
Subject:	LOCAL GOVERNMENT (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) ACT 1976 – HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARE TARIFF: REQUEST FOR INCREASE
Meeting and Date:	Cabinet – 7 December 2020
Report of:	Diane Croucher, Head of Regulatory Services
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Nigel Collor, Portfolio Holder for Transport, Licensing and Community
Decision Type:	Key Decision
Classification:	Unrestricted

Purpose of the report: To consider the proposal submitted by the Cinque Ports Hackney Carriage Federation to increase the maximum Hackney Carriage tariff within the Dover District.

Recommendation: That Cabinet:

1. Approves the table of fares presented by the Cinque Ports Hackney Carriage Federation.
2. Delegates authority to the Head of Regulatory Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Transport, Licensing and Community, to consider any objections received during the formal statutory consultation period and take all necessary steps to bring the table of fares into operation.

1 Summary

- 1.1 The fixing of maximum fare levels in respect of hackney carriages is a statutory function of the District Council under the provisions of Section 65, Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.
- 1.2 The formal statutory procedure for varying the fares requires the Council to publish a notice containing the proposed variation table in at least one local newspaper and specify a period of not less than 14 days from the first publication of the notice during which time objections to the variation can be made. If no objections are received, the table of fares will come into operation on the expiration of the 14 day period.
- 1.3 In the event of any objections being received, the Authority must consider those objections before bringing the table of fares into operation. The date on which the table of fares comes into operation, with or without modification, shall be not less than 2 months after the date on which it would have come into operation if no objections were received or if objections had been withdrawn.
- 1.4 The current hackney carriage table of fares came into force in January 2012, and is shown at **Appendix A**.

- 1.5 The Licensing Section received a proposal for a revised table of fares from the Cinque Ports Hackney Carriage Federation. This was due to go to Cabinet on 6 April 2020 to request a preliminary non-statutory consultation exercise to be undertaken in advance of invoking the formal procedures identified in paragraphs 1.1 – 1.3 above.
- 1.6 Due to the Covid 19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown, this request was unable to go to Cabinet on 6 April 2020. In order to avoid any further delays, the non-statutory consultation was approved by the Leader of the Council on 20 August 2020.
- 1.7 The non-statutory consultation took place between 31 August 2020 – 28 September 2020.
- 1.8 No representations were received during the consultation period.

2 Introduction and Background

- 2.1 The current tariff has been in place since 2012 (8 years without review). The Cinque Ports Hackney Carriage Federation approached the licensing authority to review the tariff. They presented a proposed revised table of fares (shown at **Appendix B**). They also presented various pieces of background information which can be found at **Appendix C**.
- 2.2 The latest information shown in the October 2020 issue of The Private Hire and Taxi Monthly, lists Dover District Council as having the 167th highest taxi tariff in the country. Canterbury is ranked 84th highest, Ashford 78th, Folkestone & Hythe 133rd and Thanet 294th, out of a total of 363 authority areas (**Appendix D**).
- 2.3 The tariff presented would be the maximum that can be charged, allowing hackney proprietors to charge less if they wish.
- 2.4 The last proposal that was submitted by Dover Federation of Licensed Taxi Operators was considered to be confusing for the public, so a simpler version was requested. This proposal is considered to be more transparent and easier for consumers to understand as there is an increase on the start rate on all tariffs.

3 Identification of Options

Two options have been identified.

- 3.1 **Option 1** is to approve the proposed table of fares put forward by the Cinque Ports Hackney Carriage Federation and to facilitate the formal procedure of adoption, with authority to consider any objections received during the statutory consultation period delegated to the Head of Regulatory Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Transport, Licensing and Community.
- 3.2 **Option 2** is to reject the proposed table of fares put forward by the Cinque Ports Hackney Carriage Federation and retain the existing table of fares.

4 Evaluation of Options

- 4.1 **Option 1 – Preferred option**
The current tariff has been in place for 8 years without review. The proposal put forward is considered and transparent, so no confusion by the consumer is foreseen. There is no doubt that the running costs of a licensed vehicle have increased over the 8 year period since the last rise in fares. In addition, no representations were received during the informal consultation.

4.2 **Option 2** – There is no doubt that the hackney carriage fares should be reviewed after 8 years, as the running costs of a licensed vehicle have increased. The rejection of this proposal is therefore not the preferred option.

5. **Resource Implications**

None.

6. **Climate Change and Environmental Implications**

The proposer of the hackney tariff fare increase has sited that one of the reasons for the increase is to support the introduction of lower or no emission vehicles (see Appendix C). Therefore it is anticipated that some of the increase in fares would be used to finance the higher cost of such vehicles.

7. **Corporate Implications**

7.1 Comment from the Finance Officer: Accountancy have been consulted and have no further comments.

7.2 Comment from the Solicitor to the Council: The Head of Governance has been consulted during the preparation of this report and has no further comment to make.

7.3 Comment from the Equalities Officer: This report does not specifically highlight any equality implications, however in discharging their duties members are required to comply with the public sector equality duty as set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/149>

8. **Appendices**

Appendix A – Current tariff

Appendix B – Proposed table of fares put forward by the Cinque Ports Hackney Carriage Federation with summary

Appendix C - Presentation provided by the Dover Federation of Licensed Taxi Operators

Appendix D – PHTM figures for October 2020

Background Papers

None.

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