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# Hackney Carriage Tariff Review – Supporting Information

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## 1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1. Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 allows the Council to fix the rates for fares and other related charges in connection with the hire of hackney carriages.
- 1.2. The current tariff was set in April 2013 and can be found at Appendix A1.
- 1.3. The views of the drivers regarding a tariff review were sought in the annual newsletter to the trade which went out in April 2017. The newsletter asked if the drivers wished the Committee to consider a review of the tariff – extract as follows:

“The Licensing committee undertakes to review taxi tariffs when representations are received from drivers on the subject. If this is something you would like the committee to consider please put your request in writing together with a business plan. The business plan should be submitted to include evidence to support your request such as fuel costs/insurance/servicing/cost of living etc. Please note we do not need to see your accounts. Please submit these before 30<sup>th</sup> April 2017”
- 1.4. A letter was received from Mr R Nemeth on behalf of West Berkshire Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Operators and accompanied by a petition signed by 58 licensed drivers, with proposals for a revised table of fares. The reasons for the request for an increase in the fares are outlined in the letter and include the average cost of providing a vehicle, vehicle spares, garaging and servicing, fuel costs, insurance and miscellaneous costs and earnings. The letter and proposed new tariff card are attached at Appendices A2 and A3.

## 2. Supporting Information

- 2.1 In order to provide some context of the requested changes a benchmarking exercise has been carried out and is attached at Appendix A4.
- 2.2 The trade publication, Private Hire and Taxi Monthly, publishes a league table of fares charged for a daytime two-mile journey in most areas of the country. The July table can be found at Appendix A5. West Berkshire is currently placed 25<sup>th</sup> in the list with the fee for the two mile journey being the same as Reading at £6.80, who also had their last tariff change in 2013.
- 2.3 The proposed tariff increase effect can be seen in the price per mile of a journey at each tariff rate at the bottom of the proposed tariff table at Appendix A3 and would place West Berkshire in 5<sup>th</sup> place alongside Epsom & Ewell and London in the PHTM league table.
- 2.4 A check on CPI (Consumer Prices Index) for the year to January 2017 rose by 1.8%, compared with a 1.6% rise in the year to December 2016. The rate in

January was the highest since June 2014. One of the main contributors to the increase in the rate were rising prices for motor fuels, with prices rising by 3.4% between December 2016 and January 2017, having fallen by 2.6% a year earlier. This continues the trend of increasing fuel prices seen since early 2016, reflecting movements in oil prices.

- 2.5 Following the previous meeting of the Committee to discuss this matter in July, it was noted there may have been some inaccuracies in the figures proposed; appendix A6 is an analysis produced which was sent to the trade for comment.
- 2.6 In response to this, a letter was received from a meter company representative for the trade, Mr Richard Brown, as at Appendix A7. He has provided additional spreadsheets of figures for review and comparison by Members, relating to the current tariff at Appendix A8 and the proposed new tariff at Appendix A9.

### **3. Options for Consideration**

- 3.1 Members are asked to consider if they wish to allow the proposed taxi tariff as it has been suggested, to alter the tariff in a different way or not to allow a change of tariff in any way.

### **4. Proposals**

- 4.1 Officers have not given a recommendation on whether the proposal from the trade should be accepted or rejected. The key consideration is the balance between supporting small business and ensuring the general public has access to a good value hackney carriage service across all areas of the District.

### **5. Conclusion**

- 5.1 The key information for Members is based around the comparison of cost increase to be trading as a Hackney Carriage driver or proprietor in 2017 versus the level of rise being requested from the trade. Members should satisfy themselves that the right balance has been met.

### **6. Consultation and Engagement**

The following procedures are laid down by legislation and must be followed when making changes to a table of tariff and fares:

- 6.1 A note of the proposed changes must be published in at least one local newspaper circulating in the district. The notice must specify a period of at least 14 days from the date of publication when objections can be made to the Council. (This costs in the region of £950).
- 6.2 A copy of the published notice must be made available at the Council Offices for public inspection, free of charge at all reasonable times.
- 6.3 If there are no objections, or those made are withdrawn, the variation in table of fares comes into effect of the expiration of the time allowed for public consultation in the notice.

- 6.4 If there are any objections, and they are not withdrawn, the Council must set a date within two months of the expiry date for public consultation, and then consider the objections made before agreeing a table of tariffs and fares.

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**Background Papers:**

Existing taxi tariffs

Private Hire and Taxi Monthly – table of comparative tariffs

Letter from West Berkshire Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Operators, proposed tariff and petition

Local Authority Benchmarking Data

UK CPI data 2017

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**Subject to Call-In:**

Yes: ☒ No: ☐

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**Wards affected:**

All

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**Strategic Aims and Priorities Supported:**

The proposals will help achieve the following Council Strategy aim:

☒ **HQL – Maintain a high quality of life within our communities**

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the following Council Strategy priority:

☒ **HQL1 – Support communities to do more to help themselves**

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Council Strategy aim and priority by Statutory Duty.

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**Officer details:**

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## Appendix B

### Equality Impact Assessment - Stage One

We need to ensure that our strategies, policies, functions and services, current and proposed have given due regard to equality and diversity as set out in the Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149 of the Equality Act), which states:

- “(1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:***
- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;***
  - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; This includes the need to:***
    - (i) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;***
    - (ii) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;***
  - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, with due regard, in particular, to the need to be aware that compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.***
- (2) The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.***
- (3) Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.”***

The following list of questions may help to establish whether the decision is relevant to equality:

- Does the decision affect service users, employees or the wider community?
- (The relevance of a decision to equality depends not just on the number of those affected but on the significance of the impact on them)
- Is it likely to affect people with particular protected characteristics differently?
- Is it a major policy, or a major change to an existing policy, significantly affecting how functions are delivered?
- Will the decision have a significant impact on how other organisations operate in terms of equality?
- Does the decision relate to functions that engagement has identified as being important to people with particular protected characteristics?
- Does the decision relate to an area with known inequalities?
- Does the decision relate to any equality objectives that have been set by the council?

Please complete the following questions to determine whether a full Stage Two, Equality Impact Assessment is required.

<b>What is the proposed decision that you are asking the Licensing committee to make:</b>	Whether to increase the taxi tariff as per the proposal suggested
<b>Summary of relevant legislation:</b>	S65 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976
<b>Does the proposed decision conflict with any of the Council's key strategy priorities?</b>	No
<b>Name of assessor:</b>	Julia O'Brien
<b>Date of assessment:</b>	05/07/2017

Is this a:		Is this:	
Policy	No	New or proposed	No
Strategy	No	Already exists and is being reviewed	Yes
Function	Yes	Is changing	No
Service	Yes		

1. What are the main aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the proposed decision and who is likely to benefit from it?	
<b>Aims:</b>	Increase taxi tariff in response to rising costs
<b>Objectives:</b>	Increase fares for Hackney Carriage Drivers
<b>Outcomes:</b>	Help meet increased costs to drivers of providing their service to the public
<b>Benefits:</b>	Increase in revenue for drivers but this will increase taxi fares and therefore increase cost to the public.

2. Note which groups may be affected by the proposed decision. Consider how they may be affected, whether it is positively or negatively and what sources of information have been used to determine this. (Please demonstrate consideration of all strands – Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation.)		
Group Affected	What might be the effect?	Information to support this
Age	May not be able to afford the new increased fare	Consultation on the proposal
Disability	May not be able to afford the new increased fare	Consultation on the proposal

Gender Reassignment	Proposal has no effect on this characteristic	
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Proposal has no effect on this characteristic	
Pregnancy and Maternity	Proposal has no effect on this characteristic	
Race	Proposal has no effect on this characteristic	
Religion or Belief	Proposal has no effect on this characteristic	
Sex	Proposal has no effect on this characteristic	
Sexual Orientation	Proposal has no effect on this characteristic	
<b>Further Comments relating to the item:</b>		
None		

<b>3. Result</b>	
<b>Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could contribute to inequality?</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Please provide an explanation for your answer: It may have a greater impact on the groups identified above as they may go out less/ fear of crime as unable to afford transport late at night due to increased cost – to be consulted upon	
<b>Will the proposed decision have an adverse impact upon the lives of people, including employees and service users?</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Please provide an explanation for your answer: increase in cost may not be able to go out as often due to increased costs/ potential fear of harm.	

If your answers to question 2 have identified potential adverse impacts and you have answered 'yes' to either of the sections at question 3, or you are unsure about the impact, then you should carry out a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment.

If a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment is required, before proceeding you should discuss the scope of the Assessment with service managers in your area. You will also need to refer to the [Equality Impact Assessment guidance and Stage Two template](#).

<b>4. Identify next steps as appropriate:</b>	
<b>Stage Two required</b>	Subject to outcome of consultation
<b>Owner of Stage Two assessment:</b>	Julia O'Brien
<b>Timescale for Stage Two assessment:</b>	During quarter three

Name: Julia O'Brien

Date: 05/07/2017

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Please now forward this completed form to Rachel Craggs, Principal Policy Officer (Equality and Diversity) ([rachel.craggs@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:rachel.craggs@westberks.gov.uk)), for publication on the WBC website.