

From: Accounts [REDACTED]
Sent: 09 February 2026 12:10
To: Hazel Powell <Hazel.Powell@worcsregservices.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Consultation - Vehicle and Operator Licence Fees
Importance: High

Morning Hazel,

Thank you for your email and for giving us the opportunity to provide further detail on why we believe the proposed increases to vehicle and operator licensing fees would be detrimental to the trade in Redditch.

As one of the most established operators in the borough, responsible for **35 licensed vehicles** (currently) and **75–80 self-employed driver partners**, we feel these proposals will severely impact not only our business, but the wider trade and ultimately the public.

1. Redditch Already Applies Stricter Requirements Than Most Authorities

Redditch Borough Council already imposes some of the most restrictive licensing conditions in the region, including:

- **Vehicle age limits** that significantly shorten the operational lifespan of vehicles.
- **Mandatory twice-yearly compliance testing**, whereas many authorities – including Wolverhampton – require only one annual test.
- **Higher existing fees** compared with a number of surrounding councils.

These obligations already place Redditch-licensed operators at a financial and competitive disadvantage before any further increases are applied.

2. Service Levels Do Not Reflect the High Fees Being Paid

Despite paying among the highest fees in the region, the level of service we receive as fee-payers remains inconsistent. We have frequently experienced:

- **Licences issued late**, delaying our ability to place vehicles into service.
- **Documents mislaid during processing**, creating further delays and additional administrative burdens.
- **Reliance on just one approved testing facility**, limiting flexibility for operators and creating bottlenecks during peak periods.

In addition, **there is still no online system for submitting applications**, amendments, or renewals. This means everything must be processed manually, which is slow, labour-intensive, and increases the likelihood of errors or delays.

Given the fees being charged, we would expect a far more **efficient and streamlined licensing process**, similar to what many other authorities have now implemented. Wolverhampton, for example, operates far more digitally and efficiently, which is one of the reasons so many drivers are opting to licence there instead.

These ongoing challenges make it difficult to understand or justify any fee increase.

3. Higher Fees Will Drive More Drivers and Operators to Licence Elsewhere

Redditch already has a high number of **Wolverhampton- and Birmingham-licensed vehicles** operating locally through services like Uber. Meanwhile, those of us who continue to invest in the Redditch licensing system receive no tangible advantage or competitive support.

If fees continue to rise, many local drivers and operators will simply licence elsewhere out of financial necessity. This would result in:

- **Loss of enforcement capability** for RBC.
- **Reduced licensing income** as drivers migrate to cheaper, more efficient authorities.
- **Lower levels of oversight and public-safety control** over vehicles operating within the borough.

These are outcomes that harm both the Council and the local public.

4. Cost Comparison: Wolverhampton vs Redditch (Including Testing Costs)

Our Wolverhampton Private Hire Vehicle licensing confirmation shows a **£175 licence fee** for the vehicle.

Redditch's proposed 2026 vehicle licence fee is **£318**.

Additional testing requirements:

- **Redditch:** 2 tests per year × £54.95 = **£109.90**
- **Wolverhampton:** 1 test per year × £54.95 = **£54.95**

Annual Cost per Vehicle

Council	Licence Fee	Mandatory Tests	Total Annual Cost per Vehicle
Wolverhampton	£175	1 × £54.95	£229.95
Redditch	£318	2 × £54.95 = £109.90	£427.90

Annual Fleet Cost (35 Vehicles)

Council	Cost per Vehicle	Total Fleet Cost (×35)
Wolverhampton	£229.95	£8,048.25
Redditch	£427.90	£14,976.50

Annual Difference

Redditch licensing costs us **£6,928.25 more per year** than Wolverhampton:

£14,976.50 – £8,048.25 = £6,928.25

This is an extra **£198 per vehicle, every year**, purely for remaining licensed locally rather than elsewhere.

Driver Licensing Costs (Not Included in This Proposal, But Relevant)

Although driver-licence fees are not being increased in this consultation, it's important to highlight the **significant difference** between Redditch and Wolverhampton:

Council	New Driver 3-Year PH Licence	Renewal 3-Year PH Licence	Additional Admin Fees
Redditch	£175.20	£175.20	£43.30 admin for new applicants [hart.moderngov.co.uk]
Wolverhampton	£98	£78	Included; no additional RBC-type admin fee

This means a Redditch new driver pays:

£175.20 + £43.30 = £218.50

A Wolverhampton new driver pays:

£98

Difference for new drivers: £120.50 more in Redditch

Difference for renewals: £97.20 more in Redditch

For a fleet with **75–80 self-employed drivers**, as well as our own 20+ drivers currently, this differential is hugely significant and another reason many drivers choose Wolverhampton instead.

5. The Trade Is Already Under Severe Financial Pressure

Over the past two years:

- We have **invested heavily** in upgrading our entire fleet to hybrid vehicles.
- We experienced a decline of **over 90,000 jobs last year** due to Uber competition and cost-of-living pressures.
- Contract work has become a **race to the bottom**, leaving extremely tight margins.

Licensing has become one of the largest overheads operators can attempt to control. Any further increase will make it impossible for many to remain licensed in Redditch.

6. Fees Should Not Be Increased — They Should Be Considered for Reduction

Given the current state of the taxi industry, we believe strongly that:

- **Fees should not be increased**, and
- **Serious consideration should be given to reducing them.**

The trade is, quite frankly, **on its knees**.

Increasing fees during a period of economic decline, high competition from out-of-borough licensed vehicles, and rising operating costs would further weaken the local industry, reduce the Council's income, and erode public safety.

Fee reductions — not increases — would help:

- Retain local operators
- Preserve enforcement capability
- Support investment in greener fleets
- Strengthen public safety
- Encourage compliance
- Maintain a viable long-term licensing system for the Council

7. Summary

The proposed fee increases risk:

- Driving more operators out of the Redditch licensing system
- Reducing RBC's income
- Weakening enforcement
- Increasing public-safety risks
- Allowing out-of-borough operators to dominate the market
- Damaging the financial viability of long-standing Redditch fleets

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these concerns further and work with the Council to establish a framework that supports local businesses, protects the public, and ensures the long-term sustainability of licensing in Redditch.

Kind Regards

Ali

Amjad Ali Khan
(0603 Management Services Ltd)

For and on behalf of A2B Taxis and Contracts (Redditch) Ltd



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