

Report to Cabinet

13 April 2022

Subject:	Hackney Carriage Fare Review
Cabinet Member:	Cabinet Member for Culture & Tourism Councillor Danny Millard
Director:	Director of Borough Economy Ms Alice Davey
Key Decision:	Yes - The decision is significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in Sandwell.
Contact Officer:	Service Manager Regulated Services and Transformation, Nicola Plant Nicola_plant@sandwell.gov.uk Operations Manager, Tracy Hubball Tracy_hubball@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That approval be given to consult on the request received from a group of hackney carriage vehicle licence holders to increase the hackney carriage fares by means of an advert in the local press and via a public notice in Council buildings.
- 1.2 That, in connection to 1.1 above, in the event that no objections are received, the proposed increases as set out below, to come into effect on the date stated within the advert:

	Current Charge	Proposed Increase
Mileage tariff 1 (0600 to 2200 hours)		
For the first mile (or part thereof)	£4.00	£5.00
For each subsequent 110 yards (or part thereof)	£0.10	£0.12



Or for each subsequent mile thereafter	£1.60	£1.92
Waiting time (per hour)	£16.00	No change
Mileage tariff 2 (2200 to 0600 hours)		
For the first mile (or part thereof)	£4.80	£5.80
For each subsequent 110 yards (or part thereof)	£0.15	£0.18
Or for each subsequent mile thereafter	£2.40	£2.88
Waiting time (per hour)	£24.00	No change
Extra Charges		
For hiring on Sundays and Bank Holidays between 0600 and 2200 hours	£0.45	£0.50
For hiring from 1800 hours on Christmas Eve, throughout Christmas Day and Boxing Day	Double tariff 1 charge	No change
For hiring between the hours of 1800 hours on New Years Eve and 0600 hours on New Year's Day	Double tariff 1 charge	No change
For every article of luggage conveyed outside the passenger compartment of the carriage after the first article of luggage	£0.10	No change
For each person over the age of 7 years in excess of 4	New Charge request from trade	Tariff 2 to be applied
Soilage fee	£50.00	No change

- 1.3 That, in the event that objections are received and are not withdrawn, a further report be submitted to Cabinet for those objections to be considered.

2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 On 16th December 2021, following an approach to the Licensing Supervisor by two Sandwell licensed drivers, a request to increase the hackney carriage fares which are set by the Council was submitted. The submitted request was made by thirteen Sandwell hackney carriage



vehicle licence holders due to the increased fuel costs and rising cost of living.

- 2.2 The Council sets the fares for Hackney Carriage Vehicles and any request for an increase is usually submitted by the Trade. The last time that the fares were increased in Sandwell was November 2013.
- 2.3 Charges for private hire vehicles are set by each Private Hire Operator and do vary between operators. They can also be lower or higher at peak times than the hackney carriage fares.
- 2.4 The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 under Section 65 requires that when a request is received that a notice is published in a local newspaper inviting objections and, in the event that no objections are received, the change of fares comes into effect on a date specified in the notice. The setting of fares is an executive function, and is brought to Cabinet for consideration to proceed with the public consultation as outlined in the Act.
- 2.5 Licensing Committee met on 24 February 2022 to discuss the proposed changes and Committee were in support of consultation on the proposed fare increase.

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	Best start in life for children and young people
	People live well and age well
	Strong resilient communities
	Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods
	A strong and inclusive economy
	A connected and accessible Sandwell Ensuring that residents are confident in using the vehicles and drivers licensed by Sandwell MBC to travel both inside and outside the Borough safely.



4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 requires that when an application is made to vary the hackney carriage table of fares that it is published in a local paper giving at least 14 days for objections to be submitted. The notice must contain the details of the proposed change, details of where the notice can be viewed free of charge and the date that the changes will come into effect in the event that no objections are received.
- 4.2 In the event that objections are received, and they are not withdrawn, a further report will be brought to Cabinet to consider whether or not the proposal should be modified in light of any objections received. Whether the decision is reached by Cabinet to adopt the fare table as originally proposed or to modify the table as modified by Cabinet, the table of fares must come into effect within two months of the date given in the public notice were there to have been no objections.
- 4.3 The table below details the current fare card together with the increase being proposed by the hackney carriage vehicle licence holders:

	Current Charge	Proposed Increase
Mileage tariff 1 (0600 to 2200 hours)		
For the first mile (or part thereof)	£4.00	£5.00
For each subsequent 110 yards (or part thereof)	£0.10	£0.12
Or for each subsequent mile thereafter	£1.60	£1.92
Waiting time (per hour)	£16.00	No change
Mileage tariff 2 (2200 to 0600 hours)		
For the first mile (or part thereof)	£4.80	£5.80
For each subsequent 110 yards (or part thereof)	£0.15	£0.18
Or for each subsequent mile thereafter	£2.40	£2.88
Waiting time (per hour)	£24.00	No change
Extra Charges		



For hiring on Sundays and Bank Holidays between 0600 and 2200 hours	£0.45	£0.50
For hiring from 1800 hours on Christmas Eve, throughout Christmas Day and Boxing Day	Double tariff 1 charge	No change
For hiring between the hours of 1800 hours on New Years Eve and 0600 hours on New Year's Day	Double tariff 1 charge	No change
For every article of luggage conveyed outside the passenger compartment of the carriage after the first article of luggage	£0.10	No change
For each person over the age of 7 years in excess of 4	New Charge request from trade	Tariff 2 to be applied
Soilage fee	£50.00	No change

4.4 A national league table is published in the Private Hire and Taxi monthly which details how our charges rank across the country compared to other local authorities. At the time that the request was received to increase fares, Sandwell was ranked at 267 out of a possible 358 authorities in the country. This table is based on the cost of a two mile journey.

4.5 In the event that the proposed fare increase is adopted following the outcome of the consultation, as of the end of January 2022, it is estimated that with the two mile fare rising to £6.92, this would place Sandwell at 37 in the national league. Should Cabinet wish to view the table in full, please visit <https://www.phtm.co.uk/taxi-fares-league-tables> The table below shows the highest fares as at January 2022. The colour coding on the table for the two mile fare indicates when that fee was last increased with the key to the colours being found at the top of the table.



Filter by last rise:

- 2022
- 2021
- 2020
- 2019
- 2018
- 2017
- 2016
- 2015
- 2014
- 2013
- 2012
- 2011
- 2010
- 2008

POS	COUNCIL	2 ML. FARE	+ / -
1	LONDON (HEATHROW)	£11.40	●
2	LUTON AIRPORT	£9.70	●
3	EPSOM & EWELL	£8.60	●
4	LONDON	£8.60	●
5	WATFORD (X)	£8.40	●
6	UTTLESFORD	£8.30	●
7	READING	£8.00	●
8	GUILDFORD	£7.60	●
9	KERRIER	£7.60	●
10	OXFORD CITY	£7.60	●
11	JERSEY	£7.43	●
12	BRIGHTON & HOVE	£7.40	●
13	CHELTENHAM	£7.40	●
14	MAIDSTONE	£7.40	●
15	MID SUSSEX	£7.40	●
16	CARRICK	£7.30	●
17	GUERNSEY	£7.30	↑ £0.20
18	BATH & NORTH EAST SOMERSET	£7.20	●
19	BCP	£7.20	●
20	TORRIDGE	£7.20	●
21	TUNBRIDGE WELLS	£7.20	●
22	YORK	£7.20	●
23	CHELMSFORD	£7.10	●
24	DARTFORD	£7.10	●
25	DOVER	£7.10	●
26	MOLE VALLEY	£7.10	●
27	PENWITH	£7.10	●
28	SEVENOAKS	£7.06	●
29	EAST LOTHIAN	£7.00	●
30	EDINBURGH	£7.00	●
31	HARROGATE	£7.00	●
32	HERTSMERE	£7.00	●
33	STROUD	£7.00	●
34	TONBRIDGE & MALLING	£7.00	●
35	WELWYN HATFIELD	£7.00	●
36	WILTSHIRE	£7.00	●



4.6 The regional comparison taken from the national league table as at January 2022 is as follows:

Council	League table position	Two mile cost
Sandwell	268	£5.60
Dudley	205	£5.90
Birmingham	133	£6.20
Walsall	211	£5.90
Wolverhampton	271	£5.60
Solihull	147	£6.20
Coventry	122	£6.30

5 Alternative Options

5.1 By virtue of Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous) Provisions Act 1976 there are no alternative options other than to consult upon the request received by hackney carriage vehicle licence holders, and in the event of no objections being received to adopt the fare increase proposal made. In the event that objections are received, a further report will be brought to Cabinet for consideration.

6 Implications

Resources:	<p>There will be a cost to the Council of publishing the notice in the public notices section of the local newspaper and for reprinting, laminating and posting the new fare card to all holders of hackney carriage vehicle licences. There will also be a cost to the trade for having their meters calibrated with the new rates should they be adopted.</p> <p>All hackney carriage vehicle licence holders will be advised in writing of the consultation period. This is in excess of the legal requirement but is considered to be good practice to engage with those licence holders.</p>
Legal and Governance:	<p>The Act states that on receipt of a request, the proposed table of fares is published in the local newspaper giving at least 14 days for objections. A copy of the notice has to be available at the local council offices for at least 14 days from the date of</p>



	<p>publication of the public notice and this notice must be available to view free of charge at any reasonable time. If no objections are received, then the fares take effect on the specified date. If objections are received and then withdrawn, the fares take effect on the specified date or date of withdrawal of last objection if later. If the objections are not withdrawn, then the Local Authority must consider the objections. The local authority can modify the table of fares in light of the objections. In the event that they chose not to then the fare table as originally proposed comes into effect on a new date which must be within two months of the original date. In the event that they do modify the fare table, the revised fare table comes into effect on a new date which again must be within two months of the original date.</p>
Risk:	<p>There is a risk to the Council's reputation in the event that permission is not given to consult on this request, as there is a legal requirement that the Council consult and they consider any representations that are received.</p> <p>A risk assessment has been carried out and whether any significant risks have been identified that require reporting, in relation to the recommendations being sought.</p>
Equality:	<p>All Sandwell residents and users of hackney carriage vehicles will be affected if the increase is approved. An equality impact assessment has been completed and it confirms that there are no impacts that are specific to any or all protected characteristics.</p>
Health and Wellbeing:	<p>There will be an increase in costs to those using hackney carriage vehicles at a time when the most vulnerable are also facing increased living and fuel costs.</p>
Social Value	<p>The request has been made by the licence holders due to the increased cost in fuel and associated increases in the cost of living to enable them to continue to work and offer a transport service.</p>

7. Appendices



None

8. Background Papers

Current Hackney Carriage Fare Card

Request from 13 hackney carriage vehicle licence holders to increase fares

Button on Taxis: Licensing Law and Practice

Private Hire and Taxi Monthly

