

Item 7 Request for an Increase in Hackney Carriage Fares

Report of the Head of Administration (Portfolio: Corporate)

Recommended:

That an increase in the Hackney Carriage fares in the Borough, as requested by the Test Valley Taxi Association and detailed in this report, be granted and that the Head of Administration make the necessary arrangements for the implementation of the new fare structure.

SUMMARY:

- A request for an increase in Hackney Carriage fares charged by taxis in the Borough has been submitted by the Test Valley Taxi Association.
- It is over two years since the fares were last increased and it is suggested that the requested increase be approved.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 A request for the increase of Hackney Carriage fares charged by licensed taxis in the Borough has been received from the Test Valley Taxi Association.

2 Background

- 2.1 Hackney Carriages may legally charge no more than the maximum fare set by the Council. The Tariff of fares was last increased in September 2008 and obviously since that time the costs incurred by proprietors have increased but the fares have not. Members should note that fares apply solely to Hackney Carriages; Private Hire Vehicles (often referred to as minicabs) can charge any fare they wish.

3 Corporate Objectives and Priorities

- 3.1 The setting of a tariff of fares is a statutory responsibility for the Council but members should be aware of the significant public transport role performed by licensed Hackney Carriages.

4 Consultations/Communications

- 4.1 Heads of Service have been consulted on this increase with no comments received so far. There are currently 35 licensed proprietors in the Borough the majority of whom belong to the Taxi Association thus it can be stated that a majority of proprietors are in support of the proposal.

4.2 In addition comparative rates with other local authorities are shown below:

Authority	Two miles on Tariff 1
Eastleigh	£6.00
West Berkshire	£6.00
New Forest	£5.80
East Hampshire	£5.70
Winchester	£5.60
Hart	£5.60
Rushmoor	£5.50
Basingstoke and Deane	£5.40
Southampton	£5.40
Fareham	£5.40
Havant	£5.40
Gosport	£5.40
Portsmouth	£5.20
Test Valley	£4.80

The requested increase would result in a fare of £5.00 for the first two miles on Tariff 1.

5 Options

5.1 The proposed increase is as follows (with changes underlined):

Tariff 1 Existing (7.00am Midnight – except as shown in Tariffs 2 & 3)		Tariff 1 Proposed (7.00am Midnight – except as shown in Tariffs 2 & 3)	
FARES FOR DISTANCE First Mile (1760 yds) (1609.344 metres)	£3.40	FARES FOR DISTANCE First Mile (1760 yds) (1609.344 metres)	£3.40
Thereafter each <u>1/14th</u> mile (125.714) (115.047 metres)	10p	Thereafter each <u>1/8th</u> mile (220 yds) (201.168 metres)	<u>20p</u>
Waiting Time for each 20 seconds (or part)	10p	Waiting Time for each 20 seconds (or part)	10p
HIRING BY TIME		HIRING BY TIME	
For the first hour (or part)	£18.00	For the first hour (or part)	£18.00
For each subsequent ¼ hour (or part)	£4.50	For each subsequent ¼ hour (or part)	£4.50

Extra Charges		Extra Charges	
Each person in excess of four	50p	Each person in excess of four	50p
Soiling Charge	£50.00	Soiling Charge	£50.00
Tariff 2 Existing Midnight – 7.00am daily, Bank Holidays all day and Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve 2.00pm to Midnight (Except as shown in Tariff 3)		Tariff 2 Proposed Midnight – 7.00am daily, Bank Holidays all day and Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve 2.00pm to Midnight (Except as shown in Tariff 3)	
FARES FOR DISTANCE First Mile (1760 yds) (1609.344 metres)	£5.10	FARES FOR DISTANCE First Mile (1760 yds) (1609.344 metres)	£5.10
Thereafter each 1/14th mile (125.714 yds) (115.047 metres)	15p	Thereafter each 1/8th mile (220 yds) (201.168 metres)	<u>30p</u>
Waiting Time for each 20 seconds (or part)	15p	Waiting Time for each 20 seconds (or part)	15p
HIRING BY TIME		HIRING BY TIME	
For the first hour (or part)	£27.00	For the first hour (or part)	£27.00
For each subsequent ¼ hour (or part)	£6.75	For each subsequent ¼ hour (or part)	£6.75
Extra Charges		Extra Charges	
Each person in excess of four	75p	Each person in excess of four	75p
Soiling Charge	£75.00	Soiling Charge	£75.00
Tariff 3 Existing Christmas Day all day, New Year's Day all day and from Midnight 31 st December until 7.00 am 2 nd January		Tariff 3 Proposed Christmas Day all day, New Year's Day all day and from Midnight 31 st December until 7.00 am 2 nd January	
FARES FOR DISTANCE First Mile (1760 yds) (1609.344 metres)	£6.80	FARES FOR DISTANCE First Mile (1760 yds) (1609.344 metres)	£6.80
Thereafter each 1/14th mile (125.714 yds) (115.047 metres)	20p	Thereafter each 1/8th mile (220 yds) (201.168 metres)	<u>40p</u>
Waiting Time for each 20 seconds (or part)	20p	Waiting Time for each 20 seconds (or part)	20p
HIRING BY TIME		HIRING BY TIME	
For the first hour (or part)	£36.00	For the first hour (or part)	£36.00
For each subsequent ¼ hour (or part)	£9.00	For each subsequent ¼ hour (or part)	£9.00
Extra Charges		Extra Charges	
Each person in excess of four	£1.00	Each person in excess of four	£1.00
Soiling Charge	£100.00	Soiling Charge	£100.00

6 Option Appraisal

- 6.1 As stated above the setting of hackney carriage fares is a statutory responsibility for the Council albeit the Council will only initiate an increase following receipt of a request from the majority of the Hackney Carriage proprietors. It is now over two years since the last increase and clearly there is a danger that proprietors' income is falling behind when considering the increased costs they will have incurred in the last two years. Refusal of their request would therefore seem inappropriate.

7 Resource Implications

- 7.1 There are no direct resource implications as a result of agreeing a fare increase. Any increase will have to be advertised in local newspapers and provided no objections are received the increase can be implemented. The cost of the newspapers notices can be met from existing budgets.

8 Legal Implications

- 8.1 As has been previously stated the setting of fares is a statutory responsibility for the Council and there are no apparent reasons why the request to increase fares should not be agreed.

9 Equality Issues

- 9.1 There are no specific equality issues although it should be noted that licensed taxis provide a valuable service for a significant number of persons many of whom tend to be from the more vulnerable sections of the community e.g. elderly persons and disabled persons. It is possible that any increase will impact upon those in receipt of travel vouchers under the authority's Concessionary Travel Scheme although of course such persons will be affected by the transfer of the Scheme to the County Council in April 2011.

10 Other Issues

- 10.1 Community Safety - none specific although it should be noted that licensed taxis perform a vital role in assisting with the dispersal of persons from the town centres late at night after they have pubs and clubs. This in turn reduces the potential for such persons to engage in crime or disorder.
- 10.2 Environmental Health/Sustainability Issues – none specific. Many still regard licensed taxis as just private motor vehicles. It is clear however that the Department for Transport recognises the important role of licensed taxis as part of the wider public transport infrastructure.
- 10.3 Property Issues – none.
- 10.4 Wards/Communities Affected – the whole Borough.

11 Conclusion

- 11.1 The Council has received a request, supported by a majority of the Hackney Carriage proprietors, for an increase to the fares charged by licensed Hackney Carriages within the Borough. It is now over two years since the last increase and as the increase requested is not excessive in comparison to other fares in the area, it is recommended that the request be granted.

<u>Background Papers (Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D)</u>			
Correspondence from Test Valley Taxi Association held in the Licensing Section.			
<u>Confidentiality</u>			
It is considered that this report does not contain exempt information within the meaning of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and can be made public.			
No of Annexes:	None		
Author:	Michael White	Ext:	8013
File Ref:	MW/D.8/1		
Report to:	Licensing Committee	Date:	13 January 2011