

Date of Meeting 13 April 2022

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

Hackney Carriage Fares – Adoption of New Fare Table

Report summary:

To provide an update to the Licensing and Enforcement Committee regarding the public consultation to increase to the Hackney Carriage (Taxi) Fare Tariff and to set a date on the new table of fares.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

Recommendation:

That the Committee;

- 1. Note the results of the public consultation undertaken on the increase to the Hackney Carriage Table of Fares, and**
- 2. Recommends to Council on 20 April 2022 that the fare increase be adopted from that date, and**
- 3. To consider any further request for an increase within the next 12 months only upon an exceptional basis.**

Reason for recommendation:

To enable the taxi trade within the District to continue to operate economically whilst still maintaining an efficient, safe and cost effective service for those residents of and visitors to East Devon who need to use the services of a Hackney Carriage

Officer: Steve Saunders, Licensing Manager (Governance and Licensing)

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Democracy, Transparency and Communications
- Economy and Assets
- Finance
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Tourism, Sports, Leisure and Culture

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk;

Links to background information Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976
Report to Licensing & Enforcement Committee November 2021

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
- A greener East Devon
- A resilient economy

Report in full

1 Background Information

- 1.1 Section 65 of the of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 permits District Councils to set the fares tariff for Hackney Carriages licensed in the District and this Council, in common with most other Councils, have used this power for many years. The setting of fares for hackney carriages is a function for this Council's Licensing and Enforcement Committee.
- 1.2 This Committee approved advertising the new fare tariff that proposed an increase for 10% on the initial 'flag' charge for Tariff 1 and Tariff 2 resulting in an increase from £3.50 to £3.85 (T1) and from £4.00 to £4.40 (T2). The new table of fares with the increases appears at **Appendix A**. This followed a request from licensees for a fare increase.
- 1.3 The process to review and increase the taxi fare tariff has been given all due consideration by this Committee which resolved to approve circulating the necessary public notices to take this matter forward. Legislation requires that before any alteration to the tariff table can take effect, a public notice explaining the changes must be placed in a local newspaper. The public and the taxi trade should be provided with a period of at least 14 days to make comment on the proposals and if no adverse comment/objection is received, the approved changes must take effect. Alternatively if adverse comment/objection is received then the matter must be returned to allow the Committee to consider the representation(s).
- 1.4 The necessary public notice was placed in newspapers circulating in the District setting out the approved new table of charges and explaining the procedure should anyone wish to make representations. The statutory period for objections ended on 1 April 2022 and no objections were received to the advertised new table. The notice is shown at **Appendix B**.

2 Conclusion

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Committee that there were no objections received in response to the public notices. As explained earlier in this report, Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 outlines that where no objections to a table of fares are made within the period specified in the notice that the table of fares at Appendix A shall come into operation.

- 2.2 The new fares tariff will require the taxi meters in all licensed hackney vehicles to be changed, with details of the new tariff table being changed by the meter suppliers. This occurs at the expense of each owner and although it was possible in 2012 for the meter engineers to attend a location in the district to complete the work, that is no longer being proposed or offered by the businesses and there are no grounds to compel them to do so. From the point of the new table of fares coming into operation, any hackney carriage byelaws fixing the rates, fares or any table of fares previously made for the district will cease to have effect upon adoption.
- 2.3 Licensing officers will inform the taxi trade of the requirement under 2.2 above once the date to set the new table of fares is confirmed. It is proposed that all current and any new licence holders will be required to arrange the change to the new tariff for vehicle meters by 1st September 2022. This date allows a considerable period of almost five months from adopting the new tariff to allow licence holders make that change. It also coincides with the beginning of many hackney carriage licence renewals and it will be necessary for all applicants renewing to confirm the new meter calibration when applying to renew their vehicle licence(s).

3 Future Reviews of the Hackney Carriage Fares Tariff

- 3.1 The taxi trade in East Devon has now received a fare increase twice in two years, albeit with the previous increase in 2020 being relatively modest for daytime fares under Tariff 1. A procedure adopted by this Committee previously allows approving any requests for increasing the hackney carriage fare tariff in East Devon on an annual basis. The recommendation to members today is still to allow for a period of twelve months prior to considering any further requested changes to the fare table.
- 3.2 Taking into account the turbulent costs that fluctuate with regard to fuel costs, together with the current financial climate and uncertainty, the issue will remain under review by officers for the remainder of this year with further reports being provided should circumstances require.

Financial implications:

No direct financial implications

Legal implications:

The legislative framework is set out within the report.