

**Report to:** General Licensing Committee

**Date:** 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018

**Title:** Hackney Carriage Fares

**Report of:** Director of Service Delivery

**Ward(s):** All

**Purpose of report:** To determine whether to recommend to the Cabinet portfolio holder for place services the new fare structure proposed by a Hackney Carriage Proprietor or to decline the proposal and instead consult with the Taxi trade to seek a detailed proposal of the increase/s to be put before Members at a future meeting.

**Officer recommendation(s):** The Licensing Committee is recommended determine whether to recommend to the Cabinet portfolio holder for place services the new fare structure proposed by a Hackney Carriage Proprietor or to decline the proposal and instead consult with the Taxi trade to seek a detailed proposal of the increase/s to be put before Members at a future meeting.

**Reasons for recommendations:**

- (1) Under Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 the Local Authority has the power to set fares for Hackney Carriages.
- (2) Guidance advises that where the fares are set by the Local Authority, that Authority has a responsibility to review those fares to ensure they remain fair and reasonable.

**Contact Officer(s):** **Name: Danielle Ball**  
**Post title: Specialist Adviser**  
**E-mail: Danielle.ball@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk**  
**Telephone number: 01323 415333**

---

## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 Under section 65(1) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, the Local Authority has the power to set the maximum fares for the hire of a Hackney Carriage vehicle.
- 1.2 The existing Hackney Carriage Fares were approved by the General Licensing Committee in 2009.

## **2 Background**

- 2.1 The last consultation of the fare structure took place in 2009 and the General

Licensing Committee formally adopted the current fares for Hackney Carriages within the Borough.

- 2.2 The current fares have been in place for 9 years and the trade has requested a review of the current fare structure. There are currently 113 licensed hackney carriages that are allowed to ply for hire in Eastbourne. Fares charged by hackney carriages cannot be more than the fare set by Eastbourne Borough Council. The council do not set the fares for private hire vehicles.
- 2.3 Following informal requests made by some Hackney Carriage proprietors and discussions at the Taxi Forum, all Hackney Carriage proprietors were written to on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2018 and requested that they contact the Licensing team to advise if they are in favour of a fare increase. It was made clear that should more than 50 % of the trade feel an increase is appropriate then a report would be presented to General Licensing Committee. A copy of this letter is included at **Appendix 1**. The letter also requested proposals for a new fare structure.
- 2.4 The Licensing Team received 86 positive responses from Hackney Carriage Proprietors which equates to 76% of their total number. One Proprietor proposed an alternative to the current fares and that proposal is included as **Appendix 2**. On the face of it that appears to be the proposal of a sole Proprietor, rather than being an agreed proposal made on behalf of the majority of the Taxi trade.

### 3 The proposal

- 3.1 A proposal for a change in fares has been received from a member of the trade who state it is reasonable to reflect the additional cost incurred by proprietors including increase in fuel costs, repairs and inflation.
- 3.2 The current fare card is included as **Appendix 3** but is reproduced in Table 1 along with the proposal from the trade in Table 2 for easy comparison with details of the proposed changes in bold.

Current Fare Card (Table 1)

EASTBOURNE BOROUGH COUNCIL TAXI FARE CARD						
Tariff	Time Periods and Costs	Meter at Start	Per Mile up to 5 miles	Per mile over 5 miles	Waiting time	This tariff applies to Eastbourne licensed vehicles. Payment for services must not exceed these metered rates
Rate 1	6am -11pm Mon - Sat	£2.60	£1.60	£2.00	10p for each 22 secs	
Rate 2	6am - 11pm Sunday and Bank Holidays	£3.00	£1.60	£2.00	10p for each 22 secs	
Rate 3	11pm - 6am Mon - Sun Also Christmas & New Years Eve 6pm - midnight. New Years Day 6am - 11pm	£3.00	£1.90	£2.20	10p for each 22 secs	
Rate 4	Christmas Day - 6am 27 <sup>th</sup> Dec. New Years Day to 6am	£5.20	£3.20	£4.00	20p for each 22 secs	
Rates	5 or more passengers	Rates 1 – 4 plus 50% (half)				

5-8	
Requirement for small removal will incur a £6 surcharge in addition to the metered fare (agreed in advance)	
Fouling Vehicle £50	Transportation of domestic pets £1. No charge for registered assistance dogs

Proposed Fare Card (Table 2)

EASTBOURNE BOROUGH COUNCIL TAXI FARE CARD						
Tariff	Time Periods and Costs	Meter at Start	Per Mile up to 5 miles	Per mile over 5 miles	Waiting time	This tariff applies to Eastbourne licensed vehicles. Payment for services must not exceed these metered rates
Rate 1	6am - 10pm Mon - Sat <i>(change of terminal hour)</i>	£2.80 <i>(increase 20p)</i>	£2.80 <i>(increase £1.20)</i>	£2.00 <i>(Nil)</i>	20p for each 38 secs <i>(10p / 16 secs increase)</i>	
Rate 2	6am - 10pm Sunday and Bank Holidays <i>(change of terminal hour)</i>	£3.20 <i>(increase 20p)</i>	£2.80 <i>(increase £1.20)</i>	£2.00 <i>(Nil)</i>	20p for each 38 secs <i>(10p / 16 secs increase)</i>	
Rate 3	10pm - 6am Mon – Sun. Also Christmas & New Years Eve 6am – midnight. New Years Day to 6am <i>(change in hours)</i>	£3.20 <i>(increase 20p)</i>	£3.00 <i>(increase £1.10)</i>	£2.20 <i>(Nil)</i>	20p for each 38 secs <i>(10p / 16 secs increase)</i>	
Rate 4	Christmas Day - 6am 27 <sup>th</sup> Dec. New Years Day to 6am	£5.60 <i>(increase 40p)</i>	£5.60 <i>(increase £2.40)</i>	£4.00 <i>(Nil)</i>	40p for each 38 secs <i>(20p / 16 secs increase)</i>	
Rates 5-8	5 or more passengers	Rates 1 – 4 plus 50% (half)				
Requirement for small removal will incur a £8 surcharge in addition to the metered fare (agreed in advance) <b>(Increase £2)</b>						
Fouling Vehicle £60 <b>(Increase £10)</b>		Transportation of domestic pets £2. No charge for registered assistance dogs <b>(Increase £1)</b>				

3.3 The 'Table of Fares for England' published by the Private Hire and Taxi Monthly published August 2018 shows that based on a two mile fare (the fares national tariff 1) varies from £10.60 (London Heathrow) to £3.50 (South Kesteven). Eastbourne currently at £5.70 which ranks Eastbourne at 207 of 366 councils. Permission has been obtained to reproduce the PHTM Tables of Fares and is reproduced as **Appendix 4**.

3.4 Other East Sussex Authorities are shown on the Table of Fares for England as follows.

<b>Authority</b>	<b>2 Mile Fare</b>	<b>Ranking</b>
Eastbourne	£5.70	207
Hastings	£6.10	129
Lewes	£6.30	96
Rother	£6.70	46
Wealden	£6.90	24
Average	£6.34	-

- 3.5 The proposed fare card increases the meter at start and distances up to 5 miles fares significantly. The proposal would place Eastbourne with a ranking of joint 3<sup>rd</sup> at £8.40 in England and would be more than London at £7.80 ranked 5th.
- 3.6 It can be seen that although the proposal would significantly benefit proprietors the public would be disadvantaged compared to other authorities in East Sussex. However it is acknowledged that the current fares have not been reviewed for the past 9 years and fall below the average for East Sussex.
- 3.7 Options, 1. The Committee agree the proposal to increase the fares, as set out in Table 2 and Appendix 2, and recommend the same to the Cabinet portfolio holder for place services, along with the recommendation to delegate the Senior Specialist Advisor to comply with the statutory process of publishing the proposal, or 2. That the Committee reject the proposed increased fares, as set out in Table 2 and Appendix 2, and agree to delegate the Senior Specialist Advisor to undertake a 6 week consultation exercise with the Taxi trade to draft a proposal on increasing Hackney Carriage fares for Members to consider at a future meeting.

#### **4 Financial appraisal**

This consultation has no direct financial implications. Any subsequent cost of advertising the amended 'Table of Fares' in a local newspaper will be taken from funds already reserved in the Taxi Licensing Budget.

#### **5 Legal implications**

- 5.1 The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 ("the 1976 Act") allows the Council to set the maximum costs and fares for hackney carriages. In this context the "Council" means the Executive by virtue of The Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) Regulations 2000 (as amended).
- 5.2 Under Section 65 (2) of the 1976 Act when the Council proposes to vary the hackney carriage fares it must publish a notice in a local newspaper stating the proposed new fares and give at least 14 days for any objections to be made. If there are objections, the Council must consider them before deciding whether to confirm or modify the proposed fares. If there are no objections the new fares can be brought into force at the end of the objection period. If the Council varies the proposed fares following any objections made within this period it then sets a second date, which cannot be more than two months after the first date specified, when the new fares comes into force."

5.3 This Report was considered by the Councils Legal section on 10 September 2018 (Iken 7653-MW).

## **5 Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Letter to Hackney Proprietors
- Appendix 2 – Proposed Fare Card from the Trade
- Appendix 3 – Current Fare Card
- Appendix 4 – PHTM Table of Fares

## **6 Background papers**

None