

Review of the Hackney Carriage (Taxi) Maximum Table of Fares

Community Services Committee Tuesday, 18 October 2022

Report of: Executive Head of Communities

Purpose: For decision

Publication status: Open

Wards affected: All

Executive summary:

- To determine the request for a proposed increase of the Hackney Carriage vehicle maximum table of fares.
 - The rate of Hackney Carriage fares is the authorised fare charged to passengers using Hackney Carriage vehicles licensed by the Council within the Council's area.
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This report supports the Council's priority of:

Supporting economic recovery in Tandridge

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Recommendation to Committee:

- A. To approve in principle a proposed variation to Hackney Carriage table of maximum fares as put forward by the taxi trade representative group with an implementation date of 11 November 2022.
- B. If the Committee is minded to vary the table of fares as proposed, to advertise the variation in the local press allowing 14 days for comments to be submitted to the Council.
- C. Subject to no objections being received during the consultation period, the variation will come into effect on 11 November 2022.

Reason for recommendation:

- To allow the new proposed table of maximum fares to be publicly advertised. If any objections are received to the public consultation, these objections must be considered by the Committee and any new fare tariff must come into effect within 2 months of the original implementation date.
- To vary the table of maximum fares, it is necessary to give public notice in accordance with Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.
- To permit the change in fares to be implemented provided there are no objections submitted to the Council.

Introduction

- 1.1 The Council has responsibility under Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, for setting the maximum fares that can be charged by Hackney Carriage vehicles licensed to operate within the district.
- 1.2 Hackney carriage drivers can choose to charge less than the maximum fares if they wish to, but they may not charge more.
- 1.3 Hackney Carriage ("Taxi") fares are made up of an initial hiring charge and a "mileage" rate, both of which are subject in terms of distance and / or time per unit cost. This is because when a hired taxi is stationary or moving slowly in traffic the meter continues charging, but by time instead of distance.
- 1.4 The table of fares applies only to Hackney Carriage vehicles. Private Hire Operators agree their hiring charges in advance with their customers at the time of booking the journey as way of a 'private contract'.

Current maximum table of fares

- 2.1 The current table of fares which was approved by the Council was last revised in 2018:

Rate 1	a) Between 07:01am and 08:29pm Mondays to Saturdays	
	For the first mile or 8 minutes and 20 seconds of waiting time or uncompleted part thereof.	£3.70
	For each 11th of a mile or 50 seconds waiting time thereafter (the equivalent of £2.20 per mile)	20p
Rate 2	b) Between 08:30pm and 07:00am Monday to Friday	
	or	
	c) Between 08:30pm Saturday and 07:00am the following Monday	
	or	
	d) On Bank Holidays, excluding Christmas Day, Boxing Day, and New Year's Day	
	Or	
e) Where in excess of four persons are carried in vehicles licensed to carry such numbers at the times specified in a) above		

	For the first mile or 10 minutes and 50 seconds waiting time or uncompleted part thereof	£4.00
	For each 14th of a mile or 50 seconds waiting time thereafter (the equivalent of £2.80 per mile)	20p
Rate 3	f) Between 10:00pm Christmas Eve and 11:59pm Boxing Day or	
	g) Between 10:00pm New Year's Eve and 11:59pm on New Year's Day or	
	h) Where in excess of four persons are carried in vehicles licensed to carry such numbers at the times specified in b) and g) above	
	For the first mile or 10 minutes and 13 seconds waiting time or uncompleted part thereof.	£7.40
	For each 11th of a mile or 50 seconds waiting time thereafter (the equivalent of £4.40 per mile)	40p
Other Charges	For each piece of luggage conveyed outside of the passenger compartment of the vehicle	10p
	For each passenger in excess of two, irrespective of age	20p
	Soiling Charge – when the soiling of a vehicles interior causes it to be withdrawn from service for cleaning	£120.00

Background

- 3.1 The table of maximum fare for Hackney Carriage vehicles was last revised on the 1st July 2018.
- 3.2 The taxi trade representative group is compiled of 10 Hackney carriage and private hire drivers, the senior licensing officer, licensing officer and a Surrey Police Tandridge Neighbourhood Team member to discuss any matters related to Hackney carriages and private hires.
- 3.3 The taxi trade representative group has submitted the proposal for variation following increase in the cost of living and the increase of petrol and diesel prices.
- 3.3 In May 2022, Licensing Officers received a written proposal from the taxi trade representative group to increase the maximum table of fares. The proposed new maximum table of fares is:

Rate 1	a) Between 07:01am and 08:29pm Mondays to Saturdays		
	For the first mile or 8 minutes and 20 seconds of waiting time or uncompleted part thereof.	£4.50	
	For each 9th of a mile or 34 seconds waiting time (or part thereof) thereafter (the equivalent of £2.70 per mile)	30p	
Rate 2	b) Between 08:30pm and 07:00am Monday to Friday Or		
	c) Between 08:30pm Saturday and 07:00am the following Monday Or		
	d) On Bank Holidays, excluding Christmas Day, Boxing Day, and New Year's Day Or		
	e) Where in excess of four persons are carried in vehicles licensed to carry such numbers at the times specified in a) above		

	For the first mile or 10 minutes and 50 seconds waiting time or uncompleted part thereof	£5.00
	For each 11th of a mile or 64 seconds waiting time (or part thereof) thereafter (the equivalent of £3.30 per mile)	30p
Rate 3	f) Between 10:00pm Christmas Eve and 11:59pm Boxing Day or	
	g) Between 10:00pm New Year's Eve and 11:59pm on New Year's Day or	
	h) Where in excess of four persons are carried in vehicles licensed to carry such numbers at the times specified in b) and g) above	
	For the first mile or 10 minutes and 13 seconds waiting time or uncompleted part thereof.	£8.60
	For each 13th of a mile or 24 seconds waiting time (or part thereof) thereafter (the equivalent of £5.20 per mile)	40p

Other Charges	For each piece of luggage conveyed outside of the passenger compartment of the vehicle	20p
	For each passenger in excess of two, irrespective of age	30p
	Soiling Charge – when the soiling of a vehicles interior causes it to be withdrawn from service for cleaning	£140.00

- 3.4 The proposal went to consultation with the 117 licensed Hackney Carriage drivers between the 14th June and 8th July 2022. The taxi licensing department received a total of 81 responses. 78 in favour of the increase and 3 opposed to the increase.
- 3.5 For information, published in the July 2022 online edition of the Private hire & Taxi monthly is a list of maximum fares for all local authorities in England and Wales, attached as **Appendix 'A'**. Overall, the Council is currently in position 260 out of 355.
- 3.6 When comparing Hackney Carriage fares in the neighbouring areas of the District, Tandridge taxis currently charge considerably less. The information in Appendix A is correct at time of drafting this report, there may have been further changes since. See table below:

Local Authority	2-mile fare £	Last increase	Rank out of 355 in UK
Tandridge (current)	£5.90	2018	260
Sevenoaks	£7.06	2019	71
Mole Valley	£7.10	2019	66
<i>Tandridge (proposed)</i>	<i>£7.20</i>	/	/
Reigate and Banstead	£7.20	2022	57
Mid Sussex	£7.40	2018	42

- 3.6 The proposed increase in a 2 mile journey of £1.30 is a 22% increase. However, the RPI has also increased since the last maximum table of fares

revision in July 2018. The RPI as at June 2022 was 340, whereas in July 2018 it was 281.7 – an increase of 21%.

- 3.7 The AA Fuel Price report attached at **Appendix 'B'**, shows the average cost of fuel in the South East in July 2018 when the existing tariff took effect and the present in June 2022:

Year	Unleaded (pence per litre)	Diesel (pence per litre)
2019	129.3	132.4
2022	189.3	197.2
% Increase	+46.40%	+48.94%

Consultation

- 4.1 117 licensed Hackney Carriage drivers have been consulted. 78 agreed with the proposal, 3 disagreed with the proposal and 36 did not respond to the consultation. Of those who responded, 96.3% of them wish to see the maximum fares increased as per the proposal.
- 4.2 The consultation with the Hackney Carriage trade allowed them over 3 weeks to assess the proposed increase and give their comments to the Council.
- 4.3 Public consultation will occur immediately after Committee decision if the proposal is agreed. The consultation shall not be less than fourteen days from the date of the first publication of the notice.
- 4.4 If no objections are received, the variation shall come into operation on the date of the expiration of the period specified in the notice.
- 4.5 If any objections are received to the public consultation, these objections must be considered by the Community Services Committee and any new fare tariff must come into effect within 2 months of the original implementation date.

Key implications

Comments of the Chief Finance Officer

- 5.1 The cost of carrying out the statutory consultation on the proposed variations of the taxi tariff increase would be met by the existing budget held by the Licensing department which is cost recovered by taxi licence application fees.
- 5.2 The cost of re-calibrating individual taxi meters will be met by individual Hackney carriage proprietors and then will be checked by Licensing Officers

as part of compliance checks. This is a normal part of work undertaken by Officers.

Comments of the Head of Legal Services

6.1 As explained earlier, section 65 (1) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 allows the District Council to fix the table of fares for the hiring of Hackney Carriage vehicles throughout the District. Should Members agree to vary the table of fares for the hiring of a hackney carriage vehicle then Section 65 (2) requires that the Council shall publish its intention to vary in at least one local newspaper informing of a consultation period of at least 14 days. The notice of variation will also be made available on the Council's website and will be available for inspection at the offices of the Council. If no objections are received, the variation may be brought into force at the end of that period. However, if any objections are received, these would be considered by the Committee.

Equality

This report does not disadvantage or discriminate against any different groups with protected characteristics in the community.

Climate change

There are no significant environmental / sustainability implications associated with this report.

Appendices

Appendix 'A' - List of maximum fares for all local authorities in England and Wales published in the July 2022 online edition Private hire & taxi monthly

Appendix 'B' - The AA Fuel Price report, July 2018 and June 2022

Background papers

Private hire & taxi monthly:

<https://www.phtm.co.uk/taxi-fares-league-tables>

AA fuel price reports:

<https://www.theaa.com/driving-advice/driving-costs/fuel-prices>

Office of national statistics:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/bulletins/consumerpriceinflation/june2022>

Bank of England:

<https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/monetary-policy/inflation>

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