

Public
Key Decision - Yes

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title: Hackney Carriage Fares

Meeting/Date: Cabinet - 19 July 2022

Executive Portfolio: Executive Councillor for Customer Services -
Councillor Stephen Ferguson

Report by: Licensing Manager

Ward(s) affected: All

Executive Summary:

To approve the proposed table of fares which is now considered to be an Executive function, rather than a function of the Licensing and Protection Panel.

Recommendation(s):

The Cabinet is recommended to:

- a. Consider the proposed table of Hackney Carriage fares attached at Appendix A and B, that have been compiled following the consultation that finished on 27 June 2022;
- b. Delegate the approval of any future Hackney Carriage fare tables to the Licensing Manager and Head of Service in conjunction with the Executive Portfolio Holder.

1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 provides that in respect of the charges for Hackney Carriages, we 'may fix the rates or fares within the District as well for time as distance, and all other charges in connection with the hire of a vehicle by means of a table'.

Fares comprise charges for:

- Distance travelled (three tariffs depending on time of day and day of the week)
- Waiting time
- Extra charges, which include:
 - Journeys with five or more passengers
 - Bicycles not able to be put in the luggage compartment
 - A potential fuel surcharge
 - A vehicle unfit to continue working charge

1.2 The Table of Fares for Huntingdonshire was last reviewed and increased in 2019.

1.3 Following requests from operators and drivers, it was agreed that a review of the current Hackney Carriage fares would be carried out and a public consultation commenced on the 31st May 2022 and closed on 27th June 2022.

1.4 As part of the consultation a total of 12 comments were received, these are contained at Appendix C.

1.5 Also included within this report for purposes of a comparison, are the current Table of Fares for three neighbouring authorities. These can be found at Appendix D, E and F.

2.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

2.1 When we receive a review request for the Hackney Carriage table of fares we are set by legislation to review these and a power to set the current table of fares as per the legislation - The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

It is important that the Council takes into account Court of Appeal decisions and associated legal advice to ensure the decisions the Council make are sound in the event they are challenged.

The Cabinet can also give authority under delegated powers to the relevant Executive Portfolio Holder in conjunction with the Licensing Manager and Head of Service

3.0 CONSULTATION

- 3.1 To enable a Table of Fares to be reviewed, it is necessary for the Local Authority to carry out a public consultation detailing the changes that are being proposed. The consultation took place between the 31st May and 27th June 2022 and 12 comments were received.

4.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Hackney Carriage table of fares are set by legislation to review these, and the Local Authority have a power to set the current table of fares as per the legislation - The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

5.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This process has been carried out within business as usual activity and once complete, will not require any additional resource.

6.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The taxi and Hackney Carriage industry has been significantly affected by the Coronavirus pandemic in that trade and in turn income of drivers and operators was drastically reduced over a considerable period of time. Due to Government restrictions being imposed preventing people from being allowed to leave their homes, there was little need for vehicle hire. This resulted in those employed in the trade having to seek alternative employment and some have not returned as operators or drivers following the lifting of the restrictions as they feared that the trade may not recover.
- 6.2 A review of the fares was last carried out in 2019 which was pre-pandemic.
- 6.3 Operators and drivers are also having to take into consideration rising fuel costs as well as the associated running costs of their vehicle/s. A review of the fares in consultation with the trade, allows the rising costs to be reflected in the newly proposed table of fares.

7.0 REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- 7.1 The need to review the table of fares has been driven by requests from the Hackney Carriage trade to do so, in line with the fact that the last review was carried out in 2019.
- 7.2 The review process is now complete, and the outcome of the consultation demonstrates that proposed fares are proportionate and necessary as a result of the rising costs associated with operating or driving a Hackney Carriage vehicle.

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