
Subject:	LOCAL GOVERNMENT (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) ACT 1976: HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARE TARIFF – REQUEST FOR INCREASE
Meeting and Date:	Cabinet – 3 October 2022
Report of:	Diane Croucher, Head of Regulatory Services
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Martin Bates, Portfolio Holder for Transport, Licensing and Regulatory Services
Decision Type:	Key Decision
Classification:	Unrestricted

Purpose of the report: To consider the proposal submitted by the licensed trade to increase the maximum Hackney Carriage tariff within the Dover District due to rising costs of petrol and diesel.

Recommendation: That Cabinet:

1. Approves the table of fares presented by the licensed trade.
2. Delegates authority to the Head of Regulatory Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Transport, Licensing and Regulatory Services, to consider any objections received during the formal statutory consultation period, modify as appropriate, 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after the date on which it would have come into operation if no objections were received or if objections had been withdrawn.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 2021, and is shown at **Appendix A**.

- 1.5 The Licensing Section received two proposals for a revised table of fares. The proposal received from the Dover Federation of Licensed Taxi Operators is being considered through this report. The alternative proposal was dismissed as it was considered too complicated and confusing for the public. The licensed trade were asked to vote on their preferences. Of the 221 drivers contacted, only 42 responses were received. Of these, 33 were in agreement with the Dover Federation of Licensed Taxi Operators, 8 preferred the alternative proposal and 1 felt there was no need for an increase.

2 Introduction and Background

- 2.1 The current tariff has been in place since 14 January 2021. The Dover Federation of Licensed Taxi Operators have now approached the licensing authority to review the tariff. They have presented a proposed revised table of fares (shown at **Appendix B**). The reason they have stated for requesting the proposal is the rising costs of petrol and diesel which have put the trade under extreme pressure.

- 2.2 The latest information shown in the August 2022 issue of the Private Hire and Taxi Monthly (see Appendix C) lists Dover District Council as having the 61st highest taxi tariff out of the 355 authority areas in the country. The table below shows how Dover compares to our neighbouring authorities in the ranking:

Authority	Ranking	Last increase
Canterbury	38 th	2022
Dover	61 st	2021
Ashford	142 nd	2019
Thanet	192 nd	2022
Folkestone & Hythe	202 nd	2012

- 2.3 A comparison has been made of the pump cost per litre of petrol and diesel since the last tariff increase and is shown below:

Date	Cost of Ultra Low Sulphur Unleaded Petrol	Cost of Ultra Low Sulphur Diesel
11.01.21	£116.14	£120.61
22.08.22	£171.14	£182.92
% increase	68%	66%

- 2.4 The tariff presented would be the maximum that can be charged, allowing Hackney proprietors to charge less if they wish.

- 2.5 This proposal would increase the fares as follows:

Tariff 1	1 mile journey	2 mile journey	5 mile journey	10 mile journey
Current	£4.70	£6.40	£11.50	£20.00
Proposed	£5.10	£7.10	£13.10	£23.10

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 licensed trade 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 Regulatory Services.
- 3.2 **Option 2** is to reject the proposed table of fares put forward by the licensed trade 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 17 months. However, there is no doubt that the running costs of a licensed vehicle have significantly increased since the last rise in fares.

- 4.2 **Option 2** –It is appropriate that the Hackney Carriage fares are reviewed at this time as the running costs of a licensed vehicle have significantly increased. The rejection of this proposal is therefore not the preferred option.

5. Resource Implications

- 5.1 None.

6. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

- 6.1 When the last proposal was submitted, it was cited that one of the reasons for the increase was to support the introduction of lower or no emission vehicles. It is anticipated that, if approved, some of the increase in fares may be used to finance the higher cost of replacing existing fleets with these types of vehicles.

7. Corporate Implications

- 7.1 Comment from the Finance Officer: Accountancy have been consulted and have no further comments (MR).
- 7.2 Comment from the Solicitor to the Council: The Head of Governance & HR 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>
- 7.4 Other Officers (as appropriate):

8. Appendices

Appendix A – Current tariff

Appendix B – *Proposed table of fares put forward by the licensed trade*

Background Papers

All relevant correspondence and papers held within the Licensing Team database

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