

| Report of | Meeting | Date |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Director of Planning and Development | Licensing and Public Safety Committee | Tuesday, 6 September 2022 |

Tariff Increase

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| Is this report confidential? | No |
| Is this decision key? | Yes |
| Savings or expenditure amounting to greater than £100,000 | Significant impact on 2 or more council wards |

Purpose of the Report

1. To inform members of the Licensing and Public Safety Committee, about a request from the taxi drivers of South Ribble for a tariff increase.

Recommendations

2. To note the contents of the report.
3. To consider the proposed request for an increase in the Taxi tariff set by this licensing authority
4. To accept or reject the proposed increase
5. If members are to agree to the proposed increase, the licensing section to undertake a consultation exercise with stakeholders on the proposed changes to the Hackney Carriage Table of Fares.
6. To agree to receive a report on the outcome of the consultation exercise at a future meeting only if representations are received.

Corporate priorities

7. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:
- 8.

| | |
|---|--|
| An exemplary council | Thriving communities |
| A fair local economy that works for everyone | Good homes, green spaces, healthy places |

Background to the report

9. Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 permits Licensing Authorities to set the fares tariff for its licenced Hackney carriages (taxis).
10. The total cost of using a taxi is referred to as a 'fare' and is calculated on an electronic meter installed and displayed within the vehicle.
11. The council sets the maximum fares that taxi drivers can charge its passengers. The main charge is for the distance i.e. the further you go, the higher the fare, with a startup fee that is set before the vehicle commences its journey.
12. There are extra charges for delays, when there are higher numbers of passengers and costs are also multiplied during evenings, weekends and public holidays, depending on timings within the tariff card.
13. Hackney Carriage drivers must always have the tariff card on display so that that passengers know what the charges are, before the journey commences.
14. All the separate charges are shown in a 'tariff'. The driver of a taxi cannot charge more than the tariff but can charge less if they wish.
15. To fix the schedule of fares, a written request is normally submitted to the council, usually by the taxi trade.
16. The council is obliged under Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, to advertise for a period of 28 days any variation to an approved table of fares. Any objections to the proposal must be considered before new tariffs are brought into force.
17. Once a fare increase has been approved, the council is required to ensure all licensed hackney carriage vehicles have meters which show the new tariffs, and to ensure that meters are checked and sealed, and that there are clear fare cards for each vehicle. This is to ensure that members of the public are not overcharged for their journey, and that there is a clear explanation about the fare change or increase.
18. As per S65(3) of the act states, if no representations are received after a period of consultation then the proposed table of fares comes into operation on the date of the expiration of the consultation period.
19. This meaning the consultation would not come back to members at a later date for a decision unless representations to the increase are received.
20. S65 of the act, states the following,

65 Fixing of fares for hackney carriages.

(1)A district council 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 or with the arrangements for the hire of a vehicle, to be paid in respect of the hire of hackney carriages by means of a table (hereafter in this section referred to as a "table of fares") made or varied in accordance with the provisions of this section.

(2)(a) When a district council make or vary a table of fares they shall publish in at least one local newspaper circulating in the district a notice setting out the table of fares or the variation thereof and specifying the period, which shall not be less than fourteen days from the date of the first publication of the notice, within which and the manner in which objections to the table of fares or variation can be made.

(b) A copy of the notice referred to in paragraph (a) of this subsection shall for the period of fourteen days from the date of the first publication thereof be deposited at the offices of the council which published the notice, and shall at all reasonable hours be open to public inspection without payment.

(3) If no objection to a table of fares or variation is duly made within the period specified in the notice referred to in subsection (2) of this section, or if all objections so made are withdrawn, the table of fares or variation shall come into operation on the date of the expiration of the period specified in the notice or the date of withdrawal of the objection or, if more than one, of the last objection, whichever date is the later.

(4) If objection is duly made as aforesaid and is not withdrawn, the district council shall set a further date, not later than two months after the first specified date, on which the table of fares shall come into force with or without modifications as decided by them after consideration of the objections.

(5) A table of fares made or varied under this section shall have effect for the purposes of the Act of 1847 as if it were included in hackney carriage byelaws made thereunder.

(6) On the coming into operation of a table of fares made by a council under this section for the district, any hackney carriage byelaws fixing the rates and fares or any table of fares previously made under this section for the district, as the case may be, shall cease to have effect.

Request to Increase the Tariff of charges

21. Nationally, South Ribble BC currently sit 198 least expensive out 359 councils recorded in the table of most expensive fares within the country. These figures are based on a cost of a 2-mile journey on the lowest tariff.

22. A link to the current nation table of fares can be found by following link - <https://www.phtm.co.uk/newspaper/taxi-fares-league-tables>

23. A comparison of other local authorities.

- 1) Fylde £6.70
- 2) Blackburn £6.30
- 3) **SOUTH RIBBLE £6.30**
- 4) Chorley £6.20

- 5) Preston £6.00
- 6) Blackpool £6.00
- 7) Lancaster £6.00
- 8) Wyre £5.80
- 9) Ribble valley £5.30
- 10) Bolton £5.20

24. A written request has been received from “The Hackney Drivers Association Ltd” for an increase in the tariff of charges set by this authority.
25. This request can be found in the form of a letter from The Hackney Drivers Association Ltd attached to the report as appendix A.
26. The council did increase the fare card on 1st April 2022, but since then various factors have changed and the written requests asks the committee to take into account economic factors such as the sudden significant increase in fuel since the last taxi tariff increase and continuous increases in the cost of living.
27. The current tariff card can be found attached to the report as Appendix B
28. The letter requests the following increases to its tariff,

| Current Tariff Charges | New Proposed Charge |
|---|---|
| Tariff 1 For the first two tenths of a mile – £2.70 For each succeeding tenth of a mile - £0.20 | Tariff 1 For the first two tenths of a mile – £3.00 For each succeeding tenth of a mile - £0.25 |
| Tariff 2 For the first two tenths of a mile - £3.50 For each succeeding tenth of a mile - £0.25 | Tariff 2 For the first two tenths of a mile - £3.50 For each succeeding tenth of a mile - £0.30 |
| Tariff 3 For the first two tenths of a mile - £4.50 For each succeeding tenth of a mile - £0.35 | Tariff 3 For the first two tenths of a mile - £4.50 For each succeeding tenth of a mile - £0.40 |

29. All other charges within the current tariff card to remain the same.

Climate change and air quality

30. The work noted in this report does not impact the climate change and sustainability targets of the Councils Green Agenda and all environmental considerations are in place.

Equality and diversity

31. South Ribble Borough Council is responsible for the licensing of hackney carriage and private hire vehicles, drivers and operators.

32. This policy applies to all regardless of gender, age, disability, religious belief, race or ethnic minority or sexual orientation. No overall impacts have been identified across the equality strands within this report.
33. The increase is a request from the trade itself, any increase would include all drivers.

Risk

34. This has been addressed in the body of the report.

Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

35. There are no direct financial implications of this report to the Council. The fees sit outside the Council's fees and charges income as they do not come to the authority.

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

36. As set out in the body of the report, Section 65(1) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, sets out that a district council 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 or with the arrangements for the hire of the vehicle, to be paid in respect of the hire of hackney carriages by means of a table of fares made or varied in accordance with provisions of this section.
37. Section 65(2a) of the Act states that when a district council make or vary a table of fares they shall publish, in at least one local newspaper circulating in the district, a notice setting out the table of fares, or variation thereof, and specifying the period, which shall not be less than 14 days from the date of the first publication of the notice, within which, and the manner in which, objections to the table of fares or variations can be made. There is also a requirement under section 65(2b) of the same Act for the same notice to be displayed at the council offices.
38. If no objection to a table of fares or variation is duly made within the period specified in the notice, or if all objections so made are withdrawn, the table of fares or variation shall come into operation on the date of the expiration of the period specified in the notice or the date of withdrawal of the objection or, if more than one, of the last objection, whichever date is the later.
39. If objection is duly made as aforesaid and is not withdrawn, the district council shall set a further date, not later than two months after the first specified date, on which the table of fares shall come into force with or without modifications as decided by them after consideration of the objections.
40. On the coming into operation of a table of fares made by a council under this section for the district, any Hackney Carriage table of fares previously made under this section for the district shall cease to have effect.

Background documents -There are no background papers to this report

Appendices

Appendix A – Written request from The Hackney Drivers Association Ltd

Appendix B – Current Table of Fares

| Report Author: | Email: | Telephone: | Date: |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|------------|
| Chris Ward (Licensing Manager) | christopher.ward@southribble.gov.uk | 01772 625330 | 23/08/2022 |