>	<b>PCC response</b>
<p>We object to the proposed increase of Licence Fees being imposed upon Taxi Proprietors and Drivers.</p> <p>We do so for the following reasons:</p> <p><b>PUBLIC PROTECTION SERVICE TAXI LICENSING TRADE MEETING</b></p> <p><b>Taxi Trade Meeting 07/10/2014</b></p> <p>2      <b>Items Raised by the PLTA for Discussion</b>  <b>Reduction of Licence Fees from April 2014</b>  <u>AN</u> submitted copies of the proposed new fee schedule for 2015/16. The headline points were</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Circ 30% reduction in licence fees</li> <li>▪ Removal of £30 court case subsidy payment</li> <li>▪ Increase of application fee to reflect increased Committee work</li> <li>▪ Legal fees will now be included</li> <li>▪ KOP test fee reduced due to increased numbers</li> </ul> <p>The proposals remain confidential at this stage. PLTA to provide feedback and any queries ASAP so that the reduced fees can be put to the Committee at the earliest opportunity.</p> <p align="right">AN/PLTA</p> <p><b>Taxi Trade Meeting 19.01.2016</b></p> <p><b>Taxi and Private Hire Trade Budget and Fees 2016/17</b></p>	<p>Thank you for your response.</p> <p>The minutes in 2014 detail that the licence fees would be reduced by 30%. Accounts need to be reduced and increased depending on the income and expenditure each year. Unfortunately there has been less income and more expenditure for a number of reasons as outlined in the report.</p> <p>The minutes from PLTA meeting on 14.7.14 advised that the time monitoring exercise was taking place to ensure that recharges are correctly re-allocated - please see extract below:</p> <p>2      <b>Items Raised by the PLTA for Discussion</b>  <b>Reduction of Licence Fees from April 2014</b>  <u>AN</u> noted the written decision supplied by the District Auditor which required no action by the Council. <u>AN</u> will now proceed with this year's fees review. Likely to be a small reduction. Officers are currently undertaking a time-monitoring exercise to ensure that recharges are correctly re-allocated. Central support charges will also be included in this fees review.</p> <p>Detailed analysis of the officers time were recorded for this exercise which clearly showed the 50:50 split. This continues to be the case.</p> <p>and this was detailed in the Committee report on 2015 which can be found on our website at</p>

AN updated the meeting on the budgets and the position is that the 'status quo' is likely to be maintained going forward. It is hoped that the 2016/17 budget can be completed in the next few weeks and a further meeting will be arranged.

**Taxi Trade Meeting 12/04/2016**

- 2c **Taxi and Private Hire Trade Budget and Fees 2016/17**  
AN updated the meeting on the budgets and the position is that the 'status quo' is likely to be maintained going forward. Outturn for 2015/16 now complete. Projected budgets up to 2018/19 being prepared and a further meeting will be arranged. **AN** – to send outturn and budget projects prior to meeting.
- 2d **Taxi and Private Hire Trade Budget and Fees 2016/17**  
AN updated the meeting on the budgets and the position is that the 'status quo' is likely to be maintained going forward. Outturn for 2015/16 now complete. Projected budgets up to 2018/19 being prepared and a further meeting will be arranged. **CW** – to liaise

**Note:** CW – to Liaise refers to something else; RWH

**Taxi Trade Meeting 12/07/2016**

C	PCC Taxi and Private Hire Trade Budget and Licence Fees	SF
	AN. Budget spreadsheet has been provided to RH for viewing. Approximately £80,000 in the pot. Fees proposed to be increased by 10% to stop the reserve dwindling New DBS process will be reflected in new fee structure.	

**Taxi Trade Meeting 17/01/2017**

<http://web.plymouth.gov.uk/modgov?modgovlink=http%3A%2F%2Fdemocracy.plymouth.gov.uk%2FieListDocuments.aspx%3FCId%3D566%26amp%3BMId%3D5928%26amp%3BVer%3D4>

(or by selecting the 'Councillors, Committees and meetings' and then 'Committee Meetings' and then 'Taxi Licensing Committee' and then '22 January 2015').

**Trade Meeting 17.1.17**

Rachael Hind had only just started as Licensing Manager on 18 January 2017. Therefore the budget could not be discussed in detail at this meeting. The officers at the meeting did not know the full details and

<b>8.</b>	<b>PCC Taxi and Private Hire Budget and License Fees 2017/2018</b>	
	<b>RH</b> enquired about the budget and whether any increase would be needed over the forthcoming year. <b>GH</b> stated that he did not have access to this information however, Andy Netherton had stated prior to leaving that there would need to be uplift over the next couple of years in the region of 5% per year to maintain the agreed buffer. <b>RH</b> queried this. <b>GH</b> to liaise with <b>RHD</b> to arrange a separate meeting with the PLTA to discuss.	<b>RHD/GH</b>

advised that a separate meeting would be arranged to discuss the budgets.

The date of this meeting you are referring to was 16.4.18.

The accounts are reviewed throughout the year. The previous committee report predicted the fees to be increased by 15%, however it was not known at that time that the split in enforcement had not been allocated correctly and did not foresee the increase in central recharges or the increases in expenditure for the legal fees and the ambassador courses.

**Taxi Trade Meeting 16/04/2017**

<b>3</b>	<b>Taxi and PH trade Budget for 2018-19 (PLTA)</b>	
	<p><b>RHD</b> relayed the following information regarding the setting of fees in her absence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- waiting to get full picture from the end of the financial year, end of March. The new fees only came in in August 17 so <b>RHD</b> is suggesting that this should tie in on an annual basis around this date. This also gives the Council's Finance Department and <b>RHD</b> adequate time to analyse the accounts so that the following year's fees can be accurately set. <b>RHD</b> to provide an update when sorted with finance.</li> </ul> <p><b>RWH</b> added that a 50k float was needed and therefore a raise of 15% was recommended and supported by the PLTA for the previous financial year. He also added that historically the financial information has always been provided in April of each year and consistency would be</p>	<b>RHD</b>

useful either way. It was agreed for Projected figures to be provided July time each year followed up by the final outcome in August of each year.

**Taxi Trade Meeting 18/04/2017**

7.	PCC Taxi and Private Hire Budget and License Fees 2017/2018	
	<p>After the separate meeting held with the PLTA on the 18<sup>th</sup> of April RHD provided a brief update to progress with setting the fees. There is an agreement that the fees will rise by 15 %. The report goes to Committee on the 11<sup>th</sup> of May for approval prior to being published.</p> <p><b>RH</b> requested that a meeting be held in October this year to provide plenty of time to discuss/agree any future changes to fees prior to them being set. <b>All</b> agreed.</p>	<b>All</b>

**Note:** Increased Fees were not introduced until August 2017 thereby increasing debt.

**Taxi Trade Meeting 18/07/2017**

7.	PCC taxi and Private Hire Trade Budget and Licence Fees
	<p><b>RHD</b> provided an update on the budget. <b>RHM</b> suggested that fees are looked at earlier for example the October Trade meeting to prevent any issues not being picked up prior to the new financial year. The report went to Committee on the 11<sup>th</sup> of May for approval prior to the fees being published. A few objections were received and so these were taken before Committee on the 13<sup>th</sup> of July and were rejected. The new fees structure comes into force on the 1<sup>st</sup> of August 2017.</p>

**Note:** RHM = RWH.

**Taxi Trade Meeting on 18.4.17**

The fees were not introduced until August 2017 due to objections being received. A legal process must be followed and the two objections required the committee to reconsider the report before the fees could be agreed.

**Comment:** At the Taxi Trade Meeting held on 07/10/2014 the Taxi Trade Representatives were informed that “Legal fees will now be included”. This is an additional imposed cost.

At the Taxi Trade Meeting held on 19.01.2016 the Taxi Trade Representatives were informed that the “status quo” is likely to be maintained.

At the Taxi Trade Meeting held on 12/04/2016 the Taxi Trade Representatives were informed that the “status quo” is likely to be maintained and that the 2015/16 Outturn was now complete.

At the Taxi Trade Meeting held on 12/07/2016 the Taxi Trade Representatives were informed that there was approximately an £80.000 surplus being held in the Budget.

At the Taxi Trade Meeting held on 17/01/2017 the Taxi Trade Representatives were informed that an increase of 5% per year would be required. RH queried this.

At the Taxi Trade Meeting held on 16/04/2017 the Taxi Trade Representatives were informed that the new fees only came in in August 17 so **RHD** is suggesting that this should tie in on an annual basis around this date. **RWH** added that a 50k float was needed and therefore a raise of 15% was recommended and supported by the PLTA for the previous financial year. He also added that historically the financial information has always been provided in April of each year and consistency would be useful either way.

Due to the LA’s failure to implement a Budget in April it was decided to increase fees in August. Does this mean that in future Licence Fees may increase on any month of the LA’s choosing. This is not satisfactory.

At the Taxi Trade Meeting held on 18/04/2017 the Taxi Trade Representatives were informed that fees will rise by 15% for the years 2017/18. RH requested that a meeting be held in October this year to provide plenty of time to discuss/agree any future changes to fees prior to them being set. **All** agreed.

The taxi accounts are a trade account and all costs incurred must be covered. A review of the accounts by the licensing manager in 2014 identified that corporate support recharges did not reflect the use of legal officer support for the time spent on taxi matters and that the calculation of fees should reflect the cost to the relevant parts of the trade.

The Budget was not completed prior to April 2017 as the Manager was not in post until 18 January 2017. The current budget was delayed as a number of issues needed to be addressed to ensure the fees set were accurate.

At the Taxi Trade Meeting held on 18/07/2017 the Taxi Trade Representatives were informed that the new fees structure comes into force on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2017. We were informed on 10.01.2019 at the Taxi Licensing Committee Meeting that it is not necessary to implement new Taxi Trade budgets in April as it is a 'stand-alone budget' which we accept.

The fact still remains that delays in implemented budgetary increases has increased the Taxi Trade deficit.

With a surplus of approximately £80,000 in July of 2016 and £28,305 in December 2018 it was obvious that there would eventually be a deficit therefore the LA should cut its' cloth accordingly and cut down on expenses.

It is requested that a sum is deducted from the total deficit to compensate the Taxi Trade Budget for perceived failures of our LA.

**LA should cut its' cloth accordingly and cut down on expenses**

The department continually review their performance. There has been an increase in complaints and a number of drivers have had to attend committee for their licence to be reviewed. The enforcement officers undertook 487 vehicle inspections in the last 12 months and take part in a number of targeted operations with the Police and school transport.

There have been a number of Hackney Carriage drivers that have appeared before Committee and have had their driver's licence suspended or revoked. The drivers are able to appeal the Committee decision to the Courts which has increased the time and cost in defending the appeals.

All drivers can appeal to the Magistrate's Court against a committee decision to suspend or revoke their licence. If a driver appeals then the Council must defend its case. The council have been found by the Magistrates Court in all our cases to have made the correct decision, however unfortunately very little or no costs are granted.

310 (64%) private hire vehicles and 177 (36%) hackney carriage vehicles were inspected. 28% (50) of Hackney carriage vehicles were



stopped or issued with Vehicle Defect Notices and 22% (68) of Private Hire vehicles were stopped or issued with Vehicle Defect Notices.

**Salaries**

The salaries listed in 1001 – 1006 are for the three enforcement officers and the Apprentice. The other members of staff are recharged from 7107 (Recharges from front line staff). The 2015 committee report and the 2017 committee report confirmed that the split for enforcement officers would be 50:50. The apprentice is split 30% to HC and 70% to PH and will change to 31% HC and 69% PH from 1 March 2019. These figures are correct.

The **medical expenses** is regarding a member of the enforcement officer staff which is 50:50 split.

The **employers liability insurance** is for the three taxi enforcement officers and the apprentice. The split for the future years is correct. The prediction for 2018/19 is not accurate and

**Spreadsheet 2018/19 Forecast**

<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	Taxis	PH	Total
1001 APT7Saleries basic	41,957	46,211	88,168
1002 APT&C Salaries NI	3,762	3,899	7,661
1004 APT&C Overtime	1,500	1,500	3,000
1005 Pensions Deficit	2,685	2,958	5,643 Superannuation
1006 Apprenticeship Levy	135	250	385
2505 Pertemps and	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
TRAP Care Staff			
	50,039	54,818	104,857
<b>Comment:</b>	The previously agreed 34% Taxi 66% PH provides a figure of £35,651 for Taxis and £69,206 for PH.		
2804 Medical Expenses	148	148	296
2809 Employers Liability Insurance	158	294	452

**Comment:** There is a disparity between the two trades figures.

3501 Cleaning Materials 10

**Comment:** Why is there no charge for Cleaning Materials against PH ?

4003	Repair & Maintenance of Vehicles	152	153	305
4005	Fuel Costs	184	183	367
4007	Purchase of Road Fund Licences	109	110	219
4008	Repairs & Maintenance	40	41	82
4010	MOT Fees	22	23	45
4101	Vehicle Pool Recharges	822	823	1,645

**Comment:** Costs do not appear to be correctly allocated. With the two trades paying for Vehicle Pool Recharges why are there other charges.

3042 Rank Review Nil

**Comment:** Why is there no figure for taxi rank Review ?

should be 203 (HC) and 248 (for PH) and this is correctly forecasted for the future years.

### Cleaning Materials

This is included each year as a possible expenditure based on actual spend in 2017/18. There should be £11 in the PH cell but there is an error on the spreadsheet and it hasn't pulled through. However, no additional cleaning materials have been required to be purchased this year for both accounts. In 2017/18, a total of £9.93 was charged to the HC accounts for cleaning materials. £4.48 was spent on cleaning materials for the hackney carriage rank signs. These were cleaned when the new fare tariffs were put up. The remaining £5.45 was on one bottle of suncream for one enforcement officer. This is the way it is automatically coded on our system and there is no other general code this would fit into. The PH trade spent £10.90 in 2017/18 – this was on two bottles of suncream for the remaining two enforcement officers. The 70:30 split was used here as when officers are outside inspecting vehicles, more PH are inspected than HC.

### Vehicle Costs

The costs are allocated correctly as the enforcement costs are 50:50 therefore the van is used by the enforcement officers for all their work and needs to be charged accordingly.

The vehicle pool recharges is just for the hire of the vehicle. The other costs are the general running of the vehicle per year.

### Rank Review

No expenditure has been required this year to date for any alterations of taxi ranks. Enforcement officers undertake rank reviews

Why is there no figure for New, Alteration and Removal of taxi ranks ?

**EXPENDITURE**

	Taxis	PH	Total
5001 Purchase of Equipment	6,337	12,422	18,759
5002 Maintenance of Equipment	14	33	47
5004 Purchase of Materials	202	254	456
5051 Purchase of Stock	2	0	2
5201 Purchase of Clothing and Uniforms	28	62	90

**Comment:** Why does there appear to be an annual cost of £18,759 for the purchase of equipment.

Why is the Taxi Trade charged for Purchase of stock and not PH.

The apportionment between the two trades appears to be incorrect.

5301 Printing	1,800	1,629	3,429
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**Comment:** The figures require an explanation.

throughout the year and ensure any issues are rectified. Officers also liaise with Planning and safety officers to ensure there is suitable and adequate rank provision at new development sites in the city for example the bus station, the new cinema complex and the new plans for the city centre development schemes. Any new ranks installed have been paid for as part of the development costs.

Officers also arrange temporary ranks at the Barbican during events and liaise with the Events Team to ensure there is minimal impact on the rank provision.

**Purchase of equipment** is for the VIP vehicle plates and all the materials required to make up the vehicle plate and to the materials used to print the drivers licence cards/lanyards.

**Printing**

All bulk renewal and mail merge letters are printed and posted by the print room. These costs also include the printing of HC fare stickers for the ranks signs, fare sheets, producing and printing of the drivers'

5411	Maintenance of Computer Hardware		238	238	<p>handbooks and ambassador books and the printing of the HC stickers for the cabs.</p> <p>This was a predicted figure generated by the accounts system. However, to date, the HC have spent £949 and PH have spent 1611.34. In 2017/18 the HC was higher than PH as we purchased the taxi rank sign stickers for the new fare tariff; table of fares mail merge to all drivers and copies of the fare tables to display in the cabs. We also purchased a supply of internal labels for the HC cabs as our supply had run out.</p> <p><b>Maintenance of Computer Hardware</b></p> <p>This is an error in the forecast and has been proportioned correctly on the system to £142.80 for HC and £333.20 for PH. It was for a specialist visit from our database provider, LALPAC to undertake work on our taxi database.</p> <p><b>Advertising Publicity</b></p> <p>The spreadsheet had not fed a field across into HC – it has been included as £1710 for the other years as this was based on the 2017/18 outturn. This year we have spent £347.84 which is the proportion of costs involved with the advertising of the fees in the Plymouth Herald in January 2019. The previous year was higher for HC due to the additional cost of advertising the fare tariff. This is included each year as a prediction just in case it is required.</p> <p><b>Legal Expenses</b></p> <p>The £3000 is what we predicted in November for James Button, Taxi Solicitor when he defended the taxi policy appeal at the Magistrates Court, however we are waiting the final bill as this was £6497. We</p>
476					
<b>Comment:</b>	There is no apportionment.				
5517	Advertising & Publicity			436	
<b>Comment:</b>	2017/18 Taxis charged £1,710 and in 2020/21 £1,710 but nil in 2019/20 ?				
	Why is there a cost for advertising and publicising private companies.				
5519	Legal Expenses	3,000	373	3,373	
<b>Comment:</b>	We request a breakdown of Legal Expenses				
5703	Legal Agents	31,466	18,995	50,461	

**Comment:** We request a breakdown of Legal Agents costs.

5709 Drivers Tests 11,275

**Comment:** We understand that Drivers Test Applicants pay City Bus direct. Why is there a discrepancy between 5709 and 8717.

will receive £3300 back in costs from the HC driver who was not successful with this appeal. This will be shown in 8349. The £373 is a predicted amount for PH just in case we need to use it for any barrister costs. It was reduced in October 2018 from 973 which was last year's costs and there is no current spend on this at this time.

A full breakdown of legal agent's costs will be provided to Devon Audit.

#### **Drivers Tests**

This should read the same as the following years i.e. £975 for HC and £10,075 for PH but the cell has merged it into PH in error for the forecast in 2018. The actual income line (8717) to date is £340 and an expenditure line of £300 for HC. For PH, we have had an income of £6630 and an expenditure to date of £5850.

City Bus will not allow drivers to pay them direct and therefore we have to take the payment from the drivers and pay City Bus ourselves. This year to date we have had four HC drivers requiring driving tests (one new applicant and the other were required by Committee).

An additional £10 has been included to cover the administration involved with the tests and also to ensure there is a buffer as the cost can increase at any time before a fee increase can be set.

The income is shown under 8717. The predicted figures have been based on 2017/18 outturn.

5710	DVLA checks	249	461	710
<b>Comment:</b> Report Page 8 5.9 £3.00 but £10.00 charged when staff time already paid.				
5901	Miscellaneous		37,299	(37,299)
<b>Comment:</b> In 2018/19 Taxis paid 113, a full explanation is required. Why is the same figure paid out by the Taxi Budget and received by the PH Budget.				
6101	Private Contractors	17,253	2,610	19,863
<b>Comment:</b> What did the Private Contractors do ?				
<b>INCOME</b>		<b>Taxis</b>	<b>PH</b>	<b>Total</b>
7107	Recharges from Front Line Services	48,915	91,314	140,229
<b>Comment:</b> A full breakdown is required ?				

**DVLA Checks**  
The committee report covers the new charges to be incurred using a new provider for the DVLA checks. The £10 would only be included for those drivers that do not hold a UK driving licence as this incurs a higher fee.

**Miscellaneous**  
This is the correction for the enforcement officer's costs since 2015. Hackney accounts were only paying 30% and Private Hire were paying 70% when it should have been 50:50, therefore this sum needs to move from HC to PH accounts to correct this error.

**The Private Contractors**  
£15,995 is for the unmet demand survey and the rest is for the predicted proportion of the delivery of the Ambassador and safeguarding courses.  
  
The £2610 for the PH trade is for the ambassador and safeguarding courses.

**Recharges from Front Line Services**  
This is for the two administration officers (charged at 30:70 to HC/PH); half of the Senior Officer (charged at 50:50 to HC/PH); half of the Licensing Manager wages (charged at 30:70 to HC/PH); 15% of Technical Support Supervisor and 2% of Department Manager.

7114 Support Services Recharges	9,128	16,951	26,079
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**Comment:** A full breakdown is required ?

8265 Vehicle Testing Station Fee		(825)	
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**Comment:** Why is there no figure against PH ?

8349 Fines & Fees		(£545)	
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**Comment:** The LA is not permitted to fine Licensees.

8711 Drivers Licence Fees 1 Year	(13,539)	(16,437)	(29,976)
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8712 Drivers Licence Fees 2 Year			
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8713 Drivers Licence Fees 3 Year	(5,320)	(10,619)	(15,939)
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**Comment:** Driver Licence Fees used to be separated into 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year in order that the fees were correctly allocated for the three year budget forecast. There should therefore be a figure in the 2 year licence.

8717 Driving Test Fees	(511)	(6,819)	(7,330)
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**Comment:** It is understood that Driving Test Applicants pay City Bus directly for their

**Support Services Recharges**

This is the support services recharges for the front line staff which is currently charged at £8500 per member of staff. The support services recharges include costs such as HR support, IT support, Accommodation, Procurement services etc. These costs are allocated to each full time equivalent (FTE) member of staff within the Council.

**Vehicle Testing Station Fee**

The cell did not come forward from 2017/18. Last year we introduced a charge for vehicle testing stations to cover the cost of the paperwork and inspections undertaken. This fee is split 30:70 to account for the number of vehicles inspected by the garages across the two trades. The PH is predicted to have an income of £1925 based on last year.

**Fines and Fees**

These are fees or costs issued by the Magistrates Court to be paid to us following a hearing and costs have been awarded to the Council.

**Drivers Licence Fees**

Year 2 driver licence fees were placed directly into the reserve at the outturn on 2017/18. However this has been forecasted in the future years from 2019/20 as it was felt this would be clearer than in the reserve.

**Driving Test Fees – Income line**

As advised above, City Bus will not take payment directly from the applicants. They invoice us separately.

Driving Test.

8738 Replacement MOGO Plates (52) (130)

**Comment:** PCC stopped using MOGO several years ago.

8741 Banner Licence Income (£117)

**Comment:** What is Banner Licence Income ?

For several years it has been the opinion of the Taxi Trade Representatives that there is “creative accounting” and a “hidden agenda” regarding the two trades Budget and Fees.

It was refreshing at the Taxi Licensing Committee meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> January, 2019 to learn of Councillors concern regarding the Proposed Licence Fees to be charged in 2019.

Prior to the implementing of any Fee increase we request the opportunity to go through the Spreadsheet for previous years and 2019/20 with a fine toothcomb in order to identify the LA’s justification for the charges they levy upon Licensees.

Councillors were not informed of the wording of the PCC Act 1975 S28 (1)

**Replacement MOGO plates**

This is for the replacement of VIP plates but the name hasn’t been updated on the financial system. I will arrange for this to be updated.

**Banner Licence Income**

This has been miscoded by mistake. It is for a Private Hire vehicle licence fee which is £117. It does not affect the budget as it is income under the correct trade account. This is last year’s accounts so this cannot be altered.

There is no creative accounting or hidden agenda regarding the two trades. All expenditure and income is kept separate and allocated according to the agreed proportions.

The spreadsheets for previous years have already been provided to the trade.



**PCC Taxi Licensing Committee Meeting 10<sup>th</sup> January, 2019  
Report on Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licence Fees**

<b>Page</b>	<b>Para</b>	<b>Objection</b>	<b>Comment</b>
<b>Agenda Item 5</b>			
1	1	Full Cost	PCC Act S28.-(1) "... the Council may charge such fees ... to cover in whole or in part-"
2	2	2015 – 50%/50% split	Trade not informed until December 2018
	4	not applied 18/19	Cllrs were not informed of the correct figure
	4	increase 19/20	A sensible amount to prevent further loss
<b>Report</b>			
4	2.1	PH compliance	There is a distinct lack of PH compliance
	2.2	Inspection of vehicles	No cost for testing vehicles under S5A
	2.3	PH Ops fee	PCC Act S28 "...to cover in whole or in part"
	2.4	Reasonably incurred legal expenses	Legal expenses charged to the Taxi Trade are not reasonable
5	4.1	Total Cost	Vehicles: PCC Act S28 "...to cover in whole or in part"
	4.4	Taxi Ranks	Should be a separate entry
6	4.4	Licence Administration	Apart from renewal, others are costed

**Committee Report on HC and PH Licensing Fees 10.1.19  
In response to item 1**

s.28(1) states that the Council may charge such fees for the grant of vehicle and operator licences as may be resolved by the Council from time to time and as may be sufficient in the aggregate to cover in whole or in part

A) the reasonable cost of the carrying out by or on behalf of the Council of Inspections of Hackney carriages and private hire vehicles for the purpose of determining whether any such licence should be granted or renewed

b) the reasonable cost of providing hackney carriage stands and  
C) any reasonable administrative or other costs in connection with the foregoing and with the control and supervision of hackney carriages and private hire vehicles.

2. The split of the fees was detailed in the Committee report in January 2015 and again in 2017 when the fees were reviewed. The trade were informed at the PLTA meeting on 14.7.14 that officers were undertaking a time-monitoring exercise to ensure that recharges are correctly re-allocated and this was included within the Committee report on 22.1.15. Unfortunately the proportion were not changed in the financial systems to reflect this change.

3. The correct figure was included in the report. At the PLTA trade meeting in November 2018, it was discussed that the central recharges were to increase to £15000 per head, however at the PLTA meeting to discuss the fees in December, it was advised that it has been agreed that these recharges would not be increased this year

	4. 5	50/50 split	No consultation, not aware, not mentioned until December meeting with no information given We would have objected most vociferously
	4. 5	Taxi rank issues	There has been no cost that we are aware of
	4. 5	Complaints and Committee Reports	Staff time is already paid for through salaries
<i>It appears to this writer that there is confusion between 5.1 and 5.2 as no increase figure is given for Taxis in 5.1 yet at 5.2 an increase of 45% is given for PHVs.</i>			
	5. 1	Three year licence	Explain shortfall causes
	5. 1	Additional cost	The rest of the costs = Licensees already pay for these items through salaries so are paying twice.
	5. 1	2015	Committee 2015 – no consultation
	5. 1	10%	10% increase is above inflation
	5. 1	penalty points for drivers	there is no Byelaw as required by PCC Policy
	5. 2	Vehicles 45% increase	Should this be in 5.1; There is no need for this, cut LA costs
7	5. 4	Safeguarding Course	We recognise that this is an important issue and do not object but wish to point out that it cannot be mandatory as the 2018 PCC Policy document which states that a byelaw is required at 10.2.

and it would be staggered so that it would increase to £12000 per person in 2019/20 and then £13,000 in 20/21 and then the full amount (£15000 or as calculated).

### Report

#### 2.1 – Lack of PH compliance

There is not a lack of PH compliance. The department continually review their performance. The enforcement officers undertook 487 vehicle inspections last year of which 177 (36%) was HC and 310 (64%) was PH. There has been an increase in complaints and a number of drivers have had to attend committee for their licence to be reviewed. Officers investigated 100 complaints regarding HC drivers and 96 complaints regarding PH drivers. There are 387 HC drivers and 803 PH drivers so we are getting 26% complaints regarding HC drivers compared to 12% of the PH drivers. This resulted in 12 HC drivers going to committee and 10 PH drivers going to committee based on the complaints received. Test Purchase Operations are also undertaken for both trades throughout the year. However overall the enforcement officers spent 50:50 time on both trades due to the additional time spent on ranks, unmet demand surveys, fare tariffs, wheelchair exemptions etc.

There have been a number of Hackney Carriage drivers that have appeared before Taxi Licensing Committee for review of their licence and have their licence suspended or revoked.

All drivers can appeal to the Magistrate's Court against a committee decision to suspend or revoke their licence. If a driver appeals then the Council must defend its case. The council have been found by the Magistrates Court in all our cases to have made the correct decision,

Page	Para	Objection	Comment
7	5.4	Safeguarding Course	While the cost of £5.00 is based on course of 20 applicants what will the cost be if there are less candidates and will drivers be penalised if no course is available.  We also believe that drivers have to retake this course every five years.
	5.6	Temporary Licence	- for replacement vehicle: HC 93; PHV 64. Both vehicles have their own respective licence paid for This is a paper exercise so both should be the same. Is the two month licence for the damaged vehicle refunded or taken into account in another way.
	5.7	Vehicle Transfer Fee	“administration” staff are already paid
	5.8	Change of Licence	“administration” staff are already paid.
8	5.9	DVLA Licence Check	The cost is £3.00 cost yet £10.00 is being charged When the staff are already paid.
	5.10	Ambassador Course	There is no Byelaw giving the LA power to impose this training. Also it is the opinion of several drivers that the previous Ambassador Course was a farce.
	6.2	“...monitor challenges...”	The LA has no power to charge these activities to the Taxi Trade.

however Court guidelines on awarding of costs, unfortunately result in very little or no costs being awarded.

S. 5(1)a) of the PCC1975 details the conditions that can be attached when licensing of private hire vehicles and s 28 (1) covers the fees that can be set.

#### **2.4 – reasonably incurred legal expenses**

The legal fees reflect the amount of legal officer time spent in connection with the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire trade. Costs, are calculated on the basis of time spent on each matter and attributed to the respective type of licence.

**Ranks** – whilst there has been no cost involved this year, the Parade had new lines and signage arranged which was claimed for from an insurance claim due to damage caused by a vehicle. The ranks are reviewed throughout the year and consultation is undertaken with the planners to ensure new ranks are provided for new developments such as the bus station, walkabout, cinema complex and the new city centre development proposals.

**4.5 Staff time** is paid for via salaries, however the fees must reflect the actual work undertaken for each trade and which is why this was introduced as a 50:50 split in 2015 to reflect the actual work involved.

**Committee report** – the 50:50 split was included in the committee report and was published as required.

9	7. 1	01/02/2019 new fees	We object to the proposed new fees.
10		Appendix 1	We object to the unreasonable proposed new fees.

The increase is above inflation but costs can be increased above inflation to ensure full cost recovery.

**Penalty Points** The issue regarding the requirement for a byelaw for penalty points has already been addressed by the Magistrates Court. The Penalty Points scheme forms part of the Taxi Licensing Policy and can only be appealed by way of Judicial Review.

The city has the largest number of vehicles and drivers in Devon and as such requires adequate resources to be able to do this to ensure drivers are safe and suitable and vehicles are of an acceptable and roadworthy standard.

**The safeguarding course** is a requirement of the Taxi Licensing Policy and this does not require a byelaw.

The safeguarding course is charged at a set rate. After April 2019, courses will be provided for new drivers and these will be arranged every two to three months depending on demand and has been included with the initial application fee so that drivers can book on this course at the initial visit. The cost will be reviewed at the next fee review to ensure the cost of the new applicant adequately reflects the costs involved.

The temporary licence fee must include the two month cost of the licence as the licence lasts for two months. This is for the replacement vehicle provided by the insurance company. The existing vehicle is delicensed and the whole months refunded to the vehicle proprietor.

**Comment:** At the Taxi Licensing Committee Meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2019 Councillors were informed that “the annual central recharges have been recalculated” but were not given a figure. This writer is aware that the figure is £15,500 per employee. On learning this, this writer who lives alone, checked his Council Tax, Electricity, gas, water and internet & house phone. He then asked his son how much his rent was for a two bedroom Plymouth Community Homes flat and learned that the figure is £4,004 per year but that this is

**Vehicle Transfer Fees and change of licence fees.** Each fee must reflect the costs involved. The administration staff costings are not already paid for – they are paid from the different licence fees. It would not be fair to include the costs of a vehicle transfer or change of licence within the standard licence fees as some drivers make a number of changes throughout the year.

DVLA - please refer to response above.

**Ambassador course** is a requirement of the Taxi Licensing Policy and no byelaw is required. The feedback from all the courses have been positive, however the new course has been developed so that PCC have complete ownership of the content.

Plymouth City Council has acted in accordance to the legal advice regarding the setting of fees and will review the transcript of the Wakefield Case when it is released.

The Councillors were provided with the figures in the Committee report. Please refer to page 2, paragraph 3 within the Committee report of 10 January 2019, which states the Council have advised us that the annual central recharges have been re-calculated and will be increasing. These are currently charged at the end of each financial year so this would have an impact on both the Private Hire and Hackney Carriage budgets. However, it has been agreed that this increase will not apply in this year (2018/19) and will be introduced as a stepped approach with 2019/20 being increased to £12,000 per

cheap due to a long occupancy. The total is £7,099 - why does it cost PCC £15,500.

We are informed that the Taxi and Private Account is separate and stands alone. It follows that we are responsible for the LA premises, facilities and staff – nothing else.

When we learnt that the LA authority was moving from the Civic Centre to Another Location we requested that dedicated parking facilities be provided for Taxi and PHV's for licensing appointments and Compliance Testing under the PCC Act S26. No such facilities have been provided.

It is our opinion that the Taxi Trade is being hugely overcharged.

**PCC Taxi Licensing Committee Meeting 10<sup>th</sup> January, 2019  
Report on Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licence Fees**

Cllr Mavin 2015 Report why not implemented as has put Trades into increased debt.

Annual Licensing Report does not contain figures

Reduce costs through cheaper administration

RH vehicles not allowed full on-line by DELL

Driver being looked at; Safeguarding; Book on Line;

Communicating with the Trades.

Cllr Pengelly Appeals against LA Decisions; Outside Legal Help

person and 2020/21 as either £13, 000 or the full amount, depending on the outcome of the recharges review, from 2021/22.

As advised above, the support services recharges include costs such as HR support, IT support, Accommodation, Procurement services etc. These costs are allocated to each full time equivalent (FTE) member of staff within the Council.

Parking is available for drivers and vehicle proprietors who have appointments.

Cllr Jordon 2015 Policy not implemented; Like to see Budget; Fees and Charges policy.

Cllr Bridgeman Cost of Safeguarding = £5 per head on class of 20. £100 per course.

Cllr Morris Free Market; Capitalism; Survey of Unmet Demand; Good Financial Breakdown; Revisit on back of objections. Fees – one off or spread

Cllr Mavin 2015 & 2017 Policy not implemented; if no increase this year then there will be £100.000 deficit on Taxi Account

Cllr Morris External Auditor

**Comment:** this writer attended the above meeting and fully agreed with the comments made by the Councillors.

He is very surprised that Councillors are so poorly informed by LA staff Regarding the Annual Report, spreadsheets and statutes.

**History:**

Licensing of Hackney Carriages was carried out by the Police with 90 being licensed.

It is believed that the following is correct: On 1<sup>st</sup> January 1976 the PCC Act 1975 was introduced and Plymouth City Council (PCC) assumed responsibility for the

**History**

The current licensing system cannot be compared to 1976. There are a number of different issues that have occurred in recent years which have emphasized the importance of DBS checks and the need for additional training such as safeguarding. We receive a large number of complaints regarding inappropriate driver behaviour, safeguarding, driving standards that must be investigated and dealt with appropriately. This is in addition to a number of drivers with medical

licensing of the Hackney Carriage and the new Private Hire Trade as the Licensing Authority (LA).

From 01.01.1976 Licensing of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Trades was administered by one Inspector and the figure given on 08.03.1977 was 1,103 licences issued as well as Compliance Patrols carried out by the same Inspector.

Private Hire Vehicles had a plate on the rear of the vehicle and door stickers on each front door. Only one small sign with the name of the Operator/Trading Name was permitted on the near side sun-visor which could be flipped down when approaching a booked passenger.

All Private Hire Operators had to have a car park for vehicles to return to while waiting for their next job. Many Operators paid PCC rent for their car parks.

It was realised that this was too much for one person to administer and a second inspector was appointed.

On 17.01.1978 the same Inspector reported that he had issued, and administered, a total of 1,185 licences. It was appreciated that this was too high a burden for one Inspector and from 12.03.1979 consideration was given to the problem with an additional Inspector being in post by 30.07.1979.

In addition to the following LA provided figures held are PH Operators:

DATE	VEHICLES			DRIVERS		
	H.C.	PHV	TOTAL	H.C.	PHV	TOTAL
LICENCES						

issues and convictions that must be reviewed by committee following their declaration to the department.

The enforcement officers undertook 487 vehicle inspections last year and work closely with the Police and School Transport to undertake targeted operations.



24.02.1982	176	301	477	254	392	646
	1,123					
25.03.1986	190	276	466	250	359	609
	1,075					
22.06.1993	340	240	580	411	259	670
	1,250					
17.12.2018	346	807	1,153	387	803	1,190
	2,343					

**Comments:** In 1982 two members of staff administered in excess of 1,130 Licensees = 560 each. They also carried out several Compliance Patrols each week.

In 1982 there were 78 more H.C. Drivers than vehicles so, with Double Banking, provided a more efficient service to the public by ensuring a 20 hour coverage.

The Transport Act 1985 was introduced on 01.01.1986 and LA staff encouraged H.C. Drivers who could not handle their finances efficiently to purchase their own vehicles rather than rent. The effect of this was to increase fleet sizes as ex-drivers handed vehicles back and to reduce the number of double banked vehicles.

Through efficient compliance patrols the numbers of PHV's reduced to 240 on 22.06.1993.

Double Banking: There has never been a general practice of PHV Drivers Double Banking but this was a fairly common practice within the Hackney Carriage Trade. It is noticeable that in recent years this has died out as the figures show resulting in fewer Taxis being available for the public throughout the 24 hour period..

LA staff has increased over recent years with three full time Inspectors, two clerks doing a job share, one apprentice ? and two senior staff members who provide a 50% dedication to Licensing of the two trades. This equates to six members of staff administering approximately 2,350 licences or 392 each with a drastic drop in Compliance Patrols.

#### **Taxi Trade Meeting 19.01.2016**

Private hire – RH raised concerns that the PH trade is not properly regulated and that all PH vehicles should be made to report to the Licensing Office for routine inspection where that vehicle has not inspected on the street. DH stated that

#### **Trade Meeting 19.1.16**

Vehicles over 5 years of age must have a 6 monthly compliance test by a testing station authorized by PCC. This includes the MOT and the PCC compliance certificate. If any defects are noted on patrols on vehicles that recently had a compliance/MOT then these are investigated.

resources did not allow for this course of action and that all vehicles are compliance tested once or two a year. Officers also respond to complaints and call vehicles in for inspection. By way of example RH stated that PH vehicles are routinely seen with their licence plates displayed in the rear window.

**Comment:** On several occasions Taxi Trade Representatives have complained regarding

the lack of Compliance Testing of PHV's.

When there were two members of staff there were plenty of resources, why is it that with six staff members "resources did not allow for this course of action". There was much more enforcement when the LA only had two staff than there is now.

LA Compliance administration re-active and not pro-active.

**Taxi Trade Meeting 13/10/2016**

<b>5.</b>	<p><b>Civil Enforcement Officer Powers (CEO)</b></p> <p><b>SF:</b> All 3 Taxi Enforcement Officers are now authorised to issue FPNs for vehicles parking/blocking ranks. These powers can also be used where licensed drivers' park and leave their vehicles for extended periods of time unattended. This will be trialed over the forthcoming months the licensing section needs to explore the different types of equipment available to issue the FPNs.</p>
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**Comment:** Spreadsheet: 2802 Training 2017/18 £680; 2018/19 £330. Two years equals

Any licence plates displayed in the rear window are actioned when reported or found during patrols. Please forward specific vehicle details for us to investigate.

**Trade Meeting 13.10.16**

The officers have not needed to issue these FPN's and pass intelligence to the Parking Officers. This was trialed but it was not found to be effective use of resources for the numbers involved.

**Training** – it is important that officers receive adequate training to be able to do their job such as vehicle inspection courses, taxi law updates and prosecution training. These are costs associated with running the service and therefore must be paid for by the trade accounts.

£1,010.

The LA staff were trained in 2016 yet we are informed that no vehicle has been issued with a PCN in the two and a half years since.

Why is the Taxi Trade being charged for staff training ??.

The late Lord Denning stated that a Taxi is a shop on wheels and that Taxi Proprietors/Drivers are small business men. No other small business is regulated as complexly as the Taxi Trade with the multitude of Statutes, Statutory Instruments and local Specifications and Conditions that we have to abide by so we require an efficient Licensing Authority to fairly administer the Taxi and Private Hire trades.

Plymouth Crown Court Case No: A19990007 21.09.1999

Key Cabs Ltd	and	Appellant
Plymouth City Council		Respondent

Page 4 2<sup>nd</sup> main paragraph

*“...When cross-examined he {Mr. Shepherd} accepted that the sub-committee had not in fact considered whether the ban on advertising on the roof was “reasonably necessary” and said that aspect had not been considered.”*

Page 5 paragraph 1

#### **Key Cabs Ltd 2007 Case**

This is not relevant to this review of licence fees, however members of the trade will recall that this related to the defence of a claim against the council’s policy in respect of hackney carriage vehicle licences; the trade supported the council’s position and the council were successful.

*“...In the light of some of the evidence adduced before the Magistrates Key Cabs informed PCC on 15 January 1999 that it had changed its trading name from “TaxiFast” to “TF Value Cars” and wished to use the legend “Advance Bookings Only” on the side rear panels of its licensed PHVs. ...”*



Page 8 paragraph 2

However, when the sub committee did consider the matter at its meetings on 17 September 1998 and 27 August 1999 they did not, in our view, correctly apply themselves to the question under S. 5 (1) (a) (ii) which had they asked themselves the correct question they must have answered No; they failed to consider whether a total ban on advertising on the roof of a PHV was reasonably necessary in 1998 or 1999 and in imposing such a prohibition they acted wrongly.

**Comment:** Why has the LA not enforced the removal of the word “Taxi”

What is a Taxi ? **SI 1994 No. 1519 4.** "taxi" means (a) in England and Wales, a vehicle licensed under (i) section 37 of the Town Police Clauses Act 1847;

**Use of the word “Taxi” on private hire vehicles – enforcement**

This is not relevant to this review of the licence fees.

Private Hire Vehicles are not “taxis” yet this LA continues to aid and abet the false advertising on vehicles and around the city to the detriment of the Licensed Taxi Trade.

**Key Cabs Limited t/a Taxifast Appellant v Plymouth City Council  
Respondent**

**CO/4369/2006**

**High Court of Justice Queen's Bench Division Administrative Court**

**8 November 2007**

**[2007] EWHC 2837 (Admin) 2007 WL 4190498 Before: Mr Justice Mitting**

**Thursday, 8th November 2007**

**Comment:** Criticism was made by **Mr. Justice Mitting** in the High Court in London on

Thursday about the way in which Plymouth City Council had responded to an application by Key Cabs Limited for 30 hackney carriage licences.

He said he had “great sympathy for anyone dealing with the Council”, commenting that if the submission being put forward by Counsel on behalf [of the] City Council were put forward on instructions, he considered the approach

of the Council, acting as a regulatory authority, left “much to be desired”.

*Re-typed by R. W. Hamilton from notes that were taken by staff present in the Court during the Hearing and provided by Ashford Solicitors.*

(2) On the 21st July 2004 the Complainant Company submitted a Peugeot Euro 7 vehicle, registration number SF04 RJJ, to the Respondent Authority for plating and licensing as a hackney carriage.

**Comment:** It is understood that this vehicle did not meet hackney carriage specifications but was not tested by PCC. Had it been there would have been no Court Case or cost to the Taxi Trade Budget.

THE QUEEN ON THE APPLICATION OF KEY CABS LIMITED T/A TAXIFAST V PLYMOUTH  
CROWN COURT CO/7689/2006

HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE QUEEN'S BENCH DIVISION ADMINISTRATIVE COURT

9 NOVEMBER 2007

[2007] EWHC 2800 (ADMIN)2007 WL 4190529BEFORE: MR JUSTICE MITTING

FRIDAY, 9TH NOVEMBER 2007

REPRESENTATION MR ALAN NEWMAN QC (INSTRUCTED BY MESSRS ASHFORDS ,

PLYMOUTH) APPEARED ON BEHALF OF THE CLAIMANT.

MR JAMES FINDLAY (INSTRUCTED BY PLYMOUTH LEGAL SERVICES ) APPEARED ON BEHALF OF THE INTERESTED PARTY.

JUDGMENT MR JUSTICE MITTING:

34 Even if that were the only information available to Plymouth, which it was not, on no reasonable view could the court have concluded that the costs would be anything less than £200,000, indeed, most likely, significantly more. Plymouth were aware that that was not the base figure because of the letter to which I have already referred dated 14th February 2006. It was incumbent upon Plymouth's legal department to instruct Mr Findlay on matters such as costs if, as was inevitable, he was going to make submissions about them. They had that letter in their possession. It was up to them to make it plain to Mr Findlay that the £150,000 was but the pre-hearing costs. If the court was misled, then it was misled, in my view, as a result of Plymouth's failure to give adequate instructions to Mr Findlay.

41 MR FINDLAY: My Lord, as a matter of practice I feel I should ask for permission to appeal your Lordship's judgment. The issue on which I — no one from Plymouth is here and we obviously have to take instructions,

**Comment:** 34. "Plymouth's failure to give adequate instructions to Mr Findlay."

41. "no one from Plymouth is here"

Why should the Taxi Trade Budget pay for the failures of our LA.



## HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY 2018

### 10.0 Conditions of Driver Licence

10.2 Regulation of hackney carriage drivers is achieved through the use of byelaws. The Secretary of State for Transport has approved a set of byelaws to regulate the hackney carriage trade operating within the City of Plymouth. These byelaws became effective from the 14 July 2009 and will remain in place until such time as they are updated or replaced.

**Comment:** We understand the Policy cannot be revisited for a period of twelve months.

It is the opinion of several Licensees that PCC as LA is failing to comply with its' own Policy

When a Taxi Proprietor sought a court ruling on whether Byelaws are required to regulate Taxi Drivers the Legal Department went out of house thereby incurring additional costs and raising the question, is the Legal Department fit for purpose ??.

	Spreadsheet	Taxis	PH	Total
5519	Legal Expenses	3,000	373	3,373
5703	Legal Agents	31,466	18,995	50,461

How can the Legal Department justify a cost of 34,466 this year. It is our opinion that the Taxi Trade should not have all of these costs imposed upon our budget.

## Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy 2018

The Council complies with its Policy.

### Use of External Legal Advice

The reason that James Button was employed regarding this case was because he is a specialist Taxi Licensing Solicitor.

### Legal Costs

All legal costs are time recorded to ensure accuracy and the trade should pay the costs attributable to licensing of the trade which would otherwise fall to be paid by the general council tax payer.

The perceived past failures of the Legal Department to safeguard the Taxi Trade in Plymouth and the perceived bias towards Private Hire leaves very little faith in the Legal Department and the costs which have been imposed upon the Taxi Trade as a result.

The Taxi Trade has now reached the stage that because of false advertising by Private Hire Companies and their persistent use of the word “taxi” unfettered by the LA the general public do not know what a taxi is and persistently ask whether they have to “pre-book” or are we “available for hire” when parked on Taxi Ranks.

The cost of purchasing a Vehicle, Insurance, Vehicle Test and Licence, Driver Licence, two Tyres, a Service and Fuel to pay for the preceding equates in this writers case to £2,851.

Broken down; fourteen days holiday, one day per week off, Bank holidays etc. say 290 working days per year with an eight hour working day.

A cost of £2,851 equates to £1.23 per hour. There are many hours when Taxi Drivers earn less than the minimum wage and any unreasonable increase in Licence Fees will cause great hardship to those younger Licensees with mortgages and families.

Vehicle Proprietors who rent out vehicles will look at the increase, work out that it is £2.54 per week and increase vehicle rents by £5.00. This is a large increase in cost for a Taxi Driver with a young family and could cause real hardship.

This could also have a knock on effect for Taxi Offices trying to recruit additional drivers to serve the public on a 24 hour basis.

Taxi Offices tend to reduce the numbers of Taxis at Taxi Ranks which alleviates congestion in certain areas of the city.

All costs associated with the taxi business may be claimed as an allowable deduction for tax purposes. Please contact the HMRC or your accountant for more information.

Any additional cost reducing the attractiveness of working through an office is detrimental to the city as a whole.

The First Annual Report of the Chief Executive and Town Clerk presented on the 8<sup>th</sup> March, 1977 states at paragraph “4. THE APPEAL MACHINERY.”

There is a built in right of appeal from any decisions of the Council under the 1975 Act to the Magistrate’s Court. ...”

We assume that this right still exists. Can you please confirm that this is so?

For all of the above the Plymouth Licensed Taxi Association objects to the Proposed Licence Fees increase including various separate headings within the Spreadsheet.

### **The Appeal Machinery**

It is not clear from the representation but if the reference made is to the Plymouth City Council Act 1975 then the rights of appeal in that Act have not changed since its introduction.

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**APPENDIX 4: Taxi Fees Table of Responses**

No	Comments received	Response
I	<p>You recently wrote to us all about the change of Private Hire and Hackney fee changes and also about the ambassador courses and asked if we have any objections.</p> <p>First of all I would like you to note my objection at this time until I have seen supporting documentation to the fee rise and until we have been published with the documentation to what has been spent out and taken in, as at the moment we are only being told that the budget is in a deficit without being shown any numbers. I would also ask that the fee rise is postponed until people are issued with the correct documentation and given time to read and object to this rise.</p> <p>We are also being supposedly told that the Private Hire side of licencing is in credit so why are private hire drivers being punished for the deficit on the Hackney accounts as Private Hire drivers have different rules to how they operate and should not be financially punished for the failings of other systems. If the fees do increase can we have a guarantee that the council has now got a grip of the finances and this will never happen again?</p> <p>If money is being spent on court cases then this money should not be recovered from the drivers as it is not other drivers faults/ those who are found not guilty and it is the authority's fault who authorized the action. Committees do not need to be paid for as committee members are being paid for anyway out of other council funds.</p> <p>I would like to request a document showing all money taken in and spent out for the last three financial years please.</p> <p>The ambassadors course is in my opinion pointless as many of us have drove taxis for many years without this course and it's not much about Plymouth that most of us don't already know. I would challenge any trainer, committee to a basic knowledge test on Plymouth and the surrounding area and I am</p>	<p>Thank you for your response.</p> <p>Please see the summarised accounts in Appendix 3 of the Taxi Licensing Committee report.</p> <p>The Private Hire accounts are separate to the Hackney Carriage accounts. They are not affected by the deficit on the Hackney Carriage accounts. However the private hire fees must be increased to ensure the accounts remain in balance and the costs of running the service are met.</p> <p>The fees are reviewed throughout the year and an annual review will take place. Costs may vary each year due to uncontrollable expenses such as legal costs incurred when taking prosecutions and defending committee appeals.</p> <p>The costs incurred with dealing with court cases are for either prosecutions or for appeals against Committee decisions, mainly where a driver's licence has been revoked. Whilst it doesn't seem fair that drivers have to pay for others faults, the cost of the service needs to be met and must therefore be divided equally. All drivers can appeal to the Magistrate's Court against a committee decision to suspend or revoke their licence. If a driver appeals then the Council must defend its case. The council have been found by the Magistrates Court on all our cases to have made the correct decision, however unfortunately very little or no costs are granted.</p> <p>No charges are made for the Committee Members time within the taxi licensing accounts, however these are legitimate costs that could be included and are by other Council's.</p> <p>The aim of the ambassador course is to ensure all drivers create an excellent first impression of the City. Unfortunately we received 196</p>

	<p>already polite to customers and when they ask question I tell them the truth.</p>	<p>complaints in the last 12 months relating to taxi and private hire drivers and the majority of these complaints are regarding driver behaviour and overcharging. This creates a bad impression and damages the reputation of the trade. The feedback so far has been very positive and we hope this will help improve customer care and reduce the complaints we receive. There will also be a lot of opportunities for drivers to earn more money next year for the Mayflower 400 celebrations as we are expecting at least 500,000 more visitors to the City in 2020.</p>
<p>2</p>	<p>I would like to strongly convey my objection to the increase in taxi licence fees. At this present time the taxi trade is in a slump as with other industries. What with massive increases in fuel costs and insurance and with having to invest in newer vehicles in the last few years I believe that increases of fees will push many drivers to consider leaving the profession as working 60+ hours a week just to pay bills is not excitable for anyone. Hopefully you will reconsider this increase</p>	<p>Thank you for your response. We appreciate that these increases are an additional cost, however the income from the licence fees must cover the expenditure required to run the service. Any expenses incurred as part of running your business may be claimed as an allowable deduction for tax purposes. Please contact the HMRC or an accountant for more information as they may be able to recover some of your overheads.</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>Thankyou for your letter dated 11th January 2019 regarding the proposed steep increase in fees by yourselves. I am elated that I am retiring from the industry this year and will therefore avoid most of your draconian increases as this would have been the final nail in the coffin anyway. As I am sure you people live in cloud cuckoo land I would like to remind you of the overheads faced by the humble private hire taxi driver. Many drivers pay their insurance weekly, at an average of £50 per week,(2.4k p.a),then office rent of approx £170 per week,(8.8k p.a),then road fund licence,fuel and vehicle repairs. Beware Plymouth City Council for you may find yourself with a city devoid of taxis if you continue with this policy of milking already hard pressed taxi drivers.</p>	<p>Thank you for your response. We appreciate that these increases are an additional cost, however the income from the licence fees must cover the expenditure required to run the service. Any expenses incurred as part of running your business may be claimed as an allowable deduction for tax purposes. Please contact the HMRC or an accountant for more information as they may be able to recover some of your overheads.</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>I am writing this email to you to object to the extortionate increase to the license fees.</p>	<p>Thank you for your email.  In answer to Q1, the three year drivers licence fee is proposed to</p>

1. Can you please explain to me why you feel that a nearly £200 is a justified increase in the Hackney drivers license fee?

2. What has gone so spectacularly wrong with the accounting situation wrt our account that we have such a massive deficit?

If the increase is to cover things like the cost of safeguarding courses, changes to dress codes/enforcement of these changes and the Ambassador course then maybe a rethink on all of the above needs to happen.

For you to think that we would not realise that you are giving us these courses for free but actually they're coming from our license fees is, frankly an insult to mine and other drivers intelligence.

I am currently working from 0700 in the morning til 1900, 7 days a week pretty much all year for around £50/60 per day. This morning as I type this to you I have now been sat for 40 minutes. I may be lucky to get a job by 0900.

I feel that members of the council need to take a good look at what is happening in Plymouth right now. Shops closing, night life dead on its feet. It isn't thriving anymore it is dieing!

A lack of people coming into Plymouth to shop means a lack of people using Taxis. We are at the bottom of the food chain when it comes to people spending what little money they have. It doesn't matter what we wear or whether we know anything about the history of our city. It is not going to make up the difference in my earnings.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

increase by £197 as the current fee does not cover the full costs involved with the issue and administration of the three year licence. There are costs involved each year to deal with the general administration and compliance matters for drivers licences. For example the proportion of costs involved with reviewing the taxi licensing policy and sending update letters and guidance to drivers of the new requirements; dealing with medical compliances and medical exemption applications regarding wheelchairs; updating driver's information such as change of address or convictions/driving offences notifications; arranging the safeguarding and ambassador training courses. There are also costs involved with dealing with complaints and reviewing drivers licences to ensure drivers are safe and suitable to hold a licence. Therefore the proposed three year fee has increased to reflect the full costs involved. This increase equates to £1.26 a week.

Q2. There are a number of reasons for the deficit which are outlined in the Committee report.

Some of the increases are due to the courses but the Ambassador Course costs will be completed for all existing drivers by 31 December 2019.

The initial Ambassadors Courses were funded by an external provider, however unfortunately this funding is no longer available. The course has been arranged at as low a cost as possible and has received good feedback.

We understand the increases will affect your costs, however any expenses incurred as part of running your business may be claimed as an allowable deduction for tax purposes. Please contact the HMRC or an accountant to assist you with this as you may be able to recover some of your overheads.

5 I have just received your letter proposing a fee increase from £82 to £120 for

Thank you for your response. The Private hire one year driver licence

	<p>a 1 year drivers license...          Can you please explain how you can justify a 47% increase in this day and age ..          it's a total outrage</p>	<p>are proposed to be increased by 47% to ensure full cost recovery. The fees have been proposed to be increased higher this year and then a smaller increase in future years.</p> <p>The current one year driver licence does not cover the full costs involved with the issue and administration of the licence. There are costs involved to deal with the general administration and compliance matters for drivers' licences. For example the proportion of costs involved with reviewing the taxi licensing policy and sending update letters and guidance to drivers of the new requirements; dealing with medical compliances and medical exemption applications regarding wheelchairs; updating driver's information such as change of address or convictions/driving offences notifications; arranging the safeguarding and ambassador training courses. There are also costs involved with dealing with complaints and reviewing drivers licences to ensure drivers are safe and suitable to hold a licence. Therefore the proposed one year fee has increased to reflect the full costs involved. This increase equates to 73 pence a week.</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>I would like to lodge a strong complaint regarding the proposed increase to hackney carriage fees. The hackney carriage fees have increased far more than private hire, yet you are cutting back and back on our ranks. We are governed by yourselves on what we can charge, our cabs have to be in pristine condition we are expected to achieve a very high standard of vehicle which cost much more that any vehicle used for private hire, yet we seem to be being expected to pay far more to go to work and earn a living.          I hope you do not ignore this very strong complaint</p>	<p>Thank you for your response.          The Private Hire accounts are separate to the Hackney Carriage accounts so they must be considered separately. The Hackney carriage accounts have incurred more expenditure for example for defending appeals of committee decisions regarding revoked drivers and for carrying out the unmet demand surveys.</p> <p>No ranks have been removed without being replaced with an alternative and we work closely with the Plymouth Licensed Taxi Association (PLTA) to ensure that any proposed changes in the City are consulted on and the best provision for ranks are introduced. There will be 9 rank spaces within the new Cinema complex and additional spaces outside Walkabout to compensate for the ranks lost to the new hotel complex in Raleigh Street. This will benefit the trade as the Walkabout rank is a popular location. The Taxi Licensing Department are working closely with planners regarding the new city centre scheme to ensure that</p>



		adequate and suitable taxi rank provision is maintained as taxi's play a vital part in transporting the most vulnerable residents of the city.
7	<p>With reference to the proposed increase in Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Fees, please accept this email as a formal objection. I am a Private Hire driver so I am referring only to those proposed increases but, having looked at the Hackney proposals I feel sure you will have multiple objections to those as well. This proposed increase is only 18 months since the last rate rise and the scale beggar's belief. When the Vehicle Licence fee was increased previously, it went from £97 to £117, an increase of £20 and a gap of something like three years. Now, barely 18 months since it went to £117, you are expecting drivers to find £170 every year?? That's a £53 increase which cannot surely be justified. I know that in September 2015 the three year Driver Licence fee was £149—it then increased to £160 in August 2017 and now you want to increase it again to £300?? That's more than a 100% increase in three and a half years and a £140 jump in 18 months!! Again, this cannot possibly be justified, There are more taxis of all types than ever before in Plymouth now, meaning that drivers are really struggling to earn a decent living wage These proposed fee increase will mean an increased struggle for everyone, not to mention feelings of discontent, At the same time, you are demanding that drivers give up a day of earning what money they can to attend an Ambassador course! Whilst I'm sure parts of the course will be interesting, I feel there will be huge resentment from drivers that this is being demanded of us at the same time as the kick in the teeth of the fees increasing so drastically. I note from the list that the Operator fees are not going up at all so why is it necessary to hit the drivers so hard? It would help if the rate or timing of these proposed increases could be looked at again and either deferred (for a couple of years) or reduced considerably in scale. You simply cannot expect drivers to be able to find these sums of money from the earnings that are now available to us.</p>	<p>The fees need to be increased to ensure they cover the costs of running the service. We have reviewed the increases and have considered other options. However this would require higher percentage increases for future years. A risk with this is if other unforeseen costs that may arise in the following years then the increases may have to be greater than anticipated.</p> <p>Each fee is reviewed to ensure they are based on the actual costs involved. The Operator costs were reviewed and no increase was required as the costs covered the work involved.</p> <p>We understand the increases will affect your costs, however any expenses incurred as part of running your business may be claimed as an allowable deduction for tax purposes. Please contact the HMRC or an accountant to assist you with this as you may be able to recover some of your overheads.</p>
8	<p>TAXI LICENSING COMMETTE</p> <p>I WISH TO PUT INTO WRITING MY FORMAL COMPLAINT WITH THE EXTORSIONATE PRICE INCREASES IN THE LICENCE FEES 83% IS A UNJUST UNFAR AND WELL OVER PRICED INCREASE.</p>	<p>Thank you for your email regarding the taxi licensing fees.</p> <p>The three year drivers badge for Hackney carriages is proposed to increase by 83% as the current fee does not cover the full costs involved with the issue and administration of the three year licence. There are costs involved each year to deal with the general administration and</p>

THIS DUE TO WHAT IM BELEIVE TO INEPT SPENDING.

I WISH TO FORMALLY LODGE MY PROTEST.

I WOULD ALSO UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATIONS ACT REQUEST A COPY IF ALL SPENDING AND INCOME FOR THE TAXI LICENCING.

I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO REQUEST A AUDIT BY THE LOCAL AUDIT OFFICE ON THESE SPENDINGS.

HACKNEY DRIVER

compliance matters for drivers licences. For example the proportion of costs involved with reviewing the taxi licensing policy and sending update letters and guidance to drivers of the new requirements; dealing with medical compliances and medical exemption applications regarding wheelchairs; updating drivers' information such as change of address or convictions/driving offences notifications; arranging the safeguarding and ambassador training courses. There are also costs involved with dealing with complaints and reviewing drivers licences to ensure drivers are safe and suitable to hold a licence. Therefore the proposed three year fee has increased to reflect the full costs involved. This increase equates to £1.26 a week.

The one year drivers badge is proposed to be increased by 47% to cover the costs involved with administration as listed above, which is an increase of £1.02 a week.

The vehicle licence is proposed to be increased by 63% (£2.54 per week) to cover the full costs involved with administrating the licence; the proportion of costs involved with reviewing the taxi policy; the inspections of vehicles; provision of Hackney Carriage stands and the control and supervision of hackney carriage vehicles. The Hackney Carriage unmet demand survey is taking place this year which is an additional cost of £16,000 which will also affect the vehicle fee.

As detailed in the committee report that was considered by members on 10 January 2019, the increases have been higher due to a number of factors such as the percentage of enforcement officer costs have been incorrectly allocated since 2015 and this has now been rectified.

I can assure you that no money is misspent by the Council. However the costs involved with running the service must be accounted for and we cannot stop dealing with drivers who are not safe and suitable and are putting the public at risk.

I have logged your FOI request and this will be dealt with separately.

		<p>The Council are prepared for the Devon Audit Partnership to review the accounts and this will be arranged, however any additional costs of this will need to be charged to the taxi accounts.</p>
<p>9</p>	<p>I am very disappointed to see such a hike in the taxi fees, they don't speak in reality of the struggling trade at present, forcing drivers who don't guarantee themselves to earn the living wage having to work longer hours spending more time away from the family which is contrary to the councils policy of fairness, equality, and impact on child poverty.</p> <p>Furthermore I object to this increase as it goes against another city council policy of promoting growth and jobs, encouraging people into jobs. By raising the fees in the way you proposed will not encourage people into the taxi trade and instead kill the trade and will then threaten sustainable transport.</p> <p>This would make life harder for the disabled to travel, harm the night time economy and threaten the safeguarding of young women who may struggle to get home safely at night due to lack of taxis should you tax drivers on both sides of the trade.</p> <p>I find the report lacks detail of the truth of the taxi accounts as to how money has been spent, and why it's overspent.</p> <p>If blaming court battles and passing cost onto the trade really fair? Maybe the council should review its policy and investigate why they fail to win in court?</p> <p>If committee makes a decision that does not stack up in court then should this cost not be accountable to the tax payer as with the planning committee. The council and committee should be more accountable for their decision making as with the Planning Committee.</p> <p>The budget is not by any means transparent, which is why I would like the district auditor to investigate this account.</p> <p>Having driven a taxi for up to 15 years I am yet to see any improvement to</p>	<p>Thank you for your response.</p> <p>The Committee report outlines the main reasons for the deficit on the accounts.</p> <p>The costs incurred with dealing with court cases are for either prosecutions or for appeals against Committee decisions, mainly where a driver's licence has been revoked. All drivers can appeal to the Magistrate's Court against a committee decision to suspend or revoke their licence. If a driver appeals then the Council must defend its case. The council have been found by the Magistrates Court on all our cases to have made the correct decision, however unfortunately very little or no costs are granted.</p> <p>The Council are prepared for the Devon Audit Partnership to review the accounts and this will be arranged, however any additional costs of this will need to be charged to the taxi accounts.</p> <p>Information boards around the city contain maps and these include all of main taxi ranks in the city.</p> <p>We have reviewed the use of raised kerbs, however there are a number of issues with installing these and these are costly to install. However with the latest review of the ranks in old town street, we are working with the designers to look at the possibility of introducing the front rank space with a slightly raised kerb. Additional signage will be installed to direct shoppers from Drake Circus to the new ranks, however this is currently at the early stages of design and no firm plans have been proposed.</p> <p>Any new provisions are discussed with the Plymouth Licensed Taxi</p>

	<p>the taxi trade, no taxi rank signs in and around the city centre to direct customers to the ranks, no kerb has been raised for wheelchair transportation at ranks unlike they do in Liverpool. No new ranks have be put in placed for the Pavilions, Home Park and Royal William Yard. No one ever checks the rank outside Ivor Dewdney Pasties on Cornwall Street, where disabled drivers park on the rank preventing taxi drivers from ranking on the rank they pay for. Traffic wardens turn a blind eye to people parking on the rank with disabled badges preventing hackney cabs from using the rank. The main ranks could do with a shelter for customers having to wait in the wet weather which would not be costly due to the contract with jcedeceaux.</p> <p>The fees also don't show any incentive to drivers to buy cleaner cabs to reduce carbon emissions such as electric cabs and cars coming on to the market.</p> <p>I don't support increasing my fees just to pay for the court costs that the Council has lost due to the ineptitude of decisions made at committee.</p>	<p>Association. A rank at Home Park has been considered recently, however due to the potential for the building of a new hotel, we have recommended to our planning colleagues that a rank is incorporated in the proposed hotel plans.</p> <p>Royal William Yard – this is private land, however this is currently being reviewed as part of the Mayflower 400 project to see if rank would be possible.</p> <p>The rank in Cornwall Street is rarely used however we will pass on your concerns to the parking officers. Please contact them if you encounter any issues when using this rank.</p> <p>The shelter is a good idea for the main ranks for the city and we will look into this as part of the city centre rank review.</p>
<p><b>10</b></p>	<p>Dear sir or madam I wish to raise my objections to the proposed fee increases ref you're letter I think they are ridiculous high I believe they are not in line with the rate of inflation.</p>	<p>Thank you for your response. The proposed fee increases are higher than inflation as they need to ensure full cost recovery.</p>
<p><b>11</b></p>	<p>I wish to raise my objections to the proposed fee increases ref your letter dated 11/1/19.</p> <p>It's my opinion that a 95% increase is too high given that we still have to incur other expenses such as fuel, tax and garage fees which are also on the increase and there is no change in the hackney fare prices.</p> <p>This means that we need to work even longer hours to make all these extra payments, which will put a strain on ourselves and our families.</p> <p>Whilst I understand an increase may need to be made, I would urge you to reconsider the vast price hike and how it would affect us as taxi drivers, or, as you wish us to be known, ambassadors of the taxi trade.</p>	<p>The fees are increasing by various amounts and not by 95%.</p> <p>The three year drivers badge for Hackney carriages is proposed to increase by 83% as the current fee does not cover the full costs involved with the issue and administration of the three year licence. There are costs involved each year to deal with the general administration and compliance matters for drivers licences. For example the proportion of costs involved with reviewing the taxi licensing policy and sending update letters and guidance to drivers of the new requirements; dealing with medical compliances and medical exemption applications regarding wheelchairs; updating drivers' information such as change of address or convictions/driving offences notifications; arranging the safeguarding and ambassador training courses. There are also costs involved with dealing with complaints and reviewing drivers licences to ensure drivers are safe</p>

and suitable to hold a licence. Therefore the proposed three year fee has increased to reflect the full costs involved. This increase equates to £1.26 a week.

The one year drivers badge is proposed to be increased by 47% to cover the costs involved with administration as listed above, which is an increase of £1.02 a week.

The vehicle licence is proposed to be increased by 63% (£2.54 per week) to cover the full costs involved with administrating the licence; the proportion of costs involved with reviewing the taxi policy; the inspections of vehicles; provision of Hackney Carriage stands and the control and supervision of hackney carriage vehicles. The Hackney Carriage unmet demand survey is taking place this year which is an additional cost of £16,000 which will also affect the vehicle fee.

As detailed in the committee report that was considered by members on 10 January 2019, the increases have been higher due to a number of factors such as the percentage of enforcement officer costs have been incorrectly allocated since 2015 and this has now been rectified.

We understand the increases will affect your costs, however any expenses incurred as part of running your business may be claimed as an allowable deduction for tax purposes. Please contact the HMRC or an accountant to assist you with this as you may be able to recover some of your overheads.

I had the pleasure of meeting you at the Ambassador course, I am sorry to write to you now to object to the increase in vehicle licence fees for private hire .The rise is significant .  
 Before I earn a penny with office rent ,fuel and insurance and maintenance and cleaning and uniform ,and current licensing I have to take £410 a week before I earn a penny .So therefore I work 50 hours and earn less than £150 .

Thank you for your response and it was a pleasure to meet you at the Ambassadors course and for your positive feedback.

We have considered the use of a direct debit scheme to assist, however if there is not enough money in a person's bank account to cover the direct debit then the account provider may refuse to pay the bill. This would mean a licensed driver or proprietor would have a licence that

I read through your document and note you are aware of the pressures on taxi users .In private hire the offices won't increase fees,as the public say they are expensive enough as it is

.The issue you will find is that long serving taxi drivers will start to leave the trade and get proper jobs ,( which will be less revenue for PCC) drivers are now struggling particularly as the cushion of working tax credits or universal credit is not there ,as we are subject to the minimum income floor ,which means we have to be seen to earn the minimum wage ,which clearly we don't .And these benefits calculate your entitlement like you are earning the minimum income wage .

Also universal credit and council tax rebate does not take into account your car expenses if your a private hire driver !

I think Plymouth city council should look again at the fees and maybe if there is not alteration in the fees maybe you could look to set up a monthly direct debit scheme to help drivers budget ? Similar to the accountant or HMRC.

I am aware there are planned protests re the fees increase across the taxi trade ,but I thought I would email direct .I also ask why the hackney carriage account is in such deficit and looking at your breakdown and fees proportion it also feels the private hire drivers are paying more to prop up the hackney account .

Maybe a breakdown of these expenses and overheads and deficits may help drivers understand more ?

I also propose you introduce a taxi committee with licensing officers and members of the hackney and private hire trade to sit around and discuss and plan the best way forward ,and when I say members of the trade I mean sensible civil people not a free for all .

had not been completely paid for. This would then involve a lot of work by ourselves and our creditors department to chase up the payment. The licence would have already been issued so the only way to remove the licence would be to take the person to committee and if the licence was revoked, the person would still be able to use the licence during any appeal period. Whilst we would like to be able to provide this service, it is not deemed to be cost effective.

The private hire and hackney carriage accounts are completely separate. This is why the fees are different as they reflect the different trade accounts.

Please see the summarised accounts in Appendix 3 of the Taxi Licensing Committee report.

**12**

i am sending this email to register my disappointment of the council raising the fees charged to private hire drivers, as this places yet another burden

Thank you for your response. We appreciate that these increases are an additional cost, however the income from the licence fees must cover

	<p>upon already hard working drivers to find the extra money in the current climate of income and our ability to pass such costs on to customers who are already finding money in short supply.</p> <p>i would like a copy of the income and expenditure for the account that i pay in to to see for my self why you feel the need to impose even more monetary costs on already stretched sector</p> <p>i look forward to your reply</p>	<p>the expenditure required to run the service.</p> <p>Any expenses incurred as part of running your business may be claimed as an allowable deduction for tax purposes. Please contact the HMRC or an accountant to assist you with this as you may be able to recover some of your overheads.</p> <p>Please see the summarised accounts in Appendix 3 of the Taxi Licensing Committee report.</p>
13	<p>im emailing to object to the recent price increase proposals as its a huge increase and the money is not out there to earn as it wad sue to people not being able to afford to use taxis as much plus the increase in drivers ect this will certainly not do the trade any good</p> <p>yours sincerely</p>	<p>Thank you for your response. I appreciate that these increases are an additional cost, however the income from the licence fees must cover the expenditure required to run the service.</p>
14	<p>I am writing to you to object to the proposed increase in fees for both Hackney and Private hire taxis.</p> <p>Whilst I understand that annually there is a requirement for a proportional increase I feel that the level of increase proposed is disproportionate and is not at a level that we as drivers would be able to pass onto our customers.</p> <p>Our fares are either set by yourselves or by an operator. In the current economic climate we are not in a position to increase fares but yet we are expected to absorb the additional costs that this increase will incur. So therefore we are working the same hours for potentially less profit, or we work more hours to make the same profit as today. Either of these scenarios seem very unfair.</p> <p>A fairer proposition would be to increase the fees by a lesser percentage and step them over a greater period of time, thus allowing people who work in an already marginal marketplace the ability to pay their fees and still be able to maintain a reasonable work/life balance.</p>	<p>Thank you for your response. We have considered other options for the fees, however it is important that the deficit does not increase. The fees have been set with a predicted increase each year of 10%, however if a lower fee is set then a larger percentage increase would need to be required each year. There is also the risk that additional costs could occur for we must deal with any matters that need to be heard by committee and this will involve costs especially if the Council are to defend appeals from revoked drivers.</p>

	<p>Thank you for this opportunity to express my views.</p>	
<p><b>15</b></p>	<p><b>Subject: Objection to fees increase</b>          I have been a Hackney driver for over 20 years. I strongly object to the increase to the fees you are applying to the taxi trade.</p> <p>Not only will the cost of my badge go up but also my cab rent will now increase due to your increases.</p> <p>Some days I do not even earn minimum wage, I can't see how you can justify this added stress to a declining trade.</p>	<p>Thank you for your response.</p> <p>We appreciate that these increases are an additional cost, however the income from the licence fees must cover the expenditure required to run the service. Any expenses incurred as part of running your business may be claimed as an allowable deduction for tax purposes. Please contact the HMRC or an accountant to assist you with this as you may be able to recover some of your overheads.</p>
<p><b>16</b></p>	<p>I have been a Hackney driver for over 20 years. I strongly object to the increase to the fees you are applying to the taxi trade.</p> <p>Both myself and my partner are black cab drivers and our household income has decreased a lot over the past few years especially. We even joined Plymouth taxis to try increase our income.</p> <p>Not only will the cost of my badge go up but also my cab rent will now increase due to your increases.</p> <p>Some days I do not even earn minimum wage, I can't see how you can justify this added stress to a declining trade.</p>	<p>Thank you for your response.</p> <p>We appreciate that these increases are an additional cost, however the income from the licence fees must cover the expenditure required to run the service.</p> <p>Any expenses incurred as part of running your business may be claimed as an allowable deduction for tax purposes. Please contact the HMRC or an accountant to assist you with this as you may be able to recover some of your overheads.</p>
<p><b>17</b></p>	<p>I strongly object to the increases you are making within the taxi trade.</p> <p>In the last five years my earnings have decreased, I am now working more hours and still struggling to earn enough money to cover my household bills, cab rent and office rent.</p> <p>Both myself and my fiancé are Hackney drivers so the impact of the increases is hitting our household hard.</p> <p>My badge is due for renewal in March and the plan was to do a three year badge but due to the increase I will probably now just have to do a single year</p>	<p>Thank you for your response.</p> <p>We appreciate that these increases are an additional cost, however the income from the licence fees must cover the expenditure required to run the service.</p> <p>Any expenses incurred as part of running your business may be claimed as an allowable deduction for tax purposes. Please contact the HMRC or an accountant to assist you with this as you may be able to recover some of your overheads.</p>



badge as I had not budgeted for the big increase.

This is also impacting on our cab rents as we have been advised that due to the increase to the plates our cab rent will be increased.

You are now forcing me to think of my future in the taxi trade and no doubt many other drivers are feeling the same.

You are putting added stress to an already struggling trade.

**18**

I am writing to object in the strongest terms to the proposed licence fee increases.

Why are we being forced to pay for a badly mismanaged department?

Licensing officers now do half the job that was required 5 years ago, all licencing is now electronic, we have to do our own crb/DBS checks, there is very little face to face contact between the drivers and licencing officers.

Another huge issue for me is the totally unfair disparity of fees between ph and hc, it costs exactly the same to print out a licence or laminate a drivers badge, fees should be the same for both sides of the trade.

I, like many drivers have no issue with inflationary increases but some of the current proposals are up to 90% more, it's disgusting and I object.

HC Driver

Thank you for your response. The split in the employee costs for the three taxi enforcement officers were not allocated correctly within the accounts as agreed at the Committee meeting in January 2015. During the review of the accounts, this has been identified and therefore it must be addressed. To not address this error would be mismanagement.

I can confirm that our taxi licensing officers do not do half the job that was required five years ago and their performance is regularly monitored. Whilst the DBS checks and the majority of vehicle applications are dealt with online, we receive a large number of phone calls each day from taxi drivers with regards to their appointments and licence enquiries. This is currently being reviewed and we will be introducing an online booking system for taxi licensing appointments which will be more convenient for drivers and reduce the time taken with dealing with phone calls.

Whilst it may be the same cost for printing out a drivers badge for both trades, the costs must reflect the full cost of the service and the Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Accounts are separate.

The fees are increasing by various amounts and not by 95%.

The three year drivers badge for Hackney carriages is proposed to increase by 83% as the current fee does not cover the full costs involved with the issue and administration of the three year licence. There are

costs involved each year to deal with the general administration and compliance matters for drivers licences. For example the proportion of costs involved with reviewing the taxi licensing policy and sending update letters and guidance to drivers of the new requirements; dealing with medical compliances and medical exemption applications regarding wheelchairs; updating drivers' information such as change of address or convictions/driving offences notifications; arranging the safeguarding and ambassador training courses. There are also costs involved with dealing with complaints and reviewing drivers licences to ensure drivers are safe and suitable to hold a licence. Therefore the proposed three year fee has increased to reflect the full costs involved. This increase equates to £1.26 pence a week.

The one year drivers badge is proposed to be increased by 47% to cover the costs involved with administration as listed above, which is an increase of £1.02 a week.

The vehicle licence is proposed to be increased by 63% (£2.54 per week) to cover the full costs involved with administrating the licence; the proportion of costs involved with reviewing the taxi policy; the inspections of vehicles; provision of Hackney Carriage stands and the control and supervision of hackney carriage vehicles. The Hackney Carriage unmet demand survey is taking place this year which is an additional cost of £16,000 which will also affect the vehicle fee.

**19** id like to object fr the new proposed hike in charges for plates and badges,, we dont get holiday pay  
 we dont get sick pay  
 we dont get breakdown cover if our cars are off the rd we have to take the brunt of not earning untill our cars are repaired  
 and if hackney is the one in debt why should we be having to make up the difference  
 we pay office rent and they do not  
 they charge time and distance we do not !!!

Thank you for your response.

We appreciate that these increases are an additional cost, however the income from the licence fees must cover the expenditure required to run the service.

We understand the increases will affect your costs, however any expenses incurred as part of running your business may be claimed as an allowable deduction for tax purposes. Please contact the HMRC or an

	and when you say at the end of the comitte meeting we hope this doesnt incur any rises in fare prices which is down to our bosses where do you suppose were supposed to recoop these increases !!!!	accountant to assist you with this as you may be able to recover some of your overheads.
20	I wish to lodge a formal objection to the proposed increase in the cost of a taxi driver licence for the City of Plymouth. A 95% increase, to me, seems outrageous particularly at a time where running costs for taxi drivers continually increase and customer numbers fall. I am not a taxi driver but a council tax payer and citizen of Plymouth. I hope you can reconsider this unpopular increase to the taxi trade.	<p>Thank you for your objection. The fees are increasing by various amounts and not by 95%.</p> <p>All costs of the taxi licensing service must be covered by the trade. These costs should not have to be met by the council tax payer.</p> <p>Any expenses incurred as part of running a taxi business can be claimed as an allowable deduction for tax purposes.</p>
21	I would like to register my objections to the new price rises Plymouth city council has made on the Plymouth taxi trade. I think the new rises are completely unjustified and putting a lot of pressure on a lot of drivers who already struggle to earn a living, but i don't suppose any amount of protesting will make a difference. The only way we can show how we feel will be at the next elections Yours another angry taxi driver.	<p>Thank you for your response.</p> <p>We appreciate that these increases are an additional cost, however the income from the licence fees must cover the expenditure required to run the service.</p> <p>Any expenses incurred as part of running your business may be claimed as an allowable deduction for tax purposes. Please contact the HMRC or an accountant to assist you with this as you may be able to recover some of your overheads.</p>
22	Why are we in this situation now, because you want to rob us blind, we are not having it, we are doing a peaceful protest this Sunday and Monday then one Saturday in every month until this is resolved, we will also be boycotting the 2020 celebrations, what a embarrassment to this city. We have the support of most hackney taxis and private hire taxis, we have displayed posters on most of our taxis and generated a lot of support through social media. You have over stepped the mark this time and we are not putting up with it. We will bring this city to a stand still. In total I estimate 300 to 350 taxis could be more, we have had a lot of support on this, do the right thing and stop wasting our money on failed court cases and put the money back into the taxi trade. Maybe cut your own wage bill down. Our overheads are	<p>Thank you for your response.</p> <p>We appreciate that these increases are an additional cost, however the income from the licence fees must cover the expenditure required to run the service.</p> <p>The Hackney Carriage and Private Hire accounts are trade accounts and therefore all income and expenditure is purely spent on the two trades. Unfortunately when the accounts are in deficit, the fees need to be increased to cover the costs, however when the accounts are in credit, the trade have been discounted.</p>

	<p>even higher than before, I felt embarrassed putting my books in this year. Yes for the second year running I paid no tax because My outgoings were more than I had coming in. I just feel like chucking it all in, I work all these hours. And pay out so much money, what have I to show for it at the end of the year. Bearing in mind we don't get sick pay, holiday pay. Cab off the road, no pay. Pensions etc etc. The list goes on. Enough is enough. And yes it is true. Most of us would be better off on universal credits. We are working below minimum wage.</p>	
<p>23</p>	<p>I am writing to inform you of my objections to the proposed license fees increase as ref your letter. I feel a 95% increase is extortionate and not in line with the current rate of inflation. The Hackney carriage trade is already having to struggle with increasing prices of fuel, parts and labour, road tax and insurance coupled with a decline in trade. These proposed increases will force us to work longer hours which will ultimately mean more cabs on the road and less rank space to work from and have a detrimental effect on our home lives.</p> <p>Please take this email as my formal objection to your license fees increase.</p>	<p>Thank you for your objection. The fees are increasing by various amounts and not by 95%.</p> <p>We appreciate that these increases are an additional cost, however the income from the licence fees must cover the expenditure required to run the service.</p> <p>Any expenses incurred as part of running your business may be claimed as an allowable deduction for tax purposes. Please contact the HMRC or an accountant to assist you with this as you may be able to recover some of your overheads.</p>
<p>24</p>	<p>Last year I started working as a taxi driver in July 2018. I am a part time worker and it has cost me various high costs in order to get started with this including the cost of a new car (which include the various costs associated with the maintenance of this). As a result of my part time working due to other commitments I am not able to earn as much money in the first place once I have paid out my weekly insurances and fees in order to work. The proposed increase in fares by the council would mean that it would not be beneficial for me to work at all, as some weeks I would be working to just pay my fees and insurance.</p> <p>I therefore object to the fare increase as I would be earning less than minimum wage.</p>	<p>Thank you for your response.</p> <p>We appreciate that these increases are an additional cost, however the income from the licence fees must cover the expenditure required to run the service.</p> <p>Any expenses incurred as part of running your business may be claimed as an allowable deduction for tax purposes. Please contact the HMRC or an accountant to assist you with this as you may be able to recover some of your overheads.</p>

25	<p>I have read and considered the proposed increases on the hackney carriage and private hire fees and i must say although i feel that there should be an increase of some proportion i think that your proposed increases are at the least way out of proportion with the line of inflation</p> <p>I feel that you have not taken into account that the taxi trade has taken a down turn in the last few years so therefore we as drivers have suffered a significant drop in our takings</p> <p>It is of great concern to me that if these increases are implemented that it will force a lot of drivers to leave the trade and sit at home on unemployment benefit as it would not be possible to carry on working in the trade due to the cost being far to high to maintain</p> <p>I would also like to be at your meeting to have the chance to voice my opinion on this matter i am willing to attend at any time</p> <p>I would be grateful if you could allocate a time slot in you agender for me to do so</p> <p>HC Driver</p>	<p>Thank you for your response.</p> <p>The increase is above inflation but costs can be increased above inflation to ensure full cost recovery.</p> <p>The fees need to be increased to ensure that they cover the costs of running the service.</p> <p>The Fees will be heard at the Taxi Licensing Committee on Thursday 28 February 2019 and this is a public meeting. If you are a member of the PLTA then I would recommend you ask them to raise your concerns at the meeting. If you are not, then please contact me beforehand to discuss this further.</p>
26	<p>I would like this email to be registered as a objection to the proposal put forward by the council to increase are licensing fee's. It's very difficult has it is to make a living with these increases that are proposed it will become even harder now. My office rent per year is just short off £9000,My taxi insurance is £1250 and that's before I have earned anything for my household bills. It feels like we are an easy target to milk more money out off us. Surely you should be helping us and not making life harder for us.</p>	<p>Thank you for your response.</p> <p>We appreciate that these increases are an additional cost, however the income from the licence fees must cover the expenditure required to run the service.</p> <p>Any expenses incurred as part of running your business may be claimed as an allowable deduction for tax purposes. Please contact the HMRC or an accountant to assist you with this as you may be able to recover some of your overheads.</p>
27	<p>I strongly disagree with this increase OF (90%)</p> <p>Maybe you should be looking at spending our money on what is needed and not wasting it on stupid consultation/safe Guarding/Ambassador ..</p> <p>I've Spoken to the Americans about 2020.. they're not coming because any</p>	<p>Thank you for your response.</p> <p>We appreciate that these increases are an additional cost, however the income from the licence fees must cover the expenditure required to</p>

think.. we can offer them they can see on the internet

run the service.

Any expenses incurred as part of running your business may be claimed as an allowable deduction for tax purposes. Please contact the HMRC or an accountant to assist you with this as you may be able to recover some of your overheads.

The safeguarding workshops are designed to protect drivers and encourage drivers to report behavior that concerns them whether it involves a vulnerable child or an adult.

The safeguarding and ambassador course have been arranged at as low a cost as possible.

The aim of the ambassador course is to ensure all drivers create an excellent first impression of the City. Unfortunately we received 196 complaints in the last 12 months relating to taxi and private hire drivers and the majority of these complaints are regarding driver behaviour and overcharging. This creates a bad impression and damages the reputation of the trade. The feedback so far has been very positive and we hope this will help improve customer care and reduce the complaints we receive. There will also be a lot of opportunities for drivers to earn more money next year for the Mayflower 400 celebrations as we are expecting at least 500,000 more visitors to the City in 2020.

**28** My intension is send it to each committee member and as many councillors as I can find emails for,

Considering I suffer for Dyslexia and Dyscalculia and how difficult it is for me to write this I feel in doing so this reflects how important I feel it is to actually put pen to paper in manor of speaking.

In the past, years before many of you held your present positions, while fees where greatly less than they are at present and admittedly driver numbers were less as well, hence budgets being less there wasn't these massive negative sums you are now talking of. In actual fact accounts were in credit by tens and sometimes hundreds of thousands of pounds.

Thank you for your response.

The fees were less in the past as there were more drivers to cover the costs involved with running the service. In the past when the accounts were in credit, the fees were reduced by 30%.

The split in the employee costs for the three taxi enforcement officers were not allocated correctly within the accounts as agreed at the Committee meeting in January 2015. During the review of the accounts, this has been identified and therefore it must be addressed. To not address this error would be mismanagement.

That being said it considerable highlights this to an even greater extent these troubling accounts. You are readily aware of what your budgets are each year (fees x drivers). Every home in the country has to do this on a weekly basis with their household budget some better than others. But you yourselves are expected to do this efficiently as you are overseeing the drivers monies but as I have ascertained, you have been failing to-do this progressively for the last 5 years. Hard to understand as fees at one point took a reduction? This can only be due to mismanagement or misappropriation or the budget. I didn't use misappropriation lightly as it has been done in the past by licensing. That also being a past and dealt with issue only mentioned to highlight its possible.

But I digress back to the present budget, regardless of how many Licensing officers or staff you would like to have, ideas you would wish to implement you are held back by the constrains of YOUR budget as we all are in our home lives. But apparently you and your department have not been doing this. No home, business, council or government can have a Spend Spend Spend mentality without dire consequences.

Now I have been talking of the size of the rise with every and anybody in and out of the Taxi trade including customers. It is bordering on criminality, rises in utilities, council taxes, rent increases of 95% would getting debated in parliament and restricted. Transposing 95% increases to any items that effects the everyday person, bring home this despicable increase, council tax jumping from £1200 to £2340 or my personal tax bill increasing from £2150 to £4192 is shear madness.

Present inflation rates in the United Kingdom are 2.17% increasing by 2% forecasted until 2022 and increased from 2014 1.46%, 0.04%, 0.66%, 2.68%, 2.51% respectively until 2018 resulting in an increase from 2014 to present of 7.49% with and additional 6% for the next 3 years . Something is drastically wrong with the management of licensing at the moment to be this far adrift. Even with UK pay growth at the highest in almost a decade at 3.1% YOUR increases of upward of 95% are ridiculous to the point I believe an investigation or inquiry needs to be seriously considered if these types of

Plymouth has the largest number of licensed drivers and vehicles in Devon and Cornwall and we must ensure the trades are adequately supervised to ensure residents and visitors can expect a safe, healthy, convenient and effective hackney carriage and private hire transport service.

The three taxi licensing enforcement officers undertook 487 vehicle inspections and dealt with 196 complaints in the last 12 months relating to taxi and private hire drivers. The majority of these complaints are regarding driver behaviour and overcharging. This creates a bad impression and damages the reputation of the trade and therefore it is important that the Council deal with these issues.

The increase is above inflation but costs can be increased above inflation to ensure full cost recovery.

monies are being squandered or mismanaged.

As for the repercussions of these types of increases I'm dumbfounded as to what you imagine drivers earn these days at present I've been sat for 4 hours of a Saturday morning taken £21 across 3 jobs so about £6.20/hour before any out goings? I'm able to do the job as I'm single and don't have the family commitments unlike of the majority of the drivers. And many who because of family or medical reasons are only able to 30 or 40 hours a week so having to embarrassingly claim some form of working credits to provide for their families. I do this to pay bills not get rich!! Your increases only go toward them having there credits increased to offset your increases. Therefore everybody paying through their taxes. Because of your mismanagement of budgets and failing to compensate for spending more than you have available in the accounts. An example being a certain persons personal ambition to have to have all cabs painted his favourite colour and expecting to pay the region of 5 to as high 7 thousand pounds for professional resprays with absolutely no care as to hardship caused to children wives and the family as a whole. Thank goodness that individual has nothing to do with licensing anymore.

I realise this email may wander a bit while trying to convey myself also a trait of dyslexia but tend write as I would speak.

I strongly object to the proposed increase to the Taxi drivers license and vehicle license fees.

The increase to Drivers and Vehicle license fees which as been proposed is far to high .

**29** This increase will put more financial pressure on myself and many more drivers .

I believe the increase would cause a lot of drivers to leave the Taxi Trade all together.

Thank you for your response.

We appreciate that these increases are an additional cost, however the income from the licence fees must cover the expenditure required to run the service.

We understand the increases will affect your costs, however any expenses incurred as part of running your business may be claimed as an allowable deduction for tax purposes. Please contact the HMRC or an accountant to assist you with this as you may be able to recover some of your overheads

**30** To whom it may concern,I am writing this email to voice my objections to the

Thank you for your response.



	<p>proposed increase in license fees as to the letter you sent me.i feel the increase is extortionate and not in line with the current inflation rate. As a hackney carriage driver I am already struggling to make a living and feel these proposed rises in fees are unfair and unrealistic. Please take this email as my formal objection to your proposed license fees increase.</p>	<p>We appreciate that these increases are an additional cost, however the income from the licence fees must cover the expenditure required to run the service.</p> <p>We understand the increases will affect your costs, however any expenses incurred as part of running your business may be claimed as an allowable deduction for tax purposes. Please contact the HMRC or an accountant to assist you with this as you may be able to recover some of your overheads</p>
<p><b>31</b></p>	<p>Please take this email as my objection to the ‘proposed’ tax on taxi drivers.</p> <p>To have such a rise in one go is ridiculous and will damage morale and the general happiness and relationship between the council and us drivers.</p> <p>Everything is going up and squeezing a lot of us to breaking point and I was always lead to believe that the council were there to help and assist and not kick us while we are down.</p> <p>Stop this planned hike now!</p> <p>Private Hire Driver</p>	<p>Thank you for your response.</p> <p>We have considered other options for the fees, however it is important that the deficit does not increase. The fees for private hire have been set with a predicted increase of 8% for the first two years and then no planned increase for the last three years. However if a lower fee is set this year then a larger percentage increase would be required each year. There is also the risk that additional costs could occur in the following years for example from dealing with matters that need to be heard by committee and this will involve costs especially if the Council are to defend appeals from revoked drivers.</p> <p>We appreciate that these increases are an additional cost, however the income from the licence fees must cover the expenditure required to run the service.</p> <p>We understand the increases will affect your costs, however any expenses incurred as part of running your business may be claimed as an allowable deduction for tax purposes. Please contact the HMRC or an accountant to assist you with this as you may be able to recover some of your overheads.</p>
<p><b>32</b></p>	<p>I would like to register an objection to your proposal to increase our license fees. It is very difficult as it is to make a living, but with these increases it will become even harder, My office rent is £9,152, taxi insurance is £1,070. That is without the fuel, repair, tax and MOT bills.</p>	<p>We appreciate that these increases are an additional cost, however the income from the licence fees must cover the expenditure required to run the service.</p>

	That is before I have earned anything towards my household bills. Please, help us, don't make life harder for us than it is already	We understand the increases will affect your costs, however any expenses incurred as part of running your business may be claimed as an allowable deduction for tax purposes. Please contact the HMRC or an accountant to assist you with this as you may be able to recover some of your overheads.
<b>33</b>	Good morning, I would like to object very strongly to the proposed increase in the license fees. Hackney Driver.	Thank you for your objection.
<b>34</b>	<p>I strongly object to the new license fees reason being</p> <p>1-It will cause the trade great hardship</p> <p>2- On a personal note, I will have to increase my working hours to try and make a living that I am already struggling to achieve.</p> <p>3- Having to work longer hours will give me less quality time with my family</p> <p>4-It will also increase drivers renting vehicles having to work longer hours as proprietors will increase their rents , which once again gives less quality time with there family's and more stress put on the household budget.</p> <p>5- Everyone has a budget to live to, and I believe that taxi licensing should stay within their budget that they receive in fees from drivers.</p> <p>HC driver</p>	<p>Thank you for your objection.</p> <p>We appreciate that these increases are an additional cost, however the income from the licence fees must cover the expenditure required to run the service.</p> <p>We understand the increases will affect your costs, however any expenses incurred as part of running your business may be claimed as an allowable deduction for tax purposes. Please contact the HMRC or an accountant to assist you with this as you may be able to recover some of your overheads.</p> <p>The costs of running the service are reviewed and kept as low as possible, however there are a number of costs which were not envisaged for example the increase in legal costs associated with the Hackney carriage trade and the additional costs involved with the Ambassador Course. The split in the employee costs for the three taxi enforcement officers were not allocated correctly within the accounts as agreed at the Committee meeting in January 2015. During the review of the accounts, this has been identified and therefore it must be addressed.</p> <p>The unmet demand survey is also required this year to keep the restricted hackney carriage numbers which is an additional £16,000.</p>
<b>35</b>	Online complaint stating: Taxi licensing objection regarding charges to change by going up 95%	Thank you for your objection.
<b>36</b>	As a result of the proposal made by Plymouth City Council, Taxi Licensing	Thank you for your response.

Department regarding the increase in Taxi Licensing fees and the Plymouth Ambassador Course I want to express my objection to the proposals mentioned above.

Some of the reasons why I do not want these changes to apply will be mentioned below.

The proposal to raise tariffs, that were already quite high, is based only on the presentation of the increase in spending by the Taxi Licensing and do not take in consideration the effects that these changes will have on taxi drivers.

Three years ago Taxi Licensing demanded that all taxis to have at least Euro4 emission and as a result the vast majority of drivers have had to take a car in finance that they have to pay back in 5 years period and left the drivers with instalments between £200 and £600 a month. It must also be taken into account as all the cost involved in carrying out this job are constantly increasing in all sectors (maintenance, fuel price, insurance, etc.) .As well when we talk about these fees increase a crucial factor seems to be omitted and that is the volume of work we, the taxi drivers, get and which is the source of funding for us and the Taxi Licensing Department. This workload has been significantly decreasing in recent years especially due to the national economic situation, which led people be more careful with their spendings and one of the services that many have quit was the taxi.

In these circumstances, as a Hackney Carriage driver, who works in average 50 hours per week, after takes off all the expenses I have is almost impossible to reach the national minimum wage per hour and often the gap between our earning and this minimum limit is quite significant. To all of this we have to mention that we do not benefit from any sick pay or holiday pay and to pay for a private pension is just a dream for many of us because we simply can afford that.

From my point of view we all, the taxi drivers and the Taxi Licensing Department, are going through a difficult time and to succeed I think we have to try to understand each other's needs because we depend on each other. Looking at the Taxi Licensing's reasons for the increases, we notice that there are some areas where the cost presented could be reduced if they will be approached differently and more carefully. There were cases when the Taxi Licensing lost large amount of money in court based on their decisions against some drivers or taxi companies and which led to a lot controversy among taxi

We understand that the increase in fees will have an effect on drivers but the however the income from the licence fees must cover the expenditure required to run the service. The taxi accounts are trade accounts and therefore must be covered by the licence fees.

We understand the increases will affect your costs, however any expenses incurred as part of running your business may be claimed as an allowable deduction for tax purposes. Please contact the HMRC or an accountant to assist you with this as you may be able to recover some of your overheads.

The costs of running the service are reviewed and kept as low as possible, however there are a number of costs which were not envisaged for example the increase in legal costs associated with the Hackney carriage trade and the additional costs involved with the Ambassador Course. The split in the employee costs for the three taxi enforcement officers were not allocated correctly within the accounts as agreed at the Committee meeting in January 2015. During the review of the accounts, this has been identified and therefore it must be addressed.

The unmet demand survey is also required this year to keep the restricted hackney carriage numbers which is an additional £16,000.

The safeguarding and ambassador course has been considered as an e-learning course, however the courses are low cost and face to face training is much more beneficial. We will review this training and if a suitable online course becomes available then this will be considered.

	<p>drivers community because all this failures had as result our increase in fees. Another area where some improvements in cost can be made is the training area. Recently Taxi Licensing Policy requires all drivers to complete the Plymouth Ambassador Course and Safeguarding Course which will be funded with the money gained as a result of increasing the fees. Leaving aside there are many polemics about how effective they are, especially in terms of their cost in these difficult times, the Taxi Licensing should consider some other way to deliver this courses. An online course with a test at the end of the course it may be a better and more economical option than paying for each driver to an external training company.</p> <p>Everything I presented above represent my thoughts, my feelings and what I am standing for. I do not have the strongest legislative knowledge and I may be wrong when I presented some of my points, but the intention of this email is to point out why I am against the increase proposed by Taxi Licensing and is based on my experience as a Hackney Carriage driver and on my own struggles which I am facing in attempt to succeed in this job.</p>	
<p><b>37</b></p>	<p>I XXX Hackney carriage driver my plate number XXX badge number XXX. I object the proposal fees and I thing it's unfair. Many thanks</p>	<p>Thank you for your objection.</p>
<p><b>38</b></p>	<p>I object to increases to to Hackney Carriage Fees.</p>	<p>Thank you for your objection.</p>
<p><b>39</b></p>	<p>You are taking the P***, I object profoundly against the increase in the Taxi Licensing Fees.</p>	<p>Thank you for your objection.</p>
<p><b>40 - 57 (17 drivers signed this petition)</b></p>	<p>With reference to the proposed increase in Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Fees, please accept this email as a formal objection. I am a Private Hire Driver so I am referring only to those proposed increases but, having looked at the Hackney proposals, I feel sure you will have multiple objections to those as well.</p> <p>This proposed increase is only 18 months since the last rate rise and the scale is beggars belief. When the vehicle licence fee has increased previously it went from £97 to £117, an increase of £20 and a gap of something like three years. Now, barely 18 months since it went to £117, you are expecting driers to find £170 every year?? That's a £53 increase which cannot surely be</p>	<p>The fees will have to be increased to ensure that they cover the costs of running the service.</p> <p>There are costs involved each year to deal with the general administration and compliance matters for drivers licences. For example the proportion of costs involved with reviewing the taxi licensing policy and sending update letters and guidance to drivers of the new requirements; dealing with medical compliances; updating drivers information such as change of address or convictions/driving offences notifications; arranging the safeguarding and ambassador training courses. There are also costs involved with dealing with complaints and</p>

justified.

I know that in September 2015 the three year licences was £149 – it then increased to £160 in August 2017 and now you want to increase it again to £300. That's more than a 100% increase in three and a half years and a £140 jump in 18 months!! Again, this cannot possibly be justified.

There are more taxi's of all types than ever before in Plymouth now, meaning that drivers are really struggling to earn a decent living wage. These proposed fee increases will mean an increased struggle for everyone, not to mention feelings of discontent.

At the same time, you are demanding that drivers give up a day of earning what money they can to attend an Ambassador Course! Whilst I'm sure parts of the course will be interesting, I feel there will be a huge resentment from drivers that this is being demanded of us at the same time as the kick in the teeth of the fees increasing so drastically.

I note from the list that the Operators fees are not going up at all so why is it necessary to hit the drivers so hard?

You simply cannot expect drivers to be able to find these sums of money from the earnings that are now available to us.

reviewing drivers licences to ensure drivers are safe and suitable to hold a licence.

As detailed in the committee report that was considered by members on 10 January 2019, the increases have been higher due to a number of factors such as the percentage of enforcement officer costs have been incorrectly allocated since 2015 and this has now been rectified.

Each fee is reviewed to ensure they are based on the actual costs involved. The Operator costs were reviewed and no increase was required as the costs covered the work involved.

We understand the increases will affect your costs, however any expenses incurred as part of running your business may be claimed as an allowable deduction for tax purposes. Please contact the HMRC or an accountant to assist you with this as you may be able to recover some of your overheads.

**58**

I am writing this letter regarding the proposed increase in charges for taxi drivers.

I cannot believe you think a 63% (vehicle) & 48% (1 year driver) increase is ok. We are seeing declining trade ( hasn't recovered since 2008 crash ), I understand that there needs to be increases but that amount is ridiculous. If it was a utility company raising charges by similar % it would be referred to an ombudsman. Wakefield have recently had their charges overturned by judicial review, brought by the drivers association, after they raised them by 60%

Drivers by and large have to work more hours year on year to just about manage, many (including myself) don't have savings. Last year I had to borrow

The fees will have to be increased to ensure that they cover the costs of running the service.

Plymouth City Council has acted in accordance to the legal advice regarding the setting of fees and will review the transcript of the Wakefield Case when it is released.

Each fee is reviewed to ensure they are based on the actual costs involved. The Operator costs were reviewed and no increase was required as the costs covered the work involved.

We understand the increases will affect your costs, however any

	<p>nearly £900 to replace my clutch (which I am still paying off), this increase is a big deal.</p> <p>You may ask why, if this is such a badly paid job, do I still do it? In 2004 I was involved in an accident that caused damage to my back that meant I couldn't do much physical work as I had up till then. These days it fits in with my homelife , joint carer for my mother in law, and stepson. I simply can't do anymore hours. My badge and plate are due in sep, if this is implemented I will not be renewing, I'll be better off in Lidl on the tills. I believe other drivers are thinking the same.</p> <p>Hackney Driver</p>	<p>expenses incurred as part of running your business may be claimed as an allowable deduction for tax purposes. Please contact the HMRC or an accountant to assist you with this as you may be able to recover some of your overheads.</p>
<p>59</p>	<p>I am a taxi driver my name is XXXX my license plate Number is XXX My address is XXXXXXXXX Regarding taxi fair price increases I'm completely rejected this decision.</p>	<p>Thank you for your response.</p>
<p>60</p>	<p>The rise in Licensing Fees as proposed are quite frankly, ridiculous. I have been too busy to give this matter as much attention as it deserves and am forced at this late stage to make a hurried response rather than no response at all.</p> <p>As a member of the Plymouth Licensed Taxi Association (PLTA) I would like to express my support for the objections raised by that body and presented to your Office. I have studied their document in depth and see little or nothing with which I can disagree.</p> <p>I have been a Taxi Driver in the City for nearly 17 years. During all that time the two disparate Trades, Taxi and Private Hire, have had very little on which they can fully agree. It was shown on Sunday last, and to lesser extent on Monday, that these proposals have brought both Trades together to show their antipathy for the suggested increased financial burdens which is envisaged. The PLTA do not support such actions as were taken (and indeed may well recur), individual members can, and patently, do.</p> <p>Section 11 of the PCC Act 1975 gives power to issue a Drivers Licence and allows recovery of the cost of Issue and Administration, it does not allow for the costs incurred by enforcement. Enforcement against Drivers of either</p>	<p>Thank you for your response.</p> <p>The fees will have to be increased to ensure that they cover the costs of running the service.</p> <p>Plymouth City Council has acted in accordance to the legal advice regarding the setting of fees and will review the transcript of the Wakefield Case when it is released.</p> <p>The Ambassador course is a requirement of the Taxi Licensing Policy and no byelaw is required. This was confirmed in the recent Magistrates Appeal. The feedback from all the courses have been positive, however the new course has been developed so that PCC have complete ownership of the content.</p> <p>The aim of the ambassador course is to ensure all drivers create an excellent first impression of the City. Unfortunately we received 196 complaints in the last 12 months relating to taxi and private hire drivers</p>

Trade should therefore be borne entirely by the Council and not Licensees. With the changes to Primary Legislation it has become more common for Cross Border Hiring to occur. It seems to me that many Driver/Proprietor Licensees may well take the increases in Fees to actively consider Licensing in adjoining LA's. If I were to go down that route myself I could save outlay in Licence Fee and make a substantial saving in Insurance. I would be precluded from utilising Ranks or accepting "Hails" inside the City boundary but could accept bookings from within Plymouth. I take more than 50% of my income from bookings. Private Hire Drivers will see that similar savings can be made by Licensing elsewhere.

Similar proposals for large Licence Fee Increases have caused other LA's to completely reconsider the entire Licensing Regime. I wonder if the time has come for Plymouth City Council to do the same.

A large part of the expenditure would seem to be on enforcement. This would seem to be entirely spent on enforcement against Licensees. Illegal taxi type operations are ignored by PCC and D&C Police alike. The scourge of "Facebook" taxis is taking off, yet not investigated and prosecuted. Bilking is of no concern to the Police apparently and of no interest to the LA. If the Public want a free parking space in the City, where better than a Taxi Rank, because nobody will take action. At great cost to the Trade Accounts Licensing Officers were given the Training and wherewithal to give out Parking Tickets - first issue is still awaited.

The "Ambassador" course is (illegally) made compulsory and via Licence Fees the Trades are to pay for it. If anyone actually reads this, be assured that this course is a total waste of anyone's money, particularly mine. It has already been a total waste of my time. If the requirement is for "Mayflower 2020" why? This will end up lasting maybe a week. Taxis and Private Hire Trades will hardly be involved, the roads in the vicinity will be closed to traffic! Perhaps the "Ambassadors" can be included in the periphery, they won't be in the main event (I use "they" rather than "we" because I personally will be away from Plymouth rather than be involved in the least).

More and more burdens are placed on the Trades and the burden payers are then actually charged more for these burdens. It is an unacceptable state of affairs.

The proposed fees should be fully reconsidered and lowered to an acceptable

and the majority of these complaints are regarding driver behaviour and overcharging. This creates a bad impression and damages the reputation of the trade. The feedback so far has been very positive and we hope this will help improve customer care and reduce the complaints we receive. There will also be a lot of opportunities for drivers to earn more money next year for the Mayflower 400 celebrations as we are expecting at least 500,000 more visitors to the City in 2020.

It is accepted that the existing law would allow a hackney carriage vehicle licensed by another authority to carry pre-booked passengers from Plymouth, provided that vehicle was not plying or standing for hire whilst within the jurisdictional boundary of Plymouth City Council.

The position is slightly different for private hire vehicles. As you are aware, Plymouth utilises its own Act for the licensing of the trades within the city, that being the Plymouth City Council Act 1975 (PCCA) and the amendments contained within the Plymouth City Council Act 1987. The remainder of England and Wales, with the exception of London, licences and regulates the trade by virtue of the provisions contained within the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 (LGMPA). There is no reciprocity in law between the PCC and LGMPA this therefore has the following effects:

1. Only vehicles and drivers licensed by Plymouth City Council may lawfully pick up passengers in Plymouth provided the booking is made with an operator licensed within Plymouth.
2. Drivers and vehicles licensed by Plymouth City Council are not permitted to pick up passengers who live in a district licensed under the LGMPA.
3. Drivers and vehicles licensed by a controlled district under the LGMPA may terminate a journey within the city, provided that

level.

journey was commenced outside the city.

4. Drivers and vehicles licensed by a controlled district under the LGMPA, are not permitted to commence and terminate a journey within the jurisdictional boundary of Plymouth, they may however terminate a journey within the city which commenced outside of the city.

The law regarding private hire cross border hiring is complex, and that complexity is further exaggerated given the peculiar position provided by Plymouth City Council having its own local Act.

Another consideration is the policy of 'intended use' adopted by some Local Authorities when considering licence applications for Hackney Carriages that may be operating outside of their area. Such policies are permitted and are in line with the case of R(app Newcastle City Council) v Berwick-Upon-Tweed Borough Council, so provided the licensing local authority has such a policy and evidence to suggest the use will be predominantly outside its area, it may well refuse the application.

Plymouth has thus far not felt the effects of the cross border phenomenon as it has in other areas, with large numbers of vehicles effectively working in areas where they are not licensed, and the resultant lack of enforcement that can be undertaken against such vehicles and drivers by local enforcement officers.

There are a number of events planned for the whole year from November 2019 to November 2020 for the Mayflower 400 celebrations. These will be published on <https://www.mayflower400uk.org/events/>

The aim of the ambassador course is to ensure all drivers create an excellent first impression of the City. Unfortunately we received 196 complaints in the last 12 months relating to taxi and private hire drivers



		and the majority of these complaints are regarding driver behaviour and overcharging. This creates a bad impression and damages the reputation of the trade. The feedback from the ambassador course so far has been very positive and we hope this will help improve customer care and reduce the complaints we receive. There will also be a lot of opportunities for drivers to earn more money next year for the Mayflower 400 celebrations as we are expecting at least 500,000 more visitors to the City in 2020.
61	<p>Please accept this letter of objecting to the massive proposed fees in Taxi Licences fees. My husband is a taxi driver an works long hours in a job he enjoys and like everyone we appreciate a small increase would be justified but what equates to 95% due to balance the books at Taxi Licence office if local media has report recently.</p> <p>Long Hours, Increasing Fuel and Insurance Costs, Compliance Regulations Costs along with wear and tear, servicing of their vehicles and no holiday pay or sick pay - please rethink and allocate a small % increase. Most of the documents relating to taxi is on a computer template, completed and printed off as needed.</p> <p>Plymouth City needs taxi to support the community with the elderly as well as returning the party goers home after a night out from Plymouth which ensure less trouble for the police.</p>	<p>The fees are increasing by various amounts and not by 95%.</p> <p>The fees will have to be increased to ensure that they cover the costs of running the service.</p> <p>We appreciate the vital contribution that taxi and private hire drivers play in the door to door transport especially for the most vulnerable residents of the city. We must also ensure that the public are safe and 'unfit' drivers are dealt with appropriately.</p> <p>We understand the increases will affect your costs, however any expenses incurred as part of running your business may be claimed as an allowable deduction for tax purposes. Please contact the HMRC or an accountant to assist you with this as you may be able to recover some of your overheads.</p>
62	I wish to complain about the proposed increase in fees I think this hike in fees is far to Mutch in one hike I could accept maybe inflation plus a bit but wot your proposing is far to Mutch in one hike thank you	<p>Thank you for your response. The increase is above inflation but costs can be increased above inflation to ensure full cost recovery.</p> <p>The fees need to be increased to ensure that they cover the costs of running the service.</p>
63	I would like to lodge my formal objection to the taxi license fee increase. It is unfair to the drivers to absorb the increase so it will only lead to increased fares being passed onto the passengers some of which are vulnerable, lonely and their only means of escape from their home is a taxi. It	<p>Thank you for your feedback.</p> <p>The fees will have to be increased to ensure that they cover the costs of running the service. All costs associated with the running of the taxi licensing service must be met by the trade.</p>

	<p>would then increase the demand on social services to bridge this gap thus being a false economy.</p> <p>You really need to be supporting the drivers more in generating income and the positivity of plymouth not demoralising them. Remember they are often thr first point of contacr for visitors.</p> <p>Just because you have a fixed salary regardless of how much work you do does not mean everyone has that luxury.</p> <p>PH license holder</p>	<p>The Council want to help drivers to generate more income and the Ambassador Course aims to help with this and providing information about how to assist your customers in promoting what the City has to offer and getting return trips.</p> <p>We understand the increases will affect your costs, however any expenses incurred as part of running your business may be claimed as an allowable deduction for tax purposes. Please contact the HMRC or an accountant to assist you with this as you may be able to recover some of your overheads.</p>
<p><b>64</b></p>	<p>I wish to complain about the huge increase proposed by Plymouth City council.Surely the department that deals with the accounts is to blame for the shortsighted overall costs.To expect the taxi driver to cover the cost of poor management is in my view terrible.Perhaps instead of passing all the costs onto the driver cuts should be made in the Licencing department or discontinuing some of the courses.i.e.the ambassador course. Yours faithfully. HC driver</p>	<p>Thank you for your objection.</p> <p>These are not shortsighted overall costs; these are costs associated with running the service to ensure that we can ensure our licensed drivers/vehicle proprietors are compliant and are safe and suitable.</p> <p>The courses have been sourced at low cost and aim to enhance the trade. It is hoped that less complaints will be received following the training, which will reduce the amount of issues being taken to committee and therefore reduce costs.</p>
<p><b>65</b></p>	<p>I'm driver XXX, I have recieved a letter from yourselves saying that you are going to increase the fees. To be honest the increase made is going to harm us as taxi drivers. You know more than I do that Yes I business in plymouth it has been bad for the last 10 years and it is getting indeed worse because of the vast number of taxis especially private hire.</p> <p>We taxi drivers we are struggling to make a normal living and with you putting up the new fees, we are going to struggle more.</p> <p>As a taxi driver of plymouth I'm objecting the fees rise, and I will be very happy if you consider it again.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>	<p>Thank you for your response.</p> <p>The fees will have to be increased to ensure that they cover the costs of running the service.</p> <p>We understand the increases will affect your costs, however any expenses incurred as part of running your business may be claimed as an allowable deduction for tax purposes. Please contact the HMRC or an accountant to assist you with this as you may be able to recover some of your overheads.</p>
<p><b>66</b></p>	<p>With reference to the above.These price rises will push a lot of Taxi Drivers to not renew their licenses as the price increase is astronomical.Its very hard</p>	<p>Thank you for your response.</p>

	<p>out here now trying to make a living without these prices being added. An increase yes but not on this scale. Its far too high . There has been a lot of support from our customers agreeing its a ridiculous and unfair increase. Please reconsider so that we can try and continue to try and earn a decent living. Thank you.</p>	<p>The fees will have to be increased to ensure that they cover the costs of running the service.</p> <p>We understand the increases will affect your costs, however any expenses incurred as part of running your business may be claimed as an allowable deduction for tax purposes. Please contact the HMRC or an accountant to assist you with this as you may be able to recover some of your overheads.</p>
67	<p>I'm sending this email regarding the taxis licensing fees as a taxi driver I believe this is a massive up pricing so I'm strongly rejecting this decision .</p>	<p>Thank you for your objection.</p>
68	<p>I'm sending this email regarding the taxis licensing fees as a taxi driver I believe this is a massive up pricing so I'm strongly rejecting this decision .</p>	<p>Thank you for your objection.</p>
69	<p>I'm sending this email regarding the taxis licensing fees as a taxi driver I believe this is a massive up pricing fee so I'm strongly rejecting this decision i thinks this is ridiculous increase fee i had a letter twice regarding my taxi licence for three years £238 now its gone up to £435 almost double i am hoping you review your decision i think 20% is acceptable</p>	<p>We are considering other options for the fees, however it is important that the deficit does not increase. The fees for private hire have been set with a predicted increase of 8% for the first two years and then no planned increase for the last three years. However if a lower fee is set this year then a larger percentage increase will be required each year. There is also the risk that additional costs could occur in the following years for example from dealing with matters that need to be heard by committee and this will involve costs especially if the Council are to defend appeals from revoked drivers.</p> <p>We appreciate that these increases are an additional cost, however the income from the licence fees must cover the expenditure required to run the service.</p> <p>We understand the increases will affect your costs, however any expenses incurred as part of running your business may be claimed as an allowable deduction for tax purposes. Please contact the HMRC or an accountant to assist you with this as you may be able to recover some of your overheads</p>

71

I am writing to let you know of my strong objection to the councils plans to increase taxi licensing fees by 95%.

Any fee increase is unwelcome in this economic environment but a 95% increase is frankly ridiculous and just a little bit insulting. It shows a complete lack of empathy with drivers who in most cases are working for less than minimum wage. Consider that most of us have to rent our cabs,so with fuel it costs us around 350 pounds a week just to go to work and those drivers lucky enough to own their vehicles still have to keep them on the road. It is not unheard of for drivers to be working 70 plus hours a week just to pay the bills and eat. This is dangerous enough without putting any more pressure on us.

This situation has been brought about by what can only be described as account miss management and it is not the first time it has happened.

As drivers who are struggling to make ends meet we have had enough. hence the protests which have started to happen. the protests have so far occurred on quiet days to minimise disruption but they will escalate if this situation is not resolved.

Thank you for your response.

The fees are increasing by various amounts and not by 95%.

The fees will have to be increased to ensure that they cover the costs of running the service.

The three year drivers badge for Hackney carriages is proposed to increase by 83% as the current fee does not cover the full costs involved with the issue and administration of the three year licence. There are costs involved each year to deal with the general administration and compliance matters for drivers licences. For example the proportion of costs involved with reviewing the taxi licensing policy and sending update letters and guidance to drivers of the new requirements; dealing with medical compliances and medical exemption applications regarding wheelchairs; updating driver's information such as change of address or convictions/driving offences notifications; arranging the safeguarding and ambassador training courses. There are also costs involved with dealing with complaints and reviewing drivers licences to ensure drivers are safe and suitable to hold a licence. Therefore the proposed three year fee has increased to reflect the full costs involved. This increase equates to £1.26 pence a week.

The one year drivers badge is proposed to be increased by 47% to cover the costs involved with administration as listed above, which is an increase of £1.02 a week.

The vehicle licence is proposed to be increased by 63% (£2.54 per week) to cover the full costs involved with administrating the licence; the proportion of costs involved with reviewing the taxi policy; the inspections of vehicles; provision of Hackney Carriage stands and the control and supervision of hackney carriage vehicles. The Hackney Carriage unmet demand survey is taking place this year which is an additional cost of £16,000 which will also affect the vehicle fee.

		<p>As detailed in the committee report that was considered by members on 10 January 2019, the increases have been higher due to a number of factors such as the percentage of enforcement officer costs have been incorrectly allocated since 2015 and this has now been rectified.</p> <p>I can assure you that no money is mismanaged by the Council. However the costs involved with running the service must be accounted for and we cannot stop dealing with drivers who are not safe and suitable and are putting the public at risk.</p>
72	<p>I have to make an objection to the increase in our fees for most of the reasons that the PLTA have stated in their email to you. My main reason personally, is that I object to the fact that due to yourselves not managing you budget there is a deficit that we are expected to put right with an extortionate increase in our fees. In the current climate it is difficult enough to make a decent living without incurring even more expense. Also I feel that the "ambassador" course is an insult to myself, after talking to some drivers who have been on this course it appears that they are going to teach me some interesting facts about my home city and teach me how to be polite. Let me inform you that after living in Plymouth all my life I have a good knowledge of its history and facts and figures regarding the city, my parents brought me up to be polite and treat people with respect which I try to do at all times.</p> <p>Please consider the point I have made in this email.</p>	<p>In order to manage the budgets for both trade accounts and address the deficit, the fees will have to be increased to ensure that they cover the costs of running the service.</p> <p>We appreciate that these increases are an additional cost, however the income from the licence fees must cover the expenditure required to run the service. Any expenses incurred as part of running your business may be claimed as an allowable deduction for tax purposes. Please contact the HMRC or an accountant to assist you with this as you may be able to recover some of your overheads.</p> <p>Whilst I am sure you are already an ambassador for the city, unfortunately we received 196 complaints in the last 12 months relating to taxi and private hire drivers. The majority of these complaints are regarding driver behaviour and overcharging. This creates a bad impression and damages the reputation of the trade.</p> <p>The aim of the ambassador course is to ensure all drivers create an excellent first impression of the City. The feedback so far has been very positive and we hope this will help improve customer care and reduce the complaints we receive. There will also be a lot of opportunities for drivers to earn more money next year for the Mayflower 400 celebrations as we are expecting at least 500,000 more visitors to the City in 2020.</p>
73	Committee Panel & Managers	Thank you for your response.

I am writing to you with my complaint. With regards to you labour led licensing committee. I wish to formally complain about the proposed 83% increase in the taxi badges which are abhorrent unfair and unjust.

Where our money is being used unjust and with poor judgement misspent causing a large loss that due to poor advice and management we have to pick up the pieces.

Some of payments that have not been increased like the operator fees yet licences from the poorest are being hiked i. I feel a 15 % increase on all payments across the board would be fair.

I understand that prices go up but they must be fair i understand that the vast loses are down to a poorly run license committee run by the disastrous Cllr John Riley. But times need to change and get better.

I hope your willing and able to be fair and just over this matter.

The fees will have to be increased to ensure that they cover the costs of running the service.

The three year drivers badge for Hackney carriages is proposed to increase by 83% as the current fee does not cover the full costs involved with the issue and administration of the three year licence. There are costs involved each year to deal with the general administration and compliance matters for drivers licences. For example the proportion of costs involved with reviewing the taxi licensing policy and sending update letters and guidance to drivers of the new requirements; dealing with medical compliances and medical exemption applications regarding wheelchairs; updating drivers information such as change of address or convictions/driving offences notifications; arranging the safeguarding and ambassador training courses. There are also costs involved with dealing with complaints and reviewing drivers licences to ensure drivers are safe and suitable to hold a licence. Therefore the proposed three year fee has increased to reflect the full costs involved. This increase equates to £1.26 a week.

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The vehicle licence is proposed to be increased by 63% (£2.54 per week) to cover the full costs involved with administrating the licence; the proportion of costs involved with reviewing the taxi policy; the inspections of vehicles; provision of Hackney Carriage stands and the control and supervision of hackney carriage vehicles. The Hackney Carriage unmet demand survey is taking place this year which is an additional cost of £16,000 which will also affect the vehicle fee.

As detailed in the committee report that was considered by members on 10 January 2019, the increases have been higher due to a number of factors such as the percentage of enforcement officer costs have been

incorrectly allocated since 2015 and this has now been rectified.

I can assure you that no money is misspent by the Council. However the costs involved with running the service must be accounted for and we cannot stop dealing with drivers who are not safe and suitable and are putting the public at risk.

Each fee is reviewed to ensure they are based on the actual costs involved. The Operator costs were reviewed and no increase was required as the costs covered the work involved.

The Taxi Licensing Committee is overseen by Councillor Haydon, Cabinet Member for Customer Focus and Community Safety and was overseen in the past by Councillor Riley. The Committee is made up of Members of both the Conservative and Labour Councillors and all decisions are joint party decisions.

**74** I'm sending this email regarding the taxis licensing fees as a taxi driver I believe this is a massive up pricing so I'm strongly rejecting this decision .  
Thank you

Thank you for your objection.

**75** I XXXXX, licensed Hackney Carriage driver by Plymouth City Council with the badge number XXXX, would like to object to the proposed increase in the licensing fees for the following reasons

1. The council has been aware of the diminishing available budget for the last 4(four) years, it has waited untill the year's projected budget is expected to be in the red to do something about it.
2. On an average the fees will increase by 75%.
3. The degrading social and economic reality of the city, for the average working people, is puting a continuous and increasing strain on the taxi drivers.
4. The increasing cost of life, in general, is already a burden on the taxi drivers of Plymouth, forcing them to cut down, in some cases off, any resemblance of a social or family life.

The fees were last reviewed in 2017. Prior to this, the fees were reviewed in 2015 and at that time, the accounts were in credit and the hackney carriage trade received a 30% reduction in their fees. At the review this year, there were a number of additional costs that had to be factored into the proejctions for this year and the five year projection

The fee increase is an average of 75% based on the 1 year driver fee, 3 year driver fee, vehicle fee and the temporary licence fee for hackney carriages. However the vehicle licence fee is proposed to increase by 63%; the one year drivers licence fee is proposed to increase by 47% and the three year drivers licence fee is proposed to increase by 83%. The two month temporary licence fee which is used when a hire vehicle is being used following an accident will increase by 107% to cover the costs of the two month licence.

	<p>5. Having to cope with low hourly income a taxi driver will resort to working more hours, leading to a decrease in the quality of the provided service.</p> <p>6. 5 years ago the Hackney and Private hire drivers of Plymouth were forced, by the council, to upgrade the vehicles to at least Euro4 emissions standards, under the pretext that we need a cleaner air in the city, five years later there are still busses clogging the city center with their less than Euro3 engines</p> <p>7. The Wakefield City Council has just been ruled against by the High Court, rulling explicitly saying that the Licensing Authority was not entitled to enforcement fees being charged through the licensing fees of the Hackney and Private Hire drivers. This will be brought to the attention of the courts of Plymouth, resulting in the council having to reimburse, one way or another, the Hackney and Private Hire trades.</p>	<p>We appreciate that these increases are an additional cost, however the income from the licence fees must cover the expenditure required to run the service. Any expenses incurred as part of running your business may be claimed as an allowable deduction for tax purposes. Please contact the HMRC or an accountant to assist you with this as you may be able to recover some of your overheads.</p> <p>Plymouth City Council has acted in accordance to the legal advice regarding the setting of fees and will review the transcript of the Wakefield Case when it is released.</p>
<p><b>76</b></p>	<p>I would like to register an objection to your proposal to increase our licence fees. It is very difficult as it is to make a living, but with these increases it will become even harder.</p> <p>My office rent is £9,152, taxi insurance is £1,070 without the other bills keeping the taxi on the road.</p> <p>That is before I have earned anything towards my household bills. Please, help us don't make life harder for us than it is.</p>	<p>Thank you for your response.</p> <p>The fees will have to be increased to ensure that they cover the costs of running the service.</p> <p>We understand the increases will affect your costs, however any expenses incurred as part of running your business may be claimed as an allowable deduction for tax purposes. Please contact the HMRC or an accountant to assist you with this as you may be able to recover some of your overheads.</p>
<p><b>77</b></p>	<p>I object to the Hackney Carriage proposed fees.</p> <p>I can't believe the rise you want to put on the Hackney Trade. You're going to put all of us Hackney under a lot of stress. I don't understand how's it got so bad. One year our account is in the green, the next we're in the red.</p> <p>It just doesn't add up!!!!</p>	<p>Thank you for your response.</p> <p>As detailed in the committee report that was considered by members on 10 January 2019, the increases have been higher due to a number of factors such as the percentage of enforcement officer costs have been incorrectly allocated since 2015 and this has now been rectified.</p> <p>The fees will have to be increased to ensure that they cover the costs of running the service.</p> <p>We understand the increases will affect your costs, however any expenses incurred as part of running your business may be claimed as an</p>



		allowable deduction for tax purposes. Please contact the HMRC or an accountant to assist you with this as you may be able to recover some of your overheads.
78	I am writing to you about the increase in taxi licensing fees. I don't think the increase is a good idea. So no to the increase.	Thank you for your objection.
79	<p><b>OBJECTION TO MASSIVE INCREASE IN TAX LICENCE FEES</b></p> <p>Please accept this letter of objecting to the massive proposed fees in Taxi Licences fees. As a Taxi Driver working for a local Independant and I work long hours in a job I enjoy and like everyone we appreciate a small increase would be justified but what equates to 95% due to balance the books at Taxi Licence office if local media has report recently is a large chunk of our weekly profit diminishing with inflation and costs already..</p> <p>Long Hours, Increasing Fuel and Insurance Costs, Compliance Regulations Costs along with wear and tear, servicing of their vehicles and no holiday pay or sick pay - please rethink and allocate a small % increase. Most of the documents relating to taxi is on a computer template, completed and printed off as needed.</p> <p>Plymouth City needs taxi to support the community with the elderly as well as returning the party goers home after a night out from Plymouth which ensure less trouble for the police.</p> <p><b>RE THINK THIS INCREASE AND BRING IN A SMALL INCREASE LIKE ALL OTHER SERVICES.</b></p>	<p>Thank you for your response.</p> <p>The fees will have to be increased to ensure that they cover the costs of running the service. The fees are increasing by various amounts and not by 95%.</p> <p>The three year drivers badge for Hackney carriages is proposed to increase by 83% as the current fee does not cover the full costs involved with the issue and administration of the three year licence. There are costs involved each year to deal with the general administration and compliance matters for drivers licences. For example the proportion of costs involved with reviewing the taxi licensing policy and sending update letters and guidance to drivers of the new requirements; dealing with medical compliances and medical exemption applications regarding wheelchairs; updating drivers information such as change of address or convictions/driving offences notifications; arranging the safeguarding and ambassador training courses. There are also costs involved with dealing with complaints and reviewing drivers licences to ensure drivers are safe and suitable to hold a licence. Therefore the proposed three year fee has increased to reflect the full costs involved. This increase equates to £1.26 a week.</p> <p>The one year drivers badge is proposed to be increased by 47% to cover the costs involved with administration as listed above, which is an increase of £1.02 a week.</p> <p>The vehicle licence is proposed to be increased by 63% (£2.54 per week) to cover the full costs involved with administrating the licence; the proportion of costs involved with reviewing the taxi policy; the inspections of vehicles; provision of Hackney Carriage stands and the</p>

		<p>control and supervision of hackney carriage vehicles. The Hackney Carriage unmet demand survey is taking place this year which is an additional cost of £16,000 which will also affect the vehicle fee.</p> <p>As detailed in the committee report that was considered by members on 10 January 2019, the increases have been higher due to a number of factors such as the percentage of enforcement officer costs have been incorrectly allocated since 2015 and this has now been rectified.</p> <p>We appreciate the vital contribution that taxi and private hire drivers play in the door to door transport especially for the most vulnerable residents of the city. We must also ensure that the public are safe and 'unfit' drivers are dealt with appropriately.</p>
80	<p>Sir I emailed my councillor Brian Vincent regarding my concerns over the proposed increase in the taxi licensing fees my main concerns are i rent my cab and as well as the increase in my fees my owner will pass his increase onto me so i will have a double increase as this is not at the rate of inflation but so much higher. This is now bordering on parking the cab up giving back the keys and having to sign on we haven't made any money in this trade since the financial crash in 2008. You are more than welcome to sit with me in my cab i have a front seat and see what the state of the trade is. If licensing stopped taking cabbies to court and losing the money might go further from</p>	<p>Thank you for your response.</p> <p>Unfortunately the costs will have to be increased above inflation to cover the full costs of running the service.</p> <p>It is vital that we protect the trade from unsuitable drivers who put the reputation of the trade at risk. Unsuitable drivers that are revoked by committee have the right to appeal the Council's decision. If a driver appeals following revocation or suspension of their licence then the Council must defend its case. The Council have been found by the Magistrates Court on all our cases to have made the correct decision, however unfortunately very little or no costs are granted.</p>
81	<p>Letter from the Plymouth Licensed Taxi Association (PLTA) – please refer to the separate response table.</p>	<p>Please refer to the separate response table.</p>

The following relates to exempt or confidential matters (Para(s) 1 of Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Govt Act 1972). Any breach of confidentiality could prejudice the Council/person/body concerned & might amount to a breach of the councillors /employees codes of conduct.

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