
Update on Hackney Carriage Tariffs 2024

Committee considering report:	Licensing Committee
Date of Committee:	08 July 2024
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Lee Dillon
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	20 June 2024
Report Author:	Moira Fraser
Forward Plan Ref:	EX4367

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To feedback on the statutory consultation in relation to the hackney carriage table of fares and to note the decisions taken by the Executive on the matter.

2 Recommendations

The Licensing Committee is asked to:

- 2.1 **NOTE** the outcome of the statutory consultation to increase the table of fares by circa 3.02 % undertaken between the 21 March and 11 April 2024.
- 2.2 **NOTE** that as objections to the varied table of fares were received and not withdrawn the Executive considered the matter at the 23 May 2024 meeting where they determined not to modify the existing tariffs from the rates agreed in 2023.but did resolve to modify the maximum fouling charges.

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	<p>The cost of placing the public notices was around £460 which was met from within existing budgets. There are no other specific financial implications arising from this report.</p> <p>There is a potential for licensing income to reduce should the decision made have a detrimental impact on the number of drivers and operators working in the district. This will be monitored and managed through the Joint Management Board.</p>

<p>Human Resource:</p>	<p>There are no HR implications associated with the production of this report.</p> <p>Any actions will be met from within existing resources.</p>			
<p>Legal:</p>	<p>The procedure for setting fares and public notice requirements are stipulated within Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.</p> <p>The procedure is prescriptive and requires that a decision to make/vary a table of fares is made first. Following this, there is a statutory consultation requirement, to allow for any objections to the new/varied table to be made. The remainder of the process is dependent on whether any objections are received (and not withdrawn) or not.</p> <p>There is no right of appeal so any legal challenge to the decision(s) made in relation to a new/varied table of fares would be by way of judicial review.</p> <p>As objections were received and not withdrawn the Executive was required to determine whether or not any modifications should be made to the table of fares.</p>			
<p>Risk Management:</p>	<p>There would be a risk of challenge to the decision should the statutory process not be followed.</p>			
<p>Property:</p>	<p>There are no property implications associated with this report.</p>			
<p>Policy:</p>	<p>There are no policy implications associated with this report.</p>			
	<p>Positive</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Negative</p>	<p>Commentary</p>
<p>Equalities Impact:</p>				

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A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		x		Report is to note only
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		x		Report is to note only
Environmental Impact:		x		None
Health Impact:		x		There are no health implications associated with this report.
ICT Impact:		x		There are no ICT implications associated with this report.
Digital Services Impact:		x		The outcome of the consultation was published on both the PPP website and the Council's Engagement Hub.
Council Strategy Priorities:		x		The provision of a viable taxi trade in the district will support a number of the priorities in the Council Strategy in particular they are associated with a prosperous and resilient West Berkshire and thriving communities with a strong local voice.
Core Business:		x		Providing support to the taxi trade forms part of the business as usual for the Public Protection Partnership.
Data Impact:				All data obtained during the consultation will be dealt with in accordance with the PPP - Privacy Notice

Consultation and Engagement:	The procedure for setting fares and public notice requirements are stipulated within section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.
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4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 The existing tariff scale was confirmed by the [Executive on the 08 June 2023](#) and came into effect on the 19 June 2023.
- 4.2 As part of the annual review process we received a request from a member of the trade in December 2023 to modify the fares for 2024. It is considered best practice to review the fares on an annual basis.

Modifications Requested by the Trade for the 2024 Table of Fares

- 4.3 In summary, for 2024, the submission from a member of the trade suggested that:
- they would like to see an uplift of the maximum tariffs by about 3.02%.
 - the initial flag rate remain as is, and the increase to the tariffs be achieved by reducing the yardage (mileage per unit) for tariffs 1, 2 and 3.
 - separate tariffs for saloon and multi seater vehicles carrying five or more passengers be retained i.e. tariffs 4 (1B), 5 (2B) and 6 (3B).
 - no increases be included for multi seater vehicles carrying five or more passengers (tariffs 4 (1B), 5 (2B) and 6 3(B)).
 - the maximum fouling charges be revisited and a variable fouling charge in line with the tariff to be introduced. This proposal is designed to take into consideration that it may be more difficult to get vehicles cleaned at certain times of the day and that fouling could result in greater loss of earnings to the owner and driver. The proposal is set out in the table below:

	Tariff 1	Tariff 4	Tariff 2	Tariff 5	Tariff 3	Tariff 6
Interior	£150	£150	£225	£225	£300	£300
Exterior	£50	£50	£75	£75	£100	£100

- 4.4 A report was taken to the [March Executive](#) meeting where Members agreed to undertake a statutory consultation on the proposal. The consultation ran from the 21 March to the 11 April 2024.

Statutory Consultation

- 4.5 The following consultation took place:
- A notice was placed in the Newbury Weekly News on the 21 March 2024
 - It was also posted on the Council's Consultation Hub on the 21 March 2024 and on the Public Protection Partnership's website on the same day.

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- A copy of the notice was also placed in the Market Place Reception
 - An email was sent to all licensed Hackney Carriage Proprietors to alert them to the consultation.
 - A notification was also sent out to the 2440 people on the Community Panel.
 - A Facebook message was posted on the 21 March 2024.
 - A press release was issued on the 22 March 2024
 - A tweet was sent out from the PPP X Account on the 22 March 2024.
- 4.6 The Council received 35 individual [responses to the statutory consultation](#). Fourteen responses were from drivers, three from operators, eight from residents, nine from members of the Community Panel and one from an officer in the Home to School Transport Team. Some responses were a mixture of support or objections and additional comments. We also received a separate response signed by 78 drivers from Cabco with 77 of those drivers indicating that they were not in favour of increasing the tariffs.
- 4.7 Some of the respondents indicated that they did not want to see the tariffs increase but would like to see the fouling charges increased.
- 4.8 In total 19 objections to the proposals were received (18 individual responses and the joint response from Cabco). Thirteen of these were from drivers, two from operators, one from an officer in the Home to School Transport Team and three from residents.
- 4.9 Nine respondents supported the proposals, five of these were from members of the Community Panel, one from a resident, two from drivers and one from an operator.
- 4.10 We received six comments specifically about the fouling charges (three from drivers, two from operators and one from a member of the Community Panel). Some supportive of the sliding scales and others not.
- 4.11 Eight of the respondents provided more general comments which were neither supportive of nor objected to the proposed tariff changes. Responses covered a range of topics, which fell outside of the tariff setting process, including comments about wheelchair accessible vehicles, Uber and other ride share operators, presentation of the table of fares, waiting times and options for supporting the trade to 'go greener'.
- 4.12 As objections were received and not withdrawn the Executive was required to make a decision as to whether or not to modify the fares and set a revised implementation date.
- 4.13 The Executive noted that if the comments on the consultation (eight responses) were discounted 68% of the respondents (19/28) objected to the increase in tariffs in 2024. Thirteen of the fifteen drivers and two of the three operators that responded to the consultation objected to the proposed increase in the tariffs. The Executive therefore determined not to modify the tariffs on this occasion. The Executive did however determine to increase the fouling charges as set out below.

	Tariff 1	Tariff 4	Tariff 2	Tariff 5	Tariff 3	Tariff 6
Interior	£100	£100	£150	£150	£200	£200
Exterior	£25	£25	£50	£50	£75	£75

4.14 The decision was communicated to the trade and meter agents following the Executive meeting. Officers have subsequently been contacted by a few members of the trade who have voiced their disappointment with the decision. An updated table of fares which sets out the revised fouling charges has been posted on the PPP website. The revised table came into effect on the 27 May 2024.

5 Other options considered

5.1 None. The Executive agreed that a report should be brought to this Committee.

6 Appendices

None

Background Papers:

Reports and minutes of the 08 January 2024 Licensing Committee

Reports and minutes of the 14 March 2024 Executive meeting

Reports and minutes of the 23 May 2024 Executive meeting

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: No:

Report is to note only

Wards affected: All

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