

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Licensing and Enforcement Committee held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 8 October 2025

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 10.28 am

16 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 16 July 2025 were approved and signed as a true record.

17 Declarations of interest

Minute 21. Hackney Carriage Fare Tariff Review 2025.

Councillor Brian Bailey, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Members of the East Devon taxi trade are known to the Councillor..

18 Public Speaking

The Chair of the East Devon Taxi Association, Mr George Shorters, addressed the Committee and advised that he had met with drivers who were both in support of, or against, the proposed increase in the fare tariff of approximately 2%.

At a meeting of the East Devon Taxi Association, the majority had been in support of the proposed increase. The taxi trade generally supported regular small increases.

The Chair thanked Mr Shorters for his contribution.

19 Matters of urgency

There were no matters of urgency.

20 Confidential/exempt item(s)

There were no confidential or exempt items.

21 Hackney Carriage Fare Tariff Review 2025

The Licensing Officer, Emily Westlake, presented the report. On 16th July 2025 the Licensing & Enforcement Committee determined to exercise the Council's powers under Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 and approved moving to public consultation on a proposed variation to the East Devon hackney carriage fare tariff.

The proposed fare tariff table was set out at Appendix A of the report and had been chosen from a range of options available. The proposed variation would give effect to a fare rise of approximately 2% across all three tariffs.

Valid objections were received during the public notice period and the Committee was now asked to consider the objections and determine whether it was necessary to make

any modification to the proposed hackney carriage fare tariff before setting a specific date, not later than two months after the first specified date, on which the table of fares should come into force.

The Licensing Officer advised that the first specified date was 13 August 2025, being the last date for objections to be made against the hackney carriage fare tariff, and the table of fares must therefore come into force no later than two months after this date. It was recommended that the Committee agree a date of Friday 10 October 2025 for the amended fare tariff to come into force, either with or without modifications.

The options available to the Committee were set out at section 7.2 of the report. Following the amended fare tariff coming into force, drivers would have a period of three months in which to arrange for meters to be recalibrated.

Responses to questions and discussion included the following points:

- Officers were trying to obtain a third approved garage to undertake meter recalibration, in addition to the approved garages in Exeter and Torquay;
- The soiling charge was currently set at £88, with the proposed amended rate set at £90, although the Committee could consider setting a higher rate;
- It was reiterated that drivers do not have to charge the maximum fares.

The Chair noted that the Committee had previously come to the decision that small year on year increases to the fare tariff would be preferable. The previously considered Guildford Method of calculating the fare tariff took into account all costs of running a taxi, including inflationary costs. The Chair encouraged members of the taxi trade to engage with providing the Council with the necessary information so that a fair system for calculating the fare tariff could be introduced.

The Committee unanimously agreed the following:

RESOLVED

That the proposed new hackney carriage table of fares, as published on 30 July 2025, comes into force on 10 October 2025.

Attendance List

Councillors present:

B Bailey
K Bloxham (Vice-Chair)
O Davey
T Dumper
P Fernley
M Rixson
J Whibley (Chair)

Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)

R Collins

Officers in attendance:

Sarah Jenkins, Democratic Services Officer
Phillippa Norsworthy, Licensing Manager

Giles Salter, Solicitor
Lee Staples, Licensing Officer
Emily Westlake, Licensing Officer

Councillor apologies:

I Barlow
M Chapman
S Gazzard
Y Levine
C Nicholas
S Westerman

Chairman

Date: