

Report to: **Licensing and Enforcement Committee**



Date of Meeting: 3rd September 2020

Public Document: Yes

Exemption: None

Review date for release None

Subject: Hackney Carriage Fares – Adoption of New Fare Table

Purpose of report: The Licensing and Enforcement Committee is asked to note the new Hackney Carriage Fare Table following the public consultation and to consider timeliness and procedures of future fare review processes

Recommendation: **That the Committee;**
1. Notes the adopted Hackney Carriage Table of Fares with immediate effect from 3 September 2020 (Appendix A) and
2. Agrees that the Table of Fares be reviewed annually and no earlier than 12 months after a previous review through an agreed procedure (Appendix B)

Reason for recommendation: To enable the Hackney Carriage 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 Holder: Portfolio Holder Coast, Country and Environment

Financial implications: There are no financial implications.

Legal implications: There are no legal implications requiring comment.

Equalities impact: Low Impact

Climate change: Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk

[Click here to enter text on risk considerations relating to your report.](#)

Links to background information:

- Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976
- Report to Licensing & Enforcement Committee 3rd July 2019
- Previous Report to Licensing Committee September 2019

Link to [Council Plan](#): Choose Priorities and delete what not appropriate.

Outstanding Place and Environment

Outstanding Economic Growth, Productivity, and Prosperity

Outstanding Council and Council Services

Report in full

1 Background Information

- 1.1 Section 65 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 On 18 September 2019 this Committee approved advertising the new fare tariff that appears at **Appendix A** to this report.
- 1.3 This followed extensive debate over a lengthy period of time amongst taxi licensees on the contested issue of increasing the fares which had required a ballot to identify the level of support for this course of action. The taxi trade across the district had generally been divided over the subject in view of the economic situation (prior to this year) that some did not wish to see a fare increase as the costs for fares are met by the public using taxis.
- 1.4 Licensing Officers had attended a meeting of the Exmouth Taxi Trade Association where the proposed fare tariff increase was discussed and the members of that association had proposed the increase in Appendix A, by agreeing that just one increase should be made. The proposed increase was for 50 pence on the initial 'flag' charge resulting in an increase from £3 to £3.50. It was accepted that the proposed soiling charge should increase to £80, this being the cost for cleaning soiled taxis.
- 1.5 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).
- 1.6 The necessary public notice was placed in newspapers circulating in the area 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 27 March 2020 and the council did not receive any objections to the new table.

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 with no further grounds to revise the fare tariff.

- 2.2 The new fares tariff will now require each taxi meter to be changed at the expense of each owner, with details of the new tariff being changed by the meter suppliers to address the increase. From the point of the coming into operation today for the new table of fares, any hackney carriage byelaws fixing the rates, fares or any table of fares previously made for the district cease to have effect.
- 2.3 Licensing officers will inform the taxi trade of the requirement under 2.2 above and licence holders will be required to arrange the change to vehicle meters by 31st October 2020. That date coincides with the bulk hackney carriage licence renewals and allows a considerable period of almost two months for current licence holders to undertake that task.

3 Future Reviews of the Hackney Carriage Fares Tariff

- 3.1 Until this point, the taxi trade in East Devon had not received a fare increase for eight years with the agreed increase being relatively modest for daytime fares only, under Tariff 1. Taking into account the time that it has taken to the trade to reach acceptance on this occasion, together with the current financial climate, the recommendation to members today is allow for a period of twelve months prior to considering any further requested changes to the fare table.
- 3.2 A draft procedure is provided under **Appendix B** to allow consideration under 3.1 for approving any future requests for increasing the hackney carriage fare tariff in East Devon.