

Committee:	Council	Date:	Tuesday,
Title:	Proposed 2026/27 Licence Fees for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers, Vehicles and Operators		24 February 2026
Lead Member:	Councillor Geof Driscoll, Chair of the Licensing and Environmental Health Committee		
Report Author:	Jamie Livermore, Licensing & Compliance Manager, 01799 510326		

Summary

1.1. At the Licensing & Environmental Health Committee of 20 January 2026, Members resolved to refer the approval of the proposed licence fees to full Council following the end of the consultation period.

Recommendations

2.1. It is recommended that Council approve the fees proposed in this report to take effect from 1 April 2026.

Financial Implications

3.1. The Local Authority is required to review its fees and charges as part of its annual budget setting process. In accordance with both legislation and guidance, it is appropriate for fees and charges associated with the Licensing regime to be set as cost-recoverable.

Background Papers

4.1.

A – [Licensing & Environmental Health Committee 02 October 2025 Taxi Licence Fee Report](#)

B – [Licensing & Environmental Health Committee 20 January 2026 Taxi Licence Fee Report](#)

C – Local Government Association Guidance on locally set Licence fees (Dec 2023) [LGA guidance on locally set licensing fees | Local Government Association](#)

D – S70 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 [Local Government \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) Act 1976 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

Appendices

5.1

- 1 – Proposed taxi driver, vehicle and operator licence fees from April 2026
- 2 – Responses and objections received from the public consultation

Impact

6.1.

Communication/Consultation	Statute requires notice of proposed changes to be published in at least one local newspaper for a period of at least 28 days.
Community Safety	None
Equalities	Any changes in fees must be communicated to all existing licence holders, and consultation on any proposed changes will be conducted with interested parties and the wider public to ensure there is an opportunity to contribute to any such decision.
Health and Safety	None

Human Rights/Legal Implications	The Local Authority is permitted to charge a reasonable fee for the grant of a licence with the view to recovering the costs of the issue, administration and supervision of such licences.
Sustainability	None
Ward-specific impacts	None
Workforce/Workplace	None

Situation

7.1. This report outlines the steps taken since the initial presentation of the taxi licence fee proposals at the Licensing & Environmental Health Committee meeting of the 2 October 2025, and to refer the approval of the fees to Council following the Licensing & Environmental Health Committee meeting of the 20 January 2026. Members may wish to refer to both reports, attached as **Background Paper A** and **B** respectively.

7.2. A table comparing the proposed fees alongside the existing fees is shown in **Appendix 1**, along with illustrations and explanations of the costs and income, and the reserve movements including forecasts of the current and next financial year. The licensing reserve holds the income that pays for the cost of work required in future years of Driver and Operator licences, which are generally issued for 3- and 5-year durations respectively

7.3. A public consultation ran for a period of 28 days – Thursday 6 November 2025 to Thursday 4 December 2025 - in line with statutory requirements and was advertised in the Dunmow Broadcast and Saffron Walden Reporter, the Council's website and through email correspondence to all existing licence holders.

7.4. A total of 18 responses were received to the proposed fees, four in support

and 14 in objection. All respondents except for two declared being current UDC licensed drivers. **Appendix 2** illustrates the responses and any submitted comments.

Licensing Officers would advise Members that five respondents used the opportunity to report that they no longer work as licensed drivers so were not specifically objecting to the fees, and one respondent appeared to ask a question rather than make a comment for or against. Licensing Officers have now contacted each of those concerned and updated records in accordance with procedure.

7.5. Licensing Officers recognise that this proposal represents a further increase in driver fees, in addition to other recent costs faced by licence holders, such as the Council's approved driver training course. However, Members and the Taxi & Private Hire Trade are advised that if the Licensing Authority were to hold fees at an artificially low level, this would create a deficit in the service and undermine its ability to operate on a cost-recovery basis. This would potentially lead to the service being subsidised from the Council's general fund, i.e. local taxpayers. That would mean the wider community effectively subsidising a specific trade, which is contrary to the "user pays" principle reflected in legislation and Government guidance.

Licensing Officers will continue to regularly review administration and enforcement processes in order to identify any further potential efficiencies in its delivery to keep costs to the Trade at a minimum.

7.6. Members are advised to refer to **Background Paper C** and **D** for further information and clarification on Licence fee setting from the Local Government Association and Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 respectively.