

Report to: Licensing and Enforcement Committee



Date of Meeting 7 December 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 being implemented.

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 to increase the Hackney Carriage Table of Fares, and
2. Recommend to Council on 7 December 2022 that the fare increase be adopted from that date.

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;

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 The previous meeting of this Committee resolved to advertise public notices for a new fare tariff by proposing an increase of 15% for Tariff 1 and with Tariffs 2 and 3 increasing by 20%. This followed a request from taxi 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 throughout the District setting out the new table of charges and explaining the procedure should anyone wish to make representations. The statutory period for objections ended on 18 November 2022 and no objections were received. The notice is shown at **Appendix A**.

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, where no objections to a table of fares are made within the period specified in the notice, the table of fares shall come into operation.
- 2.2 The new fares tariff will require taxi meters in all licensed hackney vehicles to be changed, with details of the new tariff table being calibrated by the meter suppliers. This occurs at the expense of each owner through arranging appointments with the meter engineers. 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 Officers will inform the taxi trade of the requirement under 2.2 above upon the resolution to set the new table of fares. The frequency of fares changes since 2020 will require that all hackney carriage licence holders will need to change their vehicle meters to the new tariff.

- 2.4 Given the forthcoming Christmas period, it is proposed that all East Devon licensed taxis arrange for their meters be completed by 1st March 2023. This date allows a period of almost three months from adopting the new tariff to make the change. In addition, the desire and need for taxi proprietors to be able to charge increased fares was clear from those attending the previous meeting and it will be necessary that all applicants renewing hackney vehicle licences after 1st March 2023 confirm the new meter calibration when applying.
- 2.5 From this date forward, all newly licensed hackney carriages will be required when applying for a licence to obtain the new tariff meter calibration.

3 Future Reviews of the Hackney Carriage Fares Tariff

- 3.1 The taxi trade in East Devon has received three fare increases in two years. The procedure adopted by this Committee requires any further requests for increasing the hackney carriage fare tariff in East Devon being on an annual basis to allow for a period of twelve months prior to considering any further requested change.
- 3.2 It is the intention of officers to review the fares each summer before bringing a review for this Committee to consider at its meeting each November.

Financial implications:

No direct financial implications

Legal implications:

The legislative framework is set out within the report.