



**Oversight and Governance**

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## TAXI LICENSING COMMITTEE

Thursday 20 February 2020  
10.00 am  
Council House, Plymouth

**Members:**

Councillor Mavin, Chair  
Councillor Derrick, Vice Chair  
Councillors Mrs Aspinall, Mrs Bridgeman, Mrs Pengelly, Rennie and Riley.

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**

### **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 - 8)**

To confirm the minutes of the meetings held on 8 January and 23 January 2020.

**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. Appeal Cases**

The Committee will be provided with the results of the judgement on appeal cases that went to Court.

**6. Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licence Fees (Pages 9 - 50)**

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

**7. Exempt Information**

To consider passing a resolution under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972 to exclude the press and the 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 paragraph 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. Member of the public will be asked to leave the meeting when such items are discussed.

**8. Confidential Minutes (Pages 51 - 58)**

To confirm the confidential minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2020.

**9. Review Status of Hackney Carriage Driver's Licence (Pages 59 - 74)**

The Director of Public Health will submit a report on the review of status of Hackney Carriage Driver's Licence.

**10. Review Status of Private Hire Driver's Licence (Pages 75 - 90)**

The Director of Public Health will submit a report on the review of status of Private Hire Driver's Licence.

**11. Application for the Grant of a Private Hire Vehicle Driver Licence (Pages 91 - 100)**

The Director of Public Health will submit a report on the application for the grant of a Private Hire Driver's Licence.

**12. Review Status of Private Hire Driver's Licence (Pages 101 - 114)**

The Director of Public Health will submit a report on the review of status of Private Hire Driver's Licence.

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## Taxi Licensing Committee

Wednesday 8 January 2020

### PRESENT:

Councillor Mavin, in the Chair.

Councillor Derrick, Vice Chair.

Councillors Mrs Aspinall, Mrs Bridgeman, Mrs Pengelly, Rennie and Riley.

Also in attendance: Helen Foote (Finance Business Partner), Ann Gillbanks (Senior Lawyer), Rachael Hind (Licensing Service Manager) and Helen Prendergast (Democratic Advisor).

The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 10.35 am.

*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.*

#### 51. **Appointment of Vice-Chair**

Agreed that Councillor Derrick is appointed as Vice-Chair of this Committee for the remainder of the municipal year 2019/20.

#### 52. **Declarations of Interest**

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

#### 53. **Minutes**

Agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2019 are a correct record.

Councillor Rennie referred to minute 48 and raised the issue of setting a time period for an applicant to re-apply for either a Private Hire or Hackney Carriage driver's licence.

The Senior Lawyer advised that applicants were not advised when they could re-apply for a licence, as this was up to the individual.

Councillor Rennie suggested that as part of the training programme, it should be made explicitly clear that the Committee cannot give a guarantee of when a licence would be granted.

The Legal Officer undertook to review this part of the training programme.

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

There were no items of Chair's urgent business.

**55. Appeal Cases**

The Committee was advised that currently there was one appeal case outstanding. This had been due at the Crown Court on 29 November 2019 but as the court could not secure two magistrates to sit with the judge (which was a statutory requirement) this had been relisted in the Crown Court for 28 February 2020.

**56. Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Fees**

Rachael Hind (Licensing Service Manager) presented the report on the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licence Fees which highlighted the following key areas –

- (a) the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire trade accounts had been reviewed and an increase in the fees was required in order to ensure that any deficit was addressed;
- (b) the proposed increased would ensure that the Council covered the full costs of providing the service, in so far as consistent with the particular provisions which allowed licence fees to be charged;
- (c) this was the second year of a five year process and the fee levels had been set to ensure that the Hackney Carriage Driver and Vehicle accounts were out of deficit by the end of the financial year 2023/24 (subject to further increases in subsequent years); all of the Private Hire Driver, Vehicle and Operator accounts remained in a surplus position (subject to further increases in subsequent years);
- (d) it was proposed that the general administration costs from 1 April 2020 would be on the basis of 30% for Hackney Carriages and 70% for Private Hire based on the average of all taxi licensing administrative functions;
- (e) the costs associated with enforcement would continue to be based on 50/50 split, on both trades, due to the additional time spent on the Hackney Carriage trade with regards to general enforcement matters, ranks, unmet demand surveys, fare tariffs and wheelchair exemptions;
- (f) the impact of the fees would be reviewed annually and any necessary alterations would be approved, as set out in the Council's scheme of delegation;
- (g) Hackney Carriage Account: the predicted income and expenditure for the year had been reviewed and to ensure the reserve accounts were in a surplus by 2023/24 -

- the Hackney Carriage Vehicle fee would need to increase by 8%;
  - the Hackney Carriage Driver fee would need to increase by 15% (one year and three year licence);
- (h) Private Hire Account: the predicted income and expenditure for the year had been reviewed; the reserve accounts were currently in surplus, however to ensure the reserves and accounts remained balance it was proposed to -
- increase the Private Hire Vehicle Licence fee by 8%;
  - increase the Private Hire Driver's Licence fee by 12% (one year and three year licence);
- (i) it was proposed that the increase in fees would commence on 1 April 2020; in order to achieve this, the fees would need to be advertised in accordance with the statutory requirement, to allow 14 days for objections to be received.

The key areas of questioning from Members related to -

- (j) the process for objections received (as part of the consultation exercise) regarding the proposed increase in fees;
- (k) whether -
- in light of the recent High Court judgement the Council's account procedures were in accordance with the new ruling;
  - the proposed increases this year would be required;
  - the fees were reviewed annually;
  - there was benchmarking information available for fees charged across other Local Authorities;
  - new drivers would be deterred from joining the trade due to the proposed increase in fees;

- there had been a reduction in the number of taxi drivers due to previous fee increases;
- (l) the weighting the Committee would have to give to any objections received as part of the consultation exercise.

The Committee agreed the proposed new fee structure, as set out in the Fees Table (Appendix I) to be advertised in accordance with the statutory requirements; a period of 14 days will be given for objections.

*(Vote: five in favour and two abstentions (Councillors Mrs Bridgeman and Mrs Pengelly))*

57. **Exempt Information**

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

58. **Confidential Minutes**

The Committee agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2019 are a correct record.

## Taxi Licensing Committee

Thursday 23 January 2020

### PRESENT:

Councillor Mavin, in the Chair.

Councillor Derrick, Vice Chair.

Councillors Mrs Aspinall, Mrs Bridgeman, Mrs Pengelly, Rennie and Riley.

Also in attendance: Steve Forshaw (Senior Enforcement Officer), Catherine Fox (Lawyer) and Helen Prendergast (Democratic Advisor).

The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 1.30 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.*

### 59. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made by Councillors, in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

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

With the permission of the Chair, Councillor Rennie raised the recent press coverage which had alleged that there were rogue cabs operating in the city and asked whether the Committee could be provided with an update.

The Committee was advised that –

- (a) an investigation had been undertaken regarding a private hire vehicle with an Oxford plate operating within the city, however there was no evidence, to date, to suggest that they had been operating as a taxi driver in Plymouth;
- (b) there was a trend, on social media, whereby teenagers were offering lifts to their personal friends and referring to themselves as being the taxi for the night;
- (c) investigation and test purchases had been carried out where possible and none of these, to date, had been illegal taxi operations, where the driver would require a licence.

The Committee urged members of the public to contact the police should they have evidence of taxis operating illegally.

The Committee requested that a cost analysis exercise be undertaken, in order to inform Members of the cost of the operators' fees charged to the drivers and the weekly cost of a Plymouth City Council licence fee.

In accordance with Section 100(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the Chair brought forward the above item for urgent consideration because of the need to update Members).

#### 61. **Appeal Cases**

The Committee was advised that -

- (a) currently there was one appeal case outstanding; this had been due at the Crown Court on 29 November 2019 but as the court had been unable to secure two magistrates to sit with the judge, this had been relisted in the Crown Court for 28 February 2020;
- (b) the case could have been heard in November had the driver agreed for the judge to sit with one magistrate, this had not happened.

The Committee raised concerns at the length of time that this appeal case had taken to be heard in the Crown Court. The driver's licence had been revoked in August 2018.

The Committee considered that it should respond to the Government's Ministry of Justice consultation seeking a change to this rule, in order to allow one magistrate to sit with the judge instead of two.

#### 62. **Exempt Information**

Agreed that under Section 100(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 paragraph 1 of Part I Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended by the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

##### **Order of Business**

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

#### 63. **Review Status of Private Hire Vehicle Driver Licence**

The Committee –

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

- (c) took the report and all that was said by the driver into account.

The Committee had -

- (d) considered the review on its own merits;
- (e) considered that the concerns raised were relevant under the Council's licensing objectives of safety and health of drivers and the public and also the protection of consumers.

Members of the Committee had asked themselves the question, set out in the Council's Policy, as to whether they would allow someone they cared about to get into a vehicle driven by this individual, and the answer was no.

The Committee was satisfied that this driver no longer remained a fit and proper or safe and suitable person to hold a Private Hire driver's licence and agreed to revoke the licence, in accordance with section 19(1)(b) of the Plymouth City Council Act 1975.

*(Recorded Vote: six in favour – one against Councillor Rennie)*

*(Note: there is a confidential part to this minute)*

#### 64. **Review Status of Private Hire Vehicle Driver Licence**

The Committee –

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

The Committee had -

- (d) considered the review on its own merits;
- (e) considered that the concerns raised were relevant under the Council's licensing objectives of safety and health of drivers and the public and also the protection of consumers.

Members of the Committee had asked themselves the question, set out in the Council's Policy, as to whether they would allow someone they cared about to get into a vehicle driven by this individual, and the answer was no.

The Committee was satisfied that this driver no longer remained a fit and proper or safe and suitable person to hold a Private Hire driver's licence and agreed to revoke the licence, in accordance with section 19(1)(b) of the Plymouth City Council Act 1975.

*(Note: there is a confidential part to this minute)*

# Taxi Licensing Committee



Date of meeting:	20 February 2020
Title of Report:	<b>Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licence Fees</b>
Lead Member:	Councillor Sally Haydon (Cabinet Member for Customer Focus and Community Safety)
Lead Strategic Director:	Ruth Harrell (Director of Public Health)
Author:	Rachael Hind, Licensing Service Manager
Contact Email:	<a href="mailto:Rachael.hind@plymouth.gov.uk">Rachael.hind@plymouth.gov.uk</a>
Your Reference:	RH/Fees2020/21
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

## Purpose of 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 8 January 2020 and the Committee approved the advertisement of the proposed fees which was published in the Herald on Monday 13 January 2020. All taxi drivers, vehicle proprietors and operators were written to and provided with a copy of the fees notice and were given until 3 February 2020 to make objections.

14 objections were received, which included an objection from the Plymouth Licensed Taxi Association (PLTA). The objections are included in Appendix 3.

## Recommendations and Reasons

That Members consider the report and resolve to:

- Approve the recommended fee structure as advertised and set out in the Fees Table in Appendix 1.

### Reason

- To ensure the Hackney Carriage Accounts are brought into balance by 2024 and the Private Hire accounts remain in balance over the next four years.

**Alternative options considered and rejected**

Consideration was given to increasing the hackney carriage accounts by a higher amount to reduce the deficit in less time but this would not be acceptable as it would cause unnecessary hardship to the trade.

**Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan**

This report links to the delivery of the City and 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.

**Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:**

The Hackney Carriage and Private Hire accounts have been reviewed and the fees must be increased to ensure that 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.

This is the second year of a five year process and the fee levels in this report have been set to ensure the Hackney Carriage Driver and Vehicle accounts are out of deficit by the end of the financial year 2023/2024 (subject to further increases in subsequent years); the Private Hire Driver, Vehicle and Operator Accounts all remain in a surplus position (subject to further increases in subsequent years).

**Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:**

Not applicable.

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

*\* When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.*

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**Appendices**

*\*Add rows as required to box below*

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable)						
		<i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Briefing report title							
B	Appendix 1: Proposed Fees							
C	Appendix 2: Summarised Accounts for 2019/20							
D	Appendix 3: Response Consultation							

**Background papers:**

\*Add rows as required to box below

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable)						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**Sign off:**

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Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Rob Nelder											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes Date agreed: 04/02/2020											
Cabinet Member approval: Sally Haydon Date approved: 07/02/2020											

## **Briefing Report**

### **1.0 Background Information**

- 1.1 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.
- 1.2 At the Taxi Licensing Committee on 8 January 2020, 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 Monday 13 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 3 February 2020 to make objections.

### **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. As advised in the consultation, the fees will take effect from 1 April 2020.

### **3.0 Objections**

- 3.1 14 objections were received within the consultation period regarding the fees increase (see appendix 3).
- 3.2 The main objections raised are: -

#### **Object to the increases which are higher than inflation**

The fees have been reviewed and the increases are necessary to meet the actual costs incurred. Table 1 shows the cost increases and percentage increases of the proposed fees which were published in January 2020. It also outlines the extra cost to the driver/proprietor per week as a result of the proposed increases.

**Table 1: Recommended fees (as published) for 2020/21 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)	£342	£369	£27	8%	£0.52	£2.25	£27
1 Year Drivers licence	£165	£190	£25	15%	£0.48	£2.08	£25
3 Year Drivers Licence	£435	£500	£65	15%	£0.42	£1.81	£22

<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)	£170	£184	£14	8%	£0.27	£1.17	£14
1 Year Drivers licence	£120	134	£14	12%	£0.27	£1.17	£14
3 Year Drivers Licence	£300	336	£36	12%	£0.23	£1.00	£12
Operator application fee	£135	135	£0	0	0	0	0
Operator fee per vehicle	£3.80	3.80	£0	0	0	0	0

<b>NEW APPLICANTS</b>	<b>Current Fee</b>	<b>Proposed Fee</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>% increase</b>
Driver Application Fee	£85	£137	£52	61%

### **Why can't the PH Operators fees be increased to help the HC trade out?**

The private hire and hackney carriage accounts are completely separate. Each fee must reflect the actual cost incurred and there cannot be any cross – subsidy.

### **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 allocated to the two 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 and if any costs are granted by the Court, they are returned to the trade account.

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**

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 two shows the summarised accounts with the forecast for 2020/21.

## **5.0 Fee Changes for 2020/21**

### **5.1 Hackney Carriage Account**

The predicted income and expenditure for the year have been reviewed and to ensure the reserve accounts are in surplus by 2023/24. An 8% increase is required for the Hackney Carriage Vehicle fee and a 15% increase is required for the Hackney Carriage Drivers licence fees in 2020/21 (one year and three year licence). Please refer to the summarised accounts in Appendix 2.

### **5.2 Private Hire Account**

The predicted income and expenditure for the year have been reviewed. The reserve accounts are currently in surplus, however to ensure the reserves and the accounts remain in balance, an 8% increase is required for the Private Hire Vehicle licence fee and a 12% increase is required for the Private Hire Drivers Licence Fees (one year and three year licence).

There is no proposed increase for the operator's fees. However a five year option has been included for Operators who may wish to apply for a five year licence.

Please refer to the summarised accounts in Appendix 2.

## **6.0 Conclusion**

6.1 The Committee members need to consider the objections and the recommendations within Appendix 3 of this report. This is the second year of a five year process to ensure the Hackney Carriage Driver and Vehicle accounts are out of deficit by the end of the financial year 2023/2024 (subject to further increases in subsequent years) and the Private Hire Driver, Vehicle and Operator Accounts all remain in a surplus position.

6.2 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.

6.3 It is recommended that Committee members resolve to approve the fee structure as set out in the Fees Table in Appendix one which is for the twelve months commencing on 1 April 2020.

**APPENDIX I****Proposed Fees for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licences for 2020/21**

<b>Hackney Carriage</b>		
<b>Type</b>	<b>Current</b>	<b>Proposed Fees</b>
Vehicle licence (1 year)	£342	£369
1 Year Drivers licence	£165	£190
3 Year Drivers Licence	£435	£500
New Drivers Application Fee	£85	£137
Replacement Plate	£13	£13.50
<b>Fees remaining at current levels:</b>		
Duplicate licence	£10	£10
Admin fee for Change of Licence/transfer from HC to PH	£20	£20
Vehicle Transfer	£35	£35
Change of vehicle registration number	£35	£35
Drivers Test	£85	£85
KOP test	£72	£72
Spoken English Test	£33	£33
Replacement ID Card fee	£10	£10
Refund Fee	£15	£15

<b>Private Hire</b>		
<b>Type</b>	<b>Current</b>	<b>Proposed Fees</b>
Vehicle licence (1 year)	£170	£184
1 Year Drivers licence	£120	£134
3 Year Drivers Licence	£300	£336
Drivers Application Fee	£85	£137
Replacement Plate	£13	£13.50
Replacement Door Sticker	£5	£5.25
Operators 5 year application fee	N/A	£578
Operator fee per vehicle (5 year)	N/A	£19
<b>Fees remaining at current levels:</b>		
Duplicate licence	£10	£10
Admin fee for Change of Licence/transfer from PH to HC	£20	£20
Vehicle Transfer	£35	£35
Change of vehicle registration number	£35	£35
Drivers Test	£85	£85
KOP test	£72	£72
Spoken English Test	£33	£33
Replacement ID Card fee	£10	£10
Refund Fee	£15	£15
Operators annual application fee	£135	£135
Operator fee per vehicle (annual)	£3.80	£3.80

**APPENDIX 2 – Summarised accounts for 2019/20****Hackney Accounts**

Expenditure or Income	Groupings	2018/19 Total	2019/20 Hackney Driver	2019/20 Hackney Vehicle	2019/20 Total
<b>Expenditure</b>	Staffing	£115,397	£36,515	£88,427	£124,943
	Salary Adjustment	£37,299	£0	£0	£0
	Other Staff costs	£1,152	£433	£462	£895
	Legal External	£8,628	£5,500	£500	£6,000
	Legal Internal	£24,672	£21,020	£1,427	£22,447
	DVLA Checks	£187	£0	£0	£0
	Supplies and services	£6,753	£1,115	£3,750	£4,865
	Private contractors inc Unmet Demand	£10,467	£0	£6,398	£6,398
	Vehicle Costs	£942	£0	£445	£445
	Rank Review	£0	£0	£500	£500
	Driver Training	£0	£6,572	£0	£6,572
<b>Expenditure Total</b>		<b>£205,497</b>	<b>£71,155</b>	<b>£101,909</b>	<b>£173,065</b>
<b>Income</b>	Driver Licence	(£31,280)	(£38,979)	£0	(£38,979)
	Licence Amendment	(£1,420)	(£340)	(£1,220)	(£1,560)
	Other Income	(£3,857)	(£3,934)	(£1,133)	(£5,067)
	Test Fee	(£637)	(£640)	£0	(£640)
	Vehicle Licence	(£74,858)	£0	(£112,518)	(£112,518)
<b>Income Total</b>		<b>(£112,052)</b>	<b>(£43,893)</b>	<b>(£114,871)</b>	<b>(£158,764)</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>£93,445</b>	<b>£27,263</b>	<b>(£12,962)</b>	<b>£14,301</b>

**Private Hire Accounts**

Expenditure or Income	Groupings	Total 2018/19	2019/20 Private Driver	2019/20 Private Vehicle	2019/20 Private Operator	Total 2019/20
<b>Expenditure</b>	Staffing	£165,778	£58,393	£121,435	£6,226	£186,054
	Salary Adjustment	(£37,299)	£0	£0	£0	£0
	Other Staff costs	£2,312	£445	£732	£33	£1,210
	Legal External	£3,730	£1,457	£1,457	£86	£3,000
	Legal Internal	£16,469	£13,108	£1,754	£466	£15,328
	Supplies and services	£27,589	£25,619	£8,896	£473	£34,988
	Vehicle Costs	£877	£0	£928	£0	£928
<b>Expenditure Total</b>		<b>£179,456</b>	<b>£99,022</b>	<b>£135,202</b>	<b>£7,284</b>	<b>£241,508</b>
<b>Income</b>	Driver Licence	(£54,572)	(£55,629)	£0	£0	(£55,629)
	Licence Amendment	(£2,589)	(£230)	(£2,400)	£0	(£2,630)
	Operator Fee	(£10,188)	£0	£0	(£8,451)	(£8,451)
	Other Income	(£1,323)	(£192)	(£2,384)	(£1)	(£2,577)
	Test Fee	(£11,391)	(£13,150)	£0	£0	(£13,150)
	Vehicle Licence	(£95,445)	£0	(£127,670)	£0	(£127,670)
<b>Income Total</b>		<b>(£175,508)</b>	<b>(£69,201)</b>	<b>(£132,454)</b>	<b>(£8,452)</b>	<b>(£210,107)</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>£3,948</b>	<b>£29,821</b>	<b>£2,748</b>	<b>(£1,169)</b>	<b>£31,401</b>

**APPENDIX 3:**

Table of responses

### Appendix 3: Taxi Licensing Fees 2020 – List of objections received by 3 February 2020

No.	Date received	Details of the objection (cut and paste content of email/type in content of letter)	Response
1	9/1/2020	<p>Councillors complain that they tried to get a taxi over Christmas/New Year but couldn't. It's once a year, which is probably the only time they use us. If they were to come out on a Friday or Saturday night during January/February they'd see cabs a plenty parked up. It's why they call it Kipper season.</p> <p>The problem with Plymouth train station is down to the franchise to operate the rank increasing 2.5% every year. As an ex Finance Director of PTL I can't tell you how much it was, but it was considerable sum. That's down to FGW, it's their land and they can charge what they like. Need a Cab who now operate the rank charge rent to drivers to work it. Not sure how much but again, in 2017 it was either £5200 or £7200 a year that each driver paid. Not sure what it is now. It could be more or could be less.</p> <p>Regarding license fees £500 this year from 1 April for a 3 year badge. The percentage rate its increasing every year means that in a few years time we could be looking at £700.</p> <p>Then councillors will wonder where all the cabs have gone. As drivers reach a certain age they'll be contemplating whether it's really worth it anymore and giving up.</p>	<p>Thank you for your email. During the Committee, there was a discussion with Members that there are times such as Christmas when it is peak demand and there will always be certain times when it is harder to get a taxi. There have also been a number of examples throughout the year where there have been lack of taxis available at the Barbican and Raleigh Street Ranks and this is generally at peak times such as payday weekends and bank holidays.</p> <p>The Council is aware of the station charges and that the provider has now changed. Late trains can also mean that two trains arrive at the same time which leads to long queues at the taxi rank.</p> <p>The fees are reviewed annually and are increased as required based on the actual costs incurred.</p>
2	13/1/2020	This email is a objection to the letter I received today about taxi fees going up it went up 98% last year it's ok for you get a pay	Thank you for your email.

		<p>rise every year iv been taxing 20 year's only had one joke Plymouth city council just a rip off .</p>	<p>None of the fees were increased by 98% last year. Full details can be found in the Taxi Committee Report on 21 March 2019 which is on our website at  <a href="http://web.plymouth.gov.uk/modgov?modgovlink=http%3A%2F%2Fdemocracy.plymouth.gov.uk%2FieListDocuments.aspx%3FCId%3D566%26amp%3BMid%3D8041%26amp%3BVer%3D4">http://web.plymouth.gov.uk/modgov?modgovlink=http%3A%2F%2Fdemocracy.plymouth.gov.uk%2FieListDocuments.aspx%3FCId%3D566%26amp%3BMid%3D8041%26amp%3BVer%3D4</a></p> <p>When the taxi fees were raised in March 2019, the committee reports advised that this was a five year process and the fees would have to be increased each year to ensure the Hackney Carriage accounts are out of deficit by the end of the financial year 2023/2024 and the Private Hire Accounts all remain in a surplus position. The fees are reviewed annually and are increased as required based on the actual costs incurred.</p>
3	13/1/2020	<p>I am writing to make an open government request for all the information to which I am entitled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.</p> <p>Please send me:</p> <p><b><i>A full breakdown of all taxi licensing fees expenditure.</i></b></p> <p><b><i>From April 2018 to Date.</i></b></p> <p>I would like the above information to be provided to me as <b><i>paper or electronic copies or an opportunity to view.</i></b></p> <p>If this request is too wide or unclear, I would be grateful if you could contact me as I understand that under the Act, you are required to advise and assist requesters. If any of this</p>	<p>Your FOI request has been logged and this will be dealt with separately.</p>

information is already in the public domain, please can you direct me to it, with page references and URLs if necessary.

If the release of any of this information is prohibited on the grounds of breach of confidence, I ask that you supply me with copies of the confidentiality agreement and remind you that information should not be treated as confidential if such an agreement has not been signed.

I understand that you are required to respond to my request within the 20 working days after you receive this letter. I would be grateful if you could confirm in writing that you have received this request.

I look forward to hearing from you.

4 13/1/2020 I am objecting to the proposed increase in taxi fees it was only eight months since you increased fees by 95% and now you want an 8% increase what happened to prices rising by the rate of inflation. It cannot be because of a deficit in the taxi account you've been using that one for years, it's not a bottomless pit working in this trade keep chipping away at it and more people will just walk away.

Thank you for your email.

None of the fees were increased by 95% last year. Full details can be found in the Taxi Committee Report on 21 March 2019 which is on our website at <http://web.plymouth.gov.uk/modgov?modgovlink=http%3A%2F%2Fdemocracy.plymouth.gov.uk%2FieListDocuments.aspx%3FCId%3D566%26amp%3BMId%3D8041%26amp%3BVer%3D4>

When the taxi fees were raised in March 2019, the committee reports advised that this was a five year process and the fees would have to be increased each year to ensure the Hackney Carriage accounts are out of deficit by the end of the financial year 2023/2024 and the Private Hire

			<p>accounts all remain in a surplus position. The fees are reviewed annually and are increased as required based on the actual costs incurred.</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>16/1/2020</p>	<p>I am writing to object against the proposed Hackney Carriage fees increases. I feel they are extortionate and unnecessary and are driving people out of the trade.</p> <p>I have been a Taxi Driver for 30 years, the trade is nowhere near vibrant and lucrative of past years. It is hard to make ends meet now, without fee increases, which will no doubt be passed onto the customer via fare increases, which we don't want to happen, we need to encourage them to take a taxi not frighten them away.</p> <p>Only the other day Cllr Pengelly stated "where are all the taxis" she couldn't get one. Well let me tell her and others "put the fee's up and there be lot less to call on"</p> <p>I would advise these Councillors who shout the loudest, to come and be taxi marshal on a Saturday night, see for themselves the abuse, they along with ourselves as drivers have to put up with taking drunks and abusive customers home, eating McDonalds, kebabs and pizza's etc, having to clean the back of our vehicles up, with it wasted everywhere.</p> <p>Then they might realise and understand why there's a lack of taxis on a Saturday evening.</p> <p>And now the council wish to charge taxis driver's more than ever for the privilege of doing so.</p>	<p>Thank you for your letter. Taxi Licensing Committee Members often go out with enforcement officers and the police and witness first-hand the abuse that drivers encounter. The Barbican and Raleigh Street Taxi Marshals were introduced to assist drivers when dealing with customers in the Evening and Night Time Economy areas. We encourage all drivers to report any incidents of abuse to the Police so this is logged and the statistics can be used to target operations.</p> <p>When the taxi fees were raised in March 2019, the committee reports advised that this was a five year process and the fees would have to be increased each year to ensure the Hackney Carriage accounts are out of deficit by the end of the financial year 2023/2024 and the Private Hire Accounts all remain in a surplus position. The fees are reviewed annually and are increased as required based on the actual costs incurred.</p>

		Thank you Plymouth City Council	
6	20/1/2020	<p>I am writing in response to the latest consultation regarding taxi fees, which you are proposing to increase them by 12% when you put badge and plate together.</p> <p>I strongly object to this increase as the fees which went up last years has already put a strain on the trade. Taxi drivers are earning far below the national living wage as it is, with too many drivers are having to work longer hours as it is, who are deprived from seeing their families. This in my mind goes against the council's policy to limit child poverty. Children need to be spending more time with both parents.</p> <p>It is council policy to see that people are paid a living wage, yet no school transport trip pays the drivers the living wage, when taking in account the cost to be a driver in the first place.</p> <p>The city council night-time economy is failing to attract visitors over the age of 35, as traders only seem interested in the student population. With no airport and very few visitors to the city has affected the taxi trade. Making life harder for many drivers.</p> <p>Secondly by raising the fees you are pricing out new blood from coming into the trade, it would cost a new driver over £1000 in fees before even getting a cab to start up as a driver, every private hire office is looking for drivers, this goes against council policy to encourage more jobs.</p> <p>I gather that a number of plates have been handed back to the council from drivers who have left the trade, which are not being reissued. While accepting we may have a deficit in the taxi trade but maybe by issuing these plates to drivers who hold</p>	Thank you for your email.

badges would help reduce the deficit, not by letting none drivers who just want to rent out the cab and plate making life harder for the drivers.

There are already non licenced taxis going around the city at night picking up the public known as cowboy drivers, I fear by raising the fees will encourage more of this, putting many young females in danger. Which could also breach the councils safeguarding policy.

Lastly as you the council are the guardians of the taxi accounts, I would suggest you review your situation, are you really giving us best value for our money? When taxi ranks disappear for developments do you not ask for a section 106 money to compensate the trade for the loss of the ranks? Do night clubs not have a responsibility in seeing their customers are getting home in a safe manner which a night-time levy could be imposed.

When consulting on new ranks etc why do this not come from the transport budget which is aimed at encouraging people to use public transport, to reduce congestion. In the council transport plan, it states that “taxi and private hire vehicles continue to remain and important part of the transport network”. I see lack of evidence of this policy, we still don’t have a rank to serve Home Park and the Life Centre, very often I get asked by customers coming via to station where there have to wait for a taxi in order to get back to the station, furthermore we still don’t have a rank for the Pavilions. Most city centres have signage around the city centre highlighting where the nearest ranks are, not in Plymouth!

The Licensing Department do not believe there are any non-licensed taxi drivers operating in Plymouth. We investigated a report in January 2019 regarding a Private Hire Vehicle with an Oxford plate, however there is no evidence to suggest that they had been operating as a taxi driver. We take allegations of rogue taxi drivers very seriously and will investigate any reports. If you have any information, please report this at [www.plymouth.gov.uk/licensingandpermits/taxilicensing/taxicomplaints](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/licensingandpermits/taxilicensing/taxicomplaints) or email [taxi.licensing@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:taxi.licensing@plymouth.gov.uk).

The businesses within a Business Improvement District (BID) area pay a levy and this levy is used to fund the Barbican Taxi Rank Marshals which assists customers to be taken home safely at night.

The Taxi Licensing Team work closely with the Planning Department to ensure taxi ranks and Private Hire drop off bays are considered for all new and future developments for example the bus station, Bar Code, Premier Inn at Derry’s cross and the plans for Old Town Street changes.

We also witnessed new road layouts where taxis are excluded from using bus lanes known as bus gates, surely its fair to allow taxis the same access as buses.

In a recent article published in the Herald it ask where have all the taxis gone, and councillors stating they could not get a taxi over the busy festive season particularly on a Friday and Saturday night, maybe this question should be raised with the police, as most drivers seem to be on their own when dealing with the awkward customers, when we have seen drivers racially attacked and assaulted. When customers foul the cab the police fail to support us from getting the council levy charge of £50. With all of these issues it puts a lot of drivers off from working the town on Friday and Saturday nights, even a council taxi officer has said to me once that he could not do our job! I gather when the city council loses a planning applications the cost comes from the legal services budget, not the planning budget, so why charge the taxi trade for the Council's failure to win the cases against taxi drivers, it is not the individual drivers fault if you fail to win court cases, maybe you should review this, ask yourselves why you're losing them, are the legal services giving the right legal advice at committee like they do with planning applications? Especially when councillors go against the officer's advice.

When we get drivers illegally parking on taxi ranks, we get no support from the parking officers, still today we get people parking on Cornwall Street Rank, which I have raised many times, even the parking officers fail to give out a ticket, and quoted to me that they are doing nothing wrong, when in fact it's a 24 hour rank. A share of the parking fines for people

The costs incurred with dealing with court cases are for either prosecution 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 allocated to the two 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 and if any costs are granted by the Court, they are returned to the trade account.

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.

		<p>parking on the ranks could go towards the taxi account to help improve the taxi facilities like raising kerbs for wheelchair users.</p> <p>As stated earlier I fail to see how the taxi trade is part of the city council's network, you fail to make ways to improve the ranks, you're constantly putting in unnecessary barriers in the way of the trade making life harder for the drivers who are just trying to earn money to feed a family. Its okay for the civil servants who make the decisions and write the reports they get pensions, holiday pay, sick pay paid above the minimum wage which no driver gets.</p> <p>Raising the fees will lead to less taxis not more, by taxing taxi drivers off the road you are not only hurting the driver and his or her family but you also hurting the disabled and elderly along with families in poverty who can't afford a car.</p> <p>I would recommend you take this proposal off the shelve, please reject the increase, bring the fees down to attract new blood into the trade and stop using the taxi trade as a cash cow. And review the taxi accounts and look at other ways to resolve the deficit with better management with sensible action.</p> <p>PS under data protection I do not wish to have my name and address published on any council document, in private or public.</p>	<p>The Taxi Licensing Department have been reviewing the issues at the Cornwall Street Rank and this should be finalised shortly.</p>
7	20/1/2020	<p>Please find attached my objection to the fee increase and the improvements that could work in improving the large PHV account deficit.</p>	<p>Thank you for your email and letter.</p> <p>The Private Hire Account does not have a deficit. There is a reserve account for the Private Hire account so whilst the summary shown in Appendix 2 for 2019/20 forecasts a deficit of £31,401, the overall accounts</p>

It is a few pages to read but big changes need to be made in the licensing sector in order to remain afloat and debt free as well as updating the outlook in this sector of work.

This is a detailed description of what needs to be done and the work that needs to be set out in order to improve this failing system - the deficit will only increase the way the licensing department is being ran currently.

All the best,

**OPPOSITION TO THE TAXI AND LICENSING FEE  
INCREASE AND POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS**

To whom this may concern,

I am writing on behalf of the recent decision to increase taxi fees, more specifically Hackney Carriage fees of which are already incredibly high. I am also very concerned as to the gap between the fees of Hackney Carriage drivers and PHV drivers.

My argument is that with these subtle increases, the Hackney carriage trade falls into further uncertainty. The previous increase caused has already creates quite a stir amongst the Hackney community but for a further increase to now be on the cards, it will only alienate the separate the two kinds of drivers and alienate the Hackney Carriages from the authorities with losses in drivers in favour of private hire being a possibility.

I find our fees shockingly high and the fee system to be completely weighted towards private hire drivers. I am glad to see an introduction of further operator fees but the problem still lies in

remain in balance as this is offset from monies held within the reserve. As the 2019/20 forecast shows a reduction in the reserve (costs more than the income), in order to balance the accounts going forward, fees must be reviewed and increased over the 5 year period to 2023/24.

how much cheaper the start up and running cost for private hire drivers is when put next to Hackney Carriage which are now becoming even more expensive and off putting. These prices are already hard to meet as drivers are forced to balance other expenses such as cab rent (of which some pay additional rate to access the station for work), insurance, fuel, repairs, dockyard pass renewal, various tests and expenses – this is before profit. Although private hire experience most of the same scrupulous testing and overheads, the price scaling makes it much more manageable to be a PHV driver and even after the new increase in April, the costs compared are still hundreds less when all overheads are added up. Private hire continues to still be much cheaper where in reality, on the most part, the approach of private hire vehicles being much cheaper compared to Hackney Carriages is an alien concept in most other cities of which charge one fixed price for both types of taxis.

The latter approach is completely fair and makes it just as accessible for both types of driver. Plymouth’s system only makes struggling hackney carriage drivers work harder with little benefit as supposed benefits such as being able to pick up anywhere is becoming more and more obsolete due to the trend-setting utilization of taxi booking apps that have created a grand impression on customers due to convenience and wide spread use of smartphones and so the taxi industry has suffered a considerable change in the way taxi booking is accessed and the market has seen a great share of Hackney ‘flagging’ be lost in favour of pre-booked taxis.

It means most Hackney Carriages become glorified private hire vehicles as the bulk of their work is pre-booked operator-based

The fees have been reviewed for this year and the Hackney Carriage fees need to be increased by 8% for vehicles and 15% for drivers to cover the costs incurred.

When the taxi fees were raised in March 2019, the committee reports advised that this was a five year process and the fees would have to be increased each year to ensure the Hackney Carriage accounts are out of deficit by the end of the financial year 2023/2024 and the Private Hire accounts all remain in a surplus position. The fees are reviewed annually and are increased as required based on the actual costs incurred.

fares. This was most evident when the last firm of Hackney only work went under last year, the firm being Plymouth Taxis, sold its assets and drivers onto Need-a-Cab to which beforehand was holistically a private hire firm. It is with this I am appalled when I see further increases to their sky-high expenses as they now do a great deal of PHV work at a PHV fare rate of which has also caused a blow to their income.

In targeting this issue, the deficit of the licensing authority mentioned in the 8<sup>th</sup> of January 'fee increase' committee meeting could look at how much the taxi market had changed and what relevant changes need to be made in order to alleviate this deficit. The company account for private hire is so short of any profit because although expenses have dictated them in a greater debt, the profit garnered from fees has fallen so short due to not high enough prices for PHV drivers. It could be inferred that greater expense in the PHV account is a direct result of higher demand and so greater expenditure has been necessarily spent to handle the influx.

This in mind, the money spent could be recovered by making the fees much fairer for both sides by increasing the PHV rate and lowering the Hackney rate but also bearing in mind the added benefits Hackney carriages have over PHV drivers but only charging them a small premium than the money hundreds you charge currently. This is a fair system and which means Hackney drivers a small premium for 'flag down' jobs and station work (they also pay their operator a fee for this) and as well as this, the operator income per private hire car and the operator fee should also work towards tackling the debt almost by itself even before you increase the PHV rates and make the Hackney rate much

The costs of all expenditure and income for Plymouth City Council Taxi Licensing Accounts are charged to separate class codes so that any costs incurred for drivers, vehicles and operators are kept completely separate. This is to ensure there is no cross subsidy between licences.

There are a lot more private hire drivers and the vehicle numbers are not restricted which means the costs can be divided up between a larger number. The recent unmet demand survey consultation showed an increase in support from the Hackney Carriage trade to keep the limit on the number of Hackney Carriage Vehicles.

All Local Authorities must charge based on actual costs of the trade and each fee must be reviewed based on the costs incurred.

more proportionate – what you'd lose from hackneys you'd gain from the far more abundant private hire cars..

I must say that to increase the rates for Hackney carriages when, already, the fees are some of the most extortionate in the UK is hard-nosed and brutish when the deficit lies in private hire drivers who populate a great deal of the taxiing market in this city but have less overheads whilst being able to access a vast market of customers.

Furthermore, if the numbers of private hire drivers are considerably bigger, why hike the Hackney carriages when there is a great opportunity to act advantageously on this increase of PHV drivers? The Department for Transport has noted the southwest to have over a twenty percent increase in PHV drivers whilst a five percent decrease in Hackneys so it would seem the trend of taxiing lies in the private hire sector.

Albeit the deficit being present in both accounts and I agree this must be addressed, the deficit lies in the vast difference in fees between Hackney carriages and private hire. It seems a small increase for a private hire driver to swallow but a massive increase for already high Hackney carriages - I would no doubt say some drivers may even question if it is worth continuing when the market share is growing in the private hires favour. It may be worth collecting such information to find how many drivers have thought of doing said change, how many are disheartened in the Taxi Licensing Authority and what improvements could be made. I am failing to see the need to appease the growing private hire sector. The market share is invariably growing to become theirs – look at the amount of private hire vehicles compared to

Hackney Carriages are also able to be pre-booked and there is nothing stopping a Hackney Carriage or a group of Hackney Carriages' having their own 'App'.

As advised above, the Private Hire accounts are not in deficit.

Hackneys and if this case be true then why not act advantageously on it? The deficit in the private hire account is already over thirty thousand pounds so it has to be found somewhere - not in the Hackney driver's pocket.

It is with this I must conclude and plead that you reassess your fee rises in order to fix the deficit of these accounts. Hackney Carriages are suffering the worst trade they have ever known in terms of 'flagging down' trade falling and the growing use of pre-booking apps.

Subjected to further price increases, private hire contemporaries are still paying just a fraction to profit off of relatively the same demand – private hire do have benefit of being flagged down and the train station access but this also needs investigation as to how feasible these are as beneficial points to the Hackney driver when the cost to have these benefits is incredibly high when private hire work is just as readily available.

A complete reassessment of the fee system is necessary and how fair it is on both types of drivers. An increase in the private hire sector would be a good start in improving the current debt and potential alienation of Hackney drivers who have already protested against increases before and are becoming ever more aware to the disadvantages of being a Hackney driver.

I agree expenses must be smaller than the income but if the biggest deficit lies in the private hire account, big changes need to be introduced to shrink this and as well as this there are clear opportunities to capitalize on a growing PHV industry.

It needs to be ensured drivers are all treated fairly. It would be fair enough to charge Hackney drivers a small premium to have the opportunity to sometimes be able to pick up off the side of

Following the Taxi Fees Review in March 2019, the Licensing Department asked the Devon Audit Partnership to formally review the taxi accounts. The Audit concluded that the accounts were found to be of a good standard and that the basis of apportionment of service income and expenditure across the five licence account categories has been clearly defined, is considered reasonable and ensures there is no cross subsidy. Please see the Summary Report in Appendix 3 of the 8 January 2020 Taxi Licensing Committee Report.

the road but a difference spanning into the hundreds is far beyond reasonability. I would understand a big increase in a bigger, much busier city but surveys and research need to be executed to see how used Hackney Carriages are for their intended purpose when compared to pre-booking apps such as Need-a-Cab, who

**Table 4: Change in total driver licences (taxi-only, PHV-only and dual) by region between 2018 and 2019, England ([TAXI0103](#))**

	Thousands			
	Total driver licences	Taxi driver licences	PHV driver licences	Dual driver licences
	<i>March 2019 figure and percentage change compared to March 2018</i>			
<b>England</b>	<b>362.6</b> <b>0.4%</b>	<b>53.5</b> <b>-7.1%</b>	<b>226.8</b> <b>1.6%</b>	<b>82.4</b> <b>2.5%</b>
North East	14.5 <b>0.2%</b>	3.4 <b>-7.6%</b>	7.7 <b>6.7%</b>	3.3 <b>-4.8%</b>
North West	48.7 <b>-0.1%</b>	10.0 <b>-16.8%</b>	30.4 <b>5.6%</b>	8.4 <b>4.7%</b>
Yorkshire and the Humber	29.6 <b>4.6%</b>	2.7 <b>-2.1%</b>	16.1 <b>5.6%</b>	10.8 <b>4.8%</b>
East Midlands	17.5 <b>-1.6%</b>	1.0 <b>-28.6%</b>	4.1 <b>1.8%</b>	12.4 <b>0.5%</b>
West Midlands	38.9 <b>15.8%</b>	3.4 <b>-6.1%</b>	25.4 <b>24.8%</b>	10.1 <b>4.9%</b>
East of England	25.0 <b>1.1%</b>	1.8 <b>-3.3%</b>	8.1 <b>-0.6%</b>	15.1 <b>2.6%</b>
London	129.9 <b>-5.5%</b>	23.2 <b>-2.8%</b>	106.8 <b>-6.0%</b>	0.0 <b>0.0%</b>
South East	39.4 <b>2.3%</b>	4.3 <b>-3.9%</b>	19.5 <b>3.9%</b>	15.6 <b>2.3%</b>
South West	19.1 <b>8.4%</b>	3.6 <b>-4.8%</b>	8.7 <b>23.3%</b>	6.8 <b>0.1%</b>

with their recent acquisition of a Hackney fleet, it is showing an alarming migration to pre-booked work and perhaps the first time in this city we have seen the popularity of PHV vehicles become the chosen choice over Hackney Carriages – look how many of the taxi ranks that used to be popular premises for drivers now lay dormant and defunct. I bring to your attention the recent survey by the Department for Transport which dictates how fast the taxi trade has grown in different areas of the United Kingdom – the southwest has one of the largest growths in the last year and some of that will be Plymouth.

The southwest, which a percentage would invariably be Plymouth had the largest increase in the 18/19 year for PHV licences. This is a massive statistic and if it were not for the West Midlands it would be the largest growing. It is only the exploitative regulations in Wolverhampton in the West Midlands that has meant people from all over the UK have been able to license themselves in the West Midlands as the laws are ridiculously lenient – this issue has been evident for a long time. As a final note, take note of the Hackney carriage percentage - a decrease nonetheless.

**The PHV sector is growing at an alarming rate and a capital on this increase would only benefit the Taxi Licensing deficit and make trading much fairer as the private hire drivers, of which there is many more than Hackneys, are currently getting away with low rates and loads of work.**

**It is clear the evidence provided from the Ministry of Transport shows you'll be able to clear the thirty thousand deficit – the introduction of the newly proposed operator licence and 'per vehicle' fee operators now imposed are a step in the right direction but also a reassessment of PHV and Hackney rates is necessary to ensure both parties have a fair basis to work on as Hackney Carriages currently bear the brunt of what should be a fifty-fifty scenario.**

**SOURCES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH:**

Department for Transport Survey:

		<p><a href="https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/833569/taxi-and-phv-england-2019.pdf">https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/833569/taxi-and-phv-england-2019.pdf</a>  Wolverhampton Taxi licensing scandal:  <a href="https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-birmingham-44849364">https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-birmingham-44849364</a></p>	
<p>8</p>	<p>22/1/2020</p>	<p>I am a hackney driver in Plymouth I wish to formally put in notification of protest against the proposed licence Hackney increases I think that the 85% increase that was put on our licences and other fees last year should be more than enough i do not think another 8% is appropriate.</p> <p>At this current time it is a struggle working 60 to 70 hours a week after paying out to be a licensed taxi I'm lucky to take home my £200 wage which is well less than the minimum wage which will council say that every person should own the minimum wage to live on.</p> <p>I feel this increase again is really going to hit the trade hard in the pockets and really really begin to bring down they already low moral of the taxi drivers in Plymouth at the moment</p> <p>I think seeing as we're technically being punished for bad financial management on your offices part with our budget which obviously is the cause for the decrease could be helped if the actual people who make the money in taxing IE the</p>	<p>Thank you for your email.</p> <p>The fees have been reviewed for this year and the Hackney Carriage fees need to be increased by 8% for vehicles and 15% for drivers to cover the costs incurred.</p> <p>When the taxi fees were raised in March 2019, the committee reports advised that this was a five year process and the fees would have to be increased each year to ensure the Hackney Carriage accounts are out of deficit by the end of the financial year 2023/2024 and the Private Hire accounts all remain in a surplus position. The fees are reviewed annually and are increased as required based on the actual costs incurred.</p> <p>The costs of all expenditure and income for Plymouth City Council Taxi Licensing accounts are charged to separate class codes so that any costs incurred for drivers, vehicles and operators are kept completely separate. This is to ensure there is no cross subsidy between licences.</p> <p>The Council has presented the accounts as five separate trading accounts since March 2019. The Accounts are set out in the Taxi Licensing</p>

		<p>operators need to be charged more than £3 to £4 pound for a drivee maybe £10 to £15 all of our fees go up but there's a stayed the same which is unfair</p> <p>I feel that the council is being misfeasance in a public office against taxi drivers by punishing us and not the operator when all the money going in the same pot so one goes up the other should go up just victimizing is and not them in my opinion is being misfeasance in a public office.</p> <p>And maybe even cut the licensing officers that come out to enforce rules from 3 down to 2 as for the past couple of years due to sickness and non-filled positions we've been running at 2 two officers so I don't think 3 are needed that could already be a 20 to £30,000 savings.</p> <p>This is my formal PROTEST to the increase that I send to you.</p>	<p>Committee Fees report to reflect the five classes of licence and this will continue each year. The Taxi Committee report from Wednesday 8 January 2020 can be found at <a href="http://web.plymouth.gov.uk/modgov?modgovlink=http%3A%2F%2Fdemocracy.plymouth.gov.uk%2FieListDocuments.aspx%3FCId%3D566%26amp%3BMId%3D9108%26amp%3BVer%3D4">http://web.plymouth.gov.uk/modgov?modgovlink=http%3A%2F%2Fdemocracy.plymouth.gov.uk%2FieListDocuments.aspx%3FCId%3D566%26amp%3BMId%3D9108%26amp%3BVer%3D4</a></p> <p>The Operators fees have not increased as the account is covering its costs. Please see Appendix 2 of the Committee Report which shows each of the five accounts. The accounts are reviewed annually. The Operators fees cannot be used to subsidise other fees. Each fee must cover the costs of the particular licence.</p> <p>I can confirm that a taxi licensing officer has recently resigned and we are currently holding this vacancy until 1 April 2020. We will review this again in April to determine if we can cope without the third officer next year. These savings will then be taken into account when we review the fees again for next year.</p>
9	23/1/2020	<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 proposed increase 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</p>	<p>Thank you for your email.</p> <p>The fees have been reviewed for this year and the Hackney Carriage fees need to be increased by 8% for vehicles and 15% for drivers to cover the costs incurred.</p> <p>When the taxi fees were raised in March 2019, the committee reports advised that this was a five year process and the fees would have to be increased each year to ensure the Hackney Carriage accounts are out of deficit by the end of the financial year 2023/2024 and the Private Hire</p>

		<p>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>Thank you for this opportunity to express my views.</p>	<p>accounts all remain in a surplus position. The fees are reviewed annually and are increased as required based on the actual costs incurred.</p> <p>A letter was emailed to all Hackney Carriage drivers in September 2019. We received 12 responses and five of these 12 responses wanted an increase. Therefore out of 346 proprietors and 357 drivers, only 5 responded to say they would like the fares increased.</p>
10	27/1/2020	<p>I can't believe PCC want to make another increase in fees, for the taxi trade,</p> <p>It was only last year the council increased the fees by a HUGE amount, now only a few months later, another increase well above the inflation rate, unbelievable.</p> <p>How or why have these accounts been allowed to get into such a mess. Somebody has got it so wrong. When did the Hackney account go into a deficit, and by such a large amount, even though I can't find the figures, it must be large as of the increases are huge.</p> <p>I am strongly opposed to these rises, and wish this to be noted.</p>	<p>The fees have been reviewed for this year and the Hackney Carriage fees need to be increased by 8% for vehicles and 15% for drivers to cover the costs incurred.</p> <p>When the taxi fees were raised in March 2019, the committee reports advised that this was a five year process and the fees would have to be increased each year to ensure the Hackney Carriage accounts are out of deficit by the end of the financial year 2023/2024 and the Private Hire Accounts all remain in a surplus position. The fees are reviewed annually and are increased as required based on the actual costs incurred.</p>
11	27/1/2020	<p>Recently I've got a letter letting me know that PCC wants more money from my job. Before you ask for more money from us have you thought to do also something for us? Some of the disturbing things I find in this job: Forced to leave my car unattended to pick up passengers while members of the staff are playing games.</p>	<p>Thank you for your email. As detailed in the Committee report, the fees are reviewed annually to ensure the Private Hire accounts remain in balance.</p> <p>I appreciate that as part of your job you assist customers and I am pleased to hear you have excellent customer care.</p>

Helping customers outside in rain while they chat with a neighbour or so.  
 Expectations from customers to lift heavy luggage while them or members of the family are sitting and watching you.  
 Vulnerability in front of thieves and runners.  
 No pickup points for PH drivers.  
 Don't get me wrong I like to help customers and I always do but some circumstances makes me feel like a slave.  
 Members of the council are paid from public money to take care of the ppl. Atm they are just wasting our money because of their incompetence and maybe laziness.

I would also like to know the salaries in taxi licensing office, I think is my right to know members of the council salaries.  
 I would like to know why you put up our fee in the beginning, where the money is going.  
 Also I would like to know my full rights as a private hire driver: I like to think that I'm a good driver but I have some strange situations:  
 Customers request to be picked up or dropped of from bus stop or double yellow lines.  
 And many more.

I moved in UK because I was always fascinated by the history of this country. I found here most welcoming ppl with manners. I've faced racist and dangerous situations in my car but never complained. I like the city and most of it's ppl but PCC is a shame for this city.

The department always ensure Private Hire Drop off points are considered with new developments within the city for example the bus station, Bar code. We have worked with the Parking Team to provide a number of drop off points in the City. A letter has been emailed to all Private Hire Drivers advising of these newly agreed drop off points.

The salaries charged to the trade accounts are contained in the Summary Accounts in Appendix 2 of the Committee Report on 8 January 2020.

Full details about why the fees were increased last year can be found in the Taxi Committee Report on 21 March 2019 which is on our website at <http://web.plymouth.gov.uk/modgov?modgovlink=http%3A%2F%2Fdemocrac y.plymouth.gov.uk%2FieListDocuments.aspx%3FCId%3D566%26amp%3BMI d%3D8041%26amp%3BVer%3D4>

When the taxi fees were raised in March 2019, the committee reports advised that this was a five year process and the fees would have to be increased each year to ensure the Hackney Carriage accounts are out of deficit by the end of the financial year 2023/2024 and the Private Hire

		<p>Continuing this way you will bring ppl together and then you will fail. A mass protest against on Mayflower event will not pass like that.</p> <p>Remember that this email is not against you in person nor taxi licensing, this email gathered all my feelings accumulated in my years as a taxi driver.</p> <p>Atm I don't feel anger for you anymore, I feel pitty and also I'm ashamed of PCC.</p> <p>I also had good experiences with PCC but not so many.</p> <p>It will be very nice if you take some time to answer to my questions.</p>	<p>accounts all remain in a surplus position. The fees are reviewed annually and are increased as required based on the actual costs incurred.</p>
12	30/1/2020	<p>I am writing regarding the proposed fee increases for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Fees.</p> <p>I think an 8% HC and 12 % PH fee increase is unacceptable.</p> <p>I understand the deficit in accounts, but increasing our fees is not the way to recoup this money. I suggest looking at government funds or any other avenues that might be available to assist with the deficit . Also, looking at the costs of running the office and where reductions could be made.</p> <p>At present, I am working over 50 hours a week and some weeks, struggle to make minimum wage with all my overheads !!</p>	<p>Thank you for your email.</p> <p>There are no government funds available for licensing regimes, however we are looking at ways to reduce costs across the service including staffing. One full time taxi enforcement officer has recently resigned and we are currently holding this vacancy until 1 April 2020. We will review this again in April to determine if we can cope without the third officer next year. These savings will then be taken into account when we review the fees again for next year.</p>
13	31/1/2020	<p>We write in response to your letter dated 10<sup>th</sup> January 2020 relating to the Proposed Licence Fees increase.</p> <p>The Licensing Authority will not be surprised to learn that we object to the proposed increases.</p>	<p>Thank you for your letter.</p>

This is mainly on two subjects.

**Legal Department:**

We have on many occasions brought to the attention of those in authority the following instances that have, and are, costing the Taxi Trade loss of earnings and excessive fees:

**The Plymouth City Council Act 1975 S6. Roof signs on private hire vehicles.**

6.—(1) No operator or proprietor of a private hire vehicle licensed under this Act shall cause or knowingly permit such private hire vehicle to have affixed thereto any roof sign of whatsoever design or nature illuminated or otherwise that would lead the public to suppose that the vehicle was a licensed hackney carriage.

(2) If any person contravenes the provisions of this section he shall be guilty of an offence and liable to a fine not exceeding one hundred pounds and to a daily fine not exceeding ten pounds.

**Complaint:** PCC as LA is failing to uphold and enforce the Act of Parliament that it created.

At the following Plymouth Crown Court Case it was stated:

**Plymouth Crown Court Case No: A19990007  
21.09.1999**

**Key Cabs Ltd Appellant and Plymouth City Council Respondent**

*“...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.”*

*“...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. ...”*

**Complaint I:** It is submitted that the fact that the Taxi and Private Hire Committee of the day did not consider the display of roof signs on PHV’s shows that the Committee was poorly advised by the Legal Department.

**Department for Transport**

**TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE LICENSING:  
BEST PRACTICE GUIDANCE**

**March 2010**

**Vehicle Identification**

**Complaint I:** This case is not relevant to this review of licence fees as costs incurred in this case do not form part of this review. The case quoted was subsequently appealed to the High Court where an Order was made requiring the Council to have roof signs on private hire vehicles and we are obliged to follow that order.

38. Members of the public can often confuse PHVs with taxis,  
But it can be argued that any roof-mounted sign, however unambiguous its words, is liable to create confusion with a taxi. So roof-mounted signs on PHVs are not seen as best practice.

**Complaint 2:** The Licensing Authority continues to ignore the DoT guidance at the expense of the Taxi Trade.

**Key Cabs Limited t/a Taxifast v Plymouth City Council CO/4369/2006**

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

**8 November 2007**

8 By a complaint lodged in the Plymouth Crown Court, the appellant identified the matter of complaint as follows:

“(1) On the 18th May 2003 the Complainant Company applied to the Respondent Authority for 30 hackney carriage vehicle licences.

(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.

Hackney carriages and private hire vehicles are clearly distinguished by their appearance and different plates/door stickers.

**Complaint 2:** Christmas safety message on social media which explained the difference between a taxi and a private hire vehicle. The public tend to use the phrase ‘taxi’ for both trades and this is common across the country. This does not have an impact on the setting of the fees.

(3) By a letter dated 21st July 2004, the Respondent Authority informed the Complainant Company that it had refused the hackney carriage licence for the submitted vehicle.

**Complaint 3:** The reason that PCC refused the licence was one of numeracy however the vehicle was not Taxi Specification Compliant. There should have been no court case.

### **Plymouth City Council**

## **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.

**Complaint 4:** On the basis of the Licensing Authority's Policy a Licensee wished to appeal against the use of Conditions of Licence. The Legal Department used an out of house solicitor specialising in Taxi Law to prevent the Appeal taking place. The Legal and Licensing Departments are not complying with their own Policy.

### **Complaint 3: Key Cabs Ltd 2007 Case**

This is not relevant to this review of licence fees as the costs incurred do not form part of this fees review, 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.

**Complaint 4:** The case you are referring to is where a driver lodged an appeal to the Plymouth Magistrates Court claiming that Plymouth City Council had made 'conditions' on Hackney Carriage Drivers which the Council were not permitted to do, in particular for the dress code, enhanced training and a resultant penalty points system. The driver argued

We are not complaining about the day to day running of the Legal Department and the procedures used at the Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Committee which we find conducive to fair hearings.

that conditions could not be attached to a taxi driver licence and that drivers could only be regulated by the Council amending its byelaws.

Despite the Council and South and West Devon Magistrates Court advising the driver in May 2018, that the Policy needed to be appealed by way of Judicial Review to the High Court, the driver was determined to pursue the appeal.

James Button, Specialist Taxi Licensing Solicitor, represented the Council and advised the Court that the Taxi Licensing Policy can only be challenged by means of judicial review in the High Court. The existence of the policy cannot be challenged in the Magistrates Court, who must accept the existence of that policy and then determine their judgement in the light of it. Mr Button, confirmed that no condition had been attached to the Hackney Carriage Drivers licence.

The Court Clerk (Legal advisor) advised the bench that the Court has no jurisdiction to hear this case and that the driver had been informed of this from the outset when the court replied to his request in May 2018. The Clerk added that the law is clear and no conditions can be attached to a drivers Hackney Carriage licence and no conditions have been added, therefore the court had no power to hear this appeal or to make any recommendations with regards to this matter. The law must be applied and there is nothing to appeal against. This matter was regarding the policy and an appeal must be via a judicial review. Plymouth City Council have not attached conditions to the persons drivers licence and the court concluded that there was no appeal to be heard. The law allows local authorities to have policies and this is not a condition. The Court cannot regulate local authority policies and this would be a judicial review at the high court.

**Complaint 5:** Through poor judgement the Legal Department has incurred a debt of approximately £160,000 to the Taxi Accounts thereby artificially creating a huge increase in Licence Fees.

Yet again we draw attention to the **Plymouth City Council Act 1975**

Fees for vehicle and operators' licences.

28.—(1) Subject to the provisions of subsection (2) of this section, the Council may charge such fees for the grant of vehicle and operators' 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—

**Complaint 6:** Staff persist in misinforming Councillors that the whole cost of Licensing the two trades has to be recouped through fees. This is incorrect. The reason for Licensing is to protect the general public. We request that due to the poor judgement of the Legal Department a one off payment is made

In deciding the matter, the Court dismissed the appeal and the Council made an application for costs and were awarded £3300. These costs are being paid by the driver and are returned directly to the Hackney Carriage accounts.

**Complaint 5:** Please see comments above.

**Complaint 6:** A recent judgement has confirmed that there is no general principle of law that the licensing regime should be self-financing, however it was considered that the costs of monitoring and enforcing the behaviour of licensed drivers can be recovered through the driver's licence fee as long as there is no cross subsidy between licences.

from the General Rate Fund to normalise the Taxi Trade Accounts.

**Licensing Department:**

In 1976 one Inspector issued all licences and patrolled the streets ensuring that enforcement was properly carried out. It was realised that this was too much for one person and so for many years there were two members of staff who competently carried out their duties.

We now have the equivalent of six full time Staff. There is virtually no enforcement and that is largely reactive and not proactive with the result that many licensed vehicles and drivers fail to comply with Licensing Authority Policy.

The costs of all expenditure and income for Plymouth City Council Taxi Licensing Accounts are charged to separate class codes so that any costs incurred for drivers, vehicles and operators are kept completely separate.

**Licensing Department**

The number of licences and the type of issues faced in 1976 is not comparable with 2020.

As detailed in section 4.5 of the 8 January 2020 committee report, the three taxi enforcement officers undertake proactive and reactive work. In financial year 2018/19, the three Taxi Enforcement Officers undertook 523 vehicle inspections of which 168 (32%) were Hackney Carriage (HC) vehicles and 355 (68%) were Private Hire (PH) vehicles. Officers investigated 80 complaints regarding HC drivers and 82 complaints regarding PH drivers. There are 357 HC drivers and 801 PH drivers so we are getting complaints regarding 22% of the HC drivers compared to 10% of the PH drivers. Officers investigated 13 complaints regarding HC vehicles, 14 complaints regarding PH vehicles and five complaints regarding PH operators. These complaints resulted in 11 HC drivers going to committee and five PH drivers going to committee based on the complaints received.

**Complaint 7:** The Licensing Department appears to be the only growth area within Plymouth City Council. The Licensing Authority should reduce the number of staff employed.

The Ambassador course; while PCC receives funding to train staff self-employed licensees are required to attend at their own expense.

**SI 1994 No. 1519** at Interpretation general 4. “taxi” means (a) in England and Wales, a vehicle licensed under (i) section 37 of the Town Police Clauses Act 1847<sup>[16]</sup>;

**Complaint 8:** The Licensing Authority refuse to differentiate between the Taxi and Private Hire trades creating confusion amongst the public and loss of revenue to the legally defined Taxi Trade.

**Plymouth City Council Web Site**

Taxi Ranks and Fares

We license two different types of taxi:

- Hackney carriages: These are usually London style taxis and can pick up from taxi ranks, be flagged down in the street or be pre-booked.
- Private hire vehicles: These are usually saloon cars or people carriers and must be pre-booked; they can't use a taxi rank or be flagged down.

**Complaint 7:** The licensing department has not had any increase in staff and are currently holding a vacancy of 1 FTE Taxi Enforcement Officer.

No funding was available to provide the courses to the taxi drivers. The cost of the course was included in the driver's fee last year and is included in the new applicant's fee from 1 April 2020.

**Complaint 8:** The Licensing Authority ensure that there is clear difference between a taxi and a private hire vehicle licence.

**Complaint 9:** This is not legally possible, the Licensing Authority is deliberately confusing the general public

**Complaint 10:** Where staff are paid to perform a task Licensees are then required to pay twice for their time and stationery.

**Complaint 11:** A Licensee was refused permission to Appeal against a Suspension because he did not have a headed letter notification to present to the Magistrates Court.

**Complaint 11:** Licensee confidentiality is being compromised by double sided letters being sent to two licensees.

While we can accept that these errors are largely due to a computer programme it remains a fact that Licensees are, in this

**Complaint 9:** The wording has been altered slightly to make this clearer and has been changed to:

We are responsible for licensing the following vehicles carrying up to and including eight passengers:

- Hackney Carriage Vehicles: these are usually London style cabs known as taxi's, and can be flagged down in the street or pre-booked.
- Private hire vehicles: These are usually saloon cars or people carriers and must be pre-booked; they can't use a taxi rank or be flagged down.

**Complaint 10:** This is not correct. All costs incurred are charged to the specific taxi licensing account and are recovered through the individual fees

**Complaint 11:** If a driver is suspended by the Taxi Licensing Committee, they receive a formal letter from the Council which they can present to the Magistrates Court.

**Complaint 11:** There was an incident in 2019 where letters had been sent out double sided in error. This was not the responsibility of the Licensing Department as bulk letters are dealt with by the Council's printing service. This matter was investigated by the Information Governance Manager.

		<p>writers opinion, currently administered by the least efficient Licensing Department since 1976.</p> <p>For all of the above reasons it is our opinion that there should be a large reduction in the Licence Fees for Taxi Trade Licensees.</p>	
14	02/2/2020	<p>I am writing to you with great displeasure because of your plans to keep increasing the taxi licensing fees. When will it stop? Last year you had great increases! How far will it go?</p> <p>I understand you have loses in your department. But, how about cutting some of the staff down and reduce costs?! We, the drivers, are the ones always paying for your bad managerial ideas. If a drivers does something wrong that goes against the taxi bylaws, he will be hold to account. Regarding your poor choices, why aren't you held to account?! Few years back, we were doing great; we were ahead financially (the department). What happened? Who made bad choices that now affect 1.000's?! Why aren't you made to pay for the loses?</p> <p>There is a joke now in the taxi ranks: in order to become a taxi driver, one will have to get a bank loan! It doesn't seem to me that there is a long queue of people waiting to become taxi drivers.</p> <p>Instead of making things easier for us, you are only complicating them more. I don't want to end up paying 500 GBP for a 3 year HCDL! In no way do I agree with your increases. As I understand, the taxi licensing department is funded by the</p>	<p>Thank you for your email.</p> <p>The fees have been reviewed for this year and the Hackney Carriage fees need to be increased by 8% for vehicles and 15% for drivers to cover the costs incurred.</p> <p>Full details about why the fees were increased last year can be found in the Taxi Committee Report on 21 March 2019 which is on our website at <a href="http://web.plymouth.gov.uk/modgov?modgovlink=http%3A%2F%2Fdemocracy.plymouth.gov.uk%2FieListDocuments.aspx%3FCId%3D566%26amp%3BMod%3D8041%26amp%3BVer%3D4">http://web.plymouth.gov.uk/modgov?modgovlink=http%3A%2F%2Fdemocracy.plymouth.gov.uk%2FieListDocuments.aspx%3FCId%3D566%26amp%3BMod%3D8041%26amp%3BVer%3D4</a></p> <p>When the taxi fees were raised in March 2019, the committee reports advised that this was a five year process and the fees would have to be increased each year to ensure the Hackney Carriage accounts are out of deficit by the end of the financial year 2023/2024 and the Private Hire Accounts all remain in a surplus position. The fees are reviewed annually and are increased as required based on the actual costs incurred.</p>

	<p>drivers. So, if out of our pockets you get your salary, why don't we ever have a say in the way you run your department?!</p> <p>You will have a lot of drivers that will not respond to this inquiry; not because they don't care, but because they are disgusted with the kind of treatment they got in the past.</p>	
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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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