

Stevenage Cab Trade Association

[REDACTED]

Mobile: [REDACTED]

ENV. HEALTH
26 FEB 2009
RECEIVED

25th February, 2009

Heather Morris

Head of Licensing

Danestrete

Stevenage

Herts.

Dear Heather,

Re: objections to proposed charges to Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Licence Fees.

Firstly SCTA did not respond or choose option 1, 2 or 3 as we felt it was an insult to try to recover running costs by penalising drivers and proprietors. The figures advertised in the Comet newspaper do not relate to those discussed in a recent Taxi Forum meeting. It is quite obvious the Council have ignored the objections raised in the meeting by proprietors and other attendees. In the current economic climate when we are going through one of the worst recessions worldwide it is inconsiderate of the Council to introduce and raise the current levies. None of the proposed increases relate to the inflation rate. If The Hackney Office has a shortfall in running costs questions need to be addressed. What cuts are being implemented by your office? Are you over staffed? Are the hours allocated to Taxi business being used to their full advantage. Failing to run a department correctly and passing the cost to the drivers and operators is not the answer. Drivers are leaving the trade as they find it difficult to meet running costs so a further increase of this proportion at this time will have damaging effects on the trade. It will also be less income for your department.

If there are to be increases they should be distributed fairly and equally. One part of the trade should not be penalised all Operators and Drivers contribute to the Licensing department. The advertisement for the increase in the Comet newspaper shows Hackney Drivers Licence as £110, the fee is already £115 does this not come under the trade descriptions Act ? We understand you are looking to increase fees yet you are advertising a reduction please clarify as we are confused?

Objection to individual items in charges

Private Hire Operators increase to £500.

Original proposal of £300 was up to 67% increase which was objected to as far too high and now you are trying to slip in a even more inflated rise of 127% which will be passed on to the drivers.

Vehicles Licence increase from £180 to £230

Is not this the largest charge in Hertfordshire?

Change of vehicle increased to £55

Changing your vehicle is a great expense now with the new proposal and with the required compliance test it will bring the cost to £100. How can you justify a proposal of £55 administration costs to change your name?

Change of vehicle Licence.

£55 Administration charges why so high? Insurance companies with larger running costs only charge £25 administration charges.

Replacement vehicle plate increase to £25.

Has the cost to produce new plates gone up?

Replacement Bracket.

Has the cost to produce this also gone up?

Door signs £8 each.

At the Forum meeting it was agreed no set charge would be implemented for door signs until a price was decided by the manufactures. No price has been given to us to agree with instead you have set your own price which you think it will be.

To conclude the trade feels cuts should be made in your department to replace your £15000 deficit. Serious questions need to be asked on expenditure. Your accounts provided to us do not tell us in detail where our fees go to. In 2005/6 Taxis Expenditure £22,452 for equipment, tools and furniture. There are not enough detail on how this high figure was reached. Does not furniture come out of Central Funding not out of our fees?

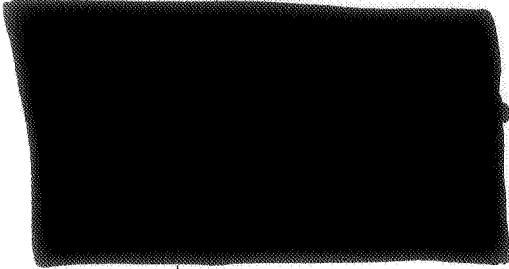
In 2007/8 £7496 for miscellaneous expenses what for? And there are no records of miscellaneous expenses for 2006 to 2004 why? Do the accounts take in to account extra revenue from knowledge test etc?

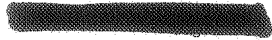


The figure supplied to Stevenage Cab Trade Association does not seem correct; your yearly central and departmental charges for 2007/8 are £117823.

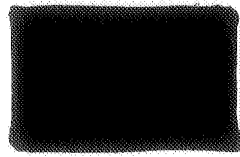
Yearly income from the trade is £81645 plus proposed increase of £15000 brings it to a total of £96645. A difference of £21178 is still to be accounted for. Are these figures wrong?




Increases of 43%, 127% and 92% are being asked for Private Hire Operators show us any business asking for increases of this magnitude.

Submitted on behalf of the Trade by Stevenage Cab Trade Association.




Chairman SCTA

Stevenage
Herts.
SG1 




Vice Chairman SCTA

Stevenage
Herts.
SG1 

Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions)

Act 1976

HACKNEY CARRIAGE & PRIVATE HIRE LICENCE FEES

Notice is hereby given that it is proposed that the scale of fees levied under the provisions of sections 53 and 70 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 should be varied as follows:

Licence Type	Existing (£)	Proposed (£)
Vehicles		
(Hackney Carriage and Private Hire)	180	230
Drivers		
(Hackney Carriage and Private Hire)	110	110
		(dual licensed)
Holder of a Hackney Carriage Driver licence applying for Private Hire (and vice versa)		
	85	0
Private Hire Operators		
<10 vehicles	n/a	200
>10 vehicles	n/a	300
<20 vehicles	140	n/a
21 - 40	180	n/a
41 - 60	230	n/a
>60 vehicles	260	n/a
All of the above are for a one year period		
Replacement paper licences	0	10
Change of address/name	0	10
Change of vehicle	35	55
Replacement bracket	10	15
Replacement vehicle plate	20	25
Transfer of vehicle licence	0	55
Door sign (each)	n/a	8
Internal vehicle plate	n/a	5
Windscreen patch	n/a	2
Docu-dash	n/a	3
Replacement badge	25	25 (no change)
Language Test	n/a	25
Knowledge Test - initial test	30	30 (no change)
Knowledge Test - re-sit	30	30 (no change)
CRB disclosure	37	37 (no change)
DVLA disclosure	5	5 (no change)

Increase 25%

Existing 115?

Increase 43%
Increase 127%

Increase 57%
55%
25%
30%

	2007/8		2006/7		2005/6		2004/5		2003/4	
	Taxis	Licensing	Taxis	Licensing	Taxis	Licensing	Taxis	Licensing	Taxis	Licensing
EXPENDITURE										
Employee related expenses										
Salaries	-	-	364	1674	4560	11048	29900	-	25177	-
Courses	-	-	-	-	-	869	-	680	-	-
Supplies and Services										
Equipment, tools and furniture	4838	-	5629	-	22452	-	9741	-	4804	-
Miscellaneous expenses	7485	258	-	-	-	-	-	184	1222	156
Agency and contracted services										
Private contractors	4405	16835	4144	16159	9426	20170	1591	20500	7672	15823
Central & Departmental charges	117823	147361	104150	122298	84421	188728	37230	129534	37823	94431
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	134561	164454	114287	140131	120859	220815	78462	150899	76698	110411
INCOME										
Fees and Charges	-109982	-105003	-96751	-70634	-125881	-112757	-100020	-40656	-84800	-39045
NET COST OF SERVICE	24579	59451	17536	69497	-5022	108058	-21558	110243	-8102	71366

PWS

71155

PWS