

Committee: Licensing & Environmental Health

Date:

Title: Review of Hackney Carriage Fare Tariff

21 January 2025

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Item for decision:
Yes

Summary

1.1. This report is to inform Members of a written request made by Hackney Carriage proprietors for a proposed increase in the fare tariff rates set by the Licensing Authority.

Recommendations

To recommend the following to full Council:

2.1. To consider the proposed rate increase and decide whether to approve or reject.

2.2. To approve the commencement of a statutory public consultation of the proposed fare chart structure, should 2.1 be approved.

Financial Implications

3.1. The costs incurred by the Council of implementing any fare changes would be contained within future licence fees.

Background Papers

- 4.1. A – Business Case submitted by Mr Aggarwal and Mr Page
B – Current [table of fares](#)
C – Essex Authority Fare Tariff Rates
D – Proposed table of fares
E – Proposed table of fares with alternative unit display

Impact

5.1.

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| Communication/Consultation | Initial consultation has been conducted with existing licensed Hackney Carriage Proprietors. Should the Committee approval the proposals, a statutory public consultation period would commence with |
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| | notices published in local newspapers and the Council's website. |
| Community Safety | Sufficient availability of taxi and private hire vehicles within the District is an important aspect to protecting public safety. |
| Equalities | There may be an adverse impact on those who use licensed taxi and private hire services because of the increase in cost. |
| Health and Safety | None |
| Human Rights/Legal Implications | Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 details the process for fixing of fares, which will be followed. If no objections are made within the period specified in the notice, or if all objections made are withdrawn, the table of fares will come into operation on the date of the expiration of the period specified in the notice or the date the last objection is withdrawn, whichever date is the later. If objection/s are made within the period specified in the notice and are not withdrawn a further date shall be set. This date must be no later than 2 months after the first specified date, on which the fares come into force with or without modifications as decided by the Council, after the Council has considered any objections. |
| Sustainability | None |
| Ward-specific impacts | None |
| Workforce/Workplace | None |

Situation

6.1. Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 empowers the Licensing Authority 'LA' to set the fare rates for Hackney Carriage Vehicles, and any Private Hire Vehicle which is equipped with a meter.

6.2. The Licensing Team received a written submission of a business case for an increase to the existing fare rates, which were last revised in 2021, from two members of the Taxi Trade. This is shown as **Background Paper A**.

6.3. Members are advised that whilst an Uttlesford Taxi Trade Association is believed to be in existence, known as ULODA, its ability to fully engage is currently thought to be impacted by illness.

6.4. When the LA last set the fare rates in 2021, Uttlesford was positioned at 6th place in the national fare tariff table for a 2-mile journey at rate 1, at £8.30. At the time of writing, Uttlesford is now 48th out of a total of 337 Authorities which set fare rates.

6.5. The proposals made by the Taxi Trade are for an increase of 12.5% on initial fares across all tariff rates. The current table of fares is shown as **Background Paper B**. The increase, should it be agreed, would amount of a 2-mile journey at rate 1 of £8.83, moving Uttlesford up to 20th on the national fare tariff table.

6.6. For comparative purposes, a table showing the existing equivalent fare rates across Essex Authority areas is attached as **Background Paper C**.

6.7. There is an additional proposal to increase the existing 'waiting time' from £30 per hour to a target £34 per hour. Currently the waiting time is at a rate 1 equivalent of 10p for every 12 seconds and the proposal would increase this to a rate 1 equivalent of 10p every 10.6 seconds.

6.8. Whilst LA's have different methods of calculations, again for comparative purposes, waiting time equivalent at Braintree is £24.00 per hour, Chelmsford is £20.57, and Colchester is £22.15 per hour.

6.9. Whilst the statutory public consultation would follow this report, Licensing Officers commenced an additional consultation with all existing 48 Hackney Carriage Proprietors which attracted 11 responses, and all were in approval of the proposals. One respondent further suggested for an increase in waiting time to at least £40 per hour, and one respondent further suggested to increase 'soiling charge' to £150 from the existing £100, as "cost of cleaning is at least that now".

6.10. Should Committee approve the proposed table of fares, it is asked to also approve commencement of the statutory public consultation exercise. This requires a notice to be published in a local newspaper covering the District and Officers will also ensure the notice is displayed on the Council's website for a two-week period. Additional consultation methods may also be considered to maximise coverage. As per the regulations, should no objections be received from the consultation, the table of fares would come into effect at the end of the consultation period. Where objections are received and not withdrawn, the LA will be required to consider those objections.

6.11. A new published table of fares would be developed by Licensing Officers subsequent to this report, however, for illustration purposes the full proposed tariff costs breakdown along with the existing equivalent is attached as **Background Paper D**. Licensing Officers would additionally recommend that the unit display be amended from 10p to 20p increments, which does not make any amendments to the fare costs, but be clearer and easier to users to follow with mind to the higher monetary amounts. This is illustrated in **Background Paper E**.