

## APPENDIX I – FEES AND CHARGES CONSULTATION COMMENTS

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

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

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

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

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