
VARIATION TO HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARES

**Responsible Cabinet Member(s) - Councillor Stephen Harker,
Consumer and Environmental Services Portfolio**

Responsible Director(s) - John Buxton, Director of Development and Environment

Purpose of Report

1. To recommend the revision of the tariff of fares.

Information and Analysis

2. A letter has been received from a member of the taxi trade requesting an increase in the hackney carriage fare tariff. A copy of the letter is attached at **Appendix A**.
3. Section 65 of the local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 states:

(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 the 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 specify 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the period specified in the notice referred to in subsection (2) of this section, or if all objections so made are withdrawn, the table of fares or variation shall come into operation on the date of the expiration of the period specified in the notice or the date of withdrawal of the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 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(4) If objection is duly made as aforesaid and is not withdrawn, the District Council shall set a further date, not later than two months after the first specified date, on which the table of fares shall come into force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 there under.

(6) On the coming into operation of the table of fares made by a Council under this section for the district, any hackney carriage byelaws fixing 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.

(7) Section 236(8) (except the words "when confirmed") and Section 238 of the Local Government Act 1972 (except paragraphs (c) and (d) of that section) shall extend and apply to a table of fares made or varied under this section as they apply to byelaws made by a District Council.

4. The tariff of fares was last varied in November 2000. The trade have stated that since that date there has been a significant increase in the cost of fuel, insurance and associated costs.
5. A letter of consultation has been sent out to all 200 proprietors of hackney carriage vehicles. The consultation letter informed proprietors that if they did not reply the Council would assume that they were in favour of the fare increase.
6. The table below gives the existing charge and the proposed increase. The fares have been worked out to reflect the first mile and following subsequent mile.

TARIFF	EXISTING First Mile	PROPOSED First Mile	EXISTING Subsequent Mile	PROPOSED Subsequent Mile
1 (06:00 to 23:00)	£2.96	£3.08	£1.20	£1.32
Charge for waiting time to be increased from 12p for 36sec to 12p for 30sec				
2 (23:00 to 06:00) and the 24 hours of all public holidays other than those included in tariff 3	£3.70	£3.85	£1.50	£1.65
Charge for Waiting time to be increased from 15p for 45sec to 15p for 30sec				
3 18:00 24th December to 06:00 27th December 18:00 31 December to 06:00 2nd January	£4.60	£4.80	£2.00	£2.20
Charge for Waiting time to be increased from 20p for 60sec to 20p for 30sec				

7. The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 dictates the period of time that should be taken for consultation and consideration of any objections. Members must consider the application before it in light of the objections received, as attached in **Appendix B**, and decide whether the Hackney Carriage Tariff should be varied as contained within this report.
8. In considering this application, members should take into account the following:-
 - (a) The hackney fare has not been increased since November 2000 and since that date the cost of fuel, insurance and associated costs have risen.
 - (b) An increase in the tariff will have an impact on the cost to passengers using hackney carriage vehicles.
 - (c) The impact of an increase to the public has to be balanced with need for the taxi trade to be able to make a living and to continue to both purchase new vehicles and maintain the current fleet.

Outcome of Consultation

- 9 The Council received seventeen replies to the consultation letter four of which were against the increase. The comments in favour of the increase are that the increase is long overdue and are needed in order to offset the cost of living. The comments in opposition to the increase are that the proposed change should be in relation to the flag start price. All comments made have been duplicated in the attached **Appendix B**.

Legal Implications

10. This report has been considered by the Borough Solicitor for legal implications in accordance with the Council's approved procedures. There are no issues which the Borough Solicitor considers need to be brought to the specific attention of Members, other than those highlighted in the report.

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

11. The contents of this report have been considered in the context of the requirements placed on the Council by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, namely, the duty on the Council to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area. It is not considered that the contents of this report have any such effect.

Council Policy Framework

12. The issues contained within this report do not represent change to Council policy or the Council's policy framework.

Decision Deadline

13. The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 dictates the period of time that should be taken for consultation and consideration of any objections. Any increase in the tariff should therefore take effect from 4th July 2005.

Key Decisions

14. The variation to hackney carriage fares is a key decision as it directly impacts upon the hackney carriage and private hire drivers licensed by the Council.

Recommendation

15. It is recommended that hackney carriage fares tariff be varied as follows:
 - (a) Tariff 1 (06:00 to 23:00) first 320 yards £2.00 for each additional 160 yards 12p
Charge for waiting time to be increased from 12p for 36 seconds to 12p for 30seconds
 - (b) Tariff 2 (23:00 to 06:00hrs) and the 24hours of all public holidays other than those included in tariff 3. First 320 yards £2.50 for each additional 160 yards 15p
Charge for waiting time to be increased from 15p for 45 seconds to 15p for 30seconds
 - (c) Tariff 3 18:00 hrs 24 December to 06:00 hrs 27 December and 18:00 hrs 31 December to 06:00 hrs 2 January First 320 yards £3.00 for each additional 160 yards 20p
Charge for waiting time to be increased from 20p for 60 seconds to 20p for 30seconds

Reasons

16. In considering this application, Members should take into account the following reasons:
 - (a) The hackney fare has not been increased since November 2000 and since that date the cost of fuel, insurance and associated costs have risen.
 - (b) The impact of an increase to the public has to be balanced with need for the taxi trade to be able to make a living and to continue to both purchase new vehicles and maintain the current fleet.

John Buxton
Director of Development and Environment

Background Papers

Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976

Appendices

- A Letter from a member of the taxi trade dated 14 March 2005
- B Consultation Replies (undated)

Ann Marku : Extension 388559

Comments By Persons In Agreement With The Increase:

Gavin Ellis - 1 ABC Taxis

“Whilst agreeing that the trade does need an increase to offset the cost of living, higher insurance costs plus idiotic draconian measures fetched in by Darlington Borough Council ie The DSA Tests surely it would make more common sense if each tariff began at a round figure and ticked over at a round figure for instance tariff 1 beginning at £3 and going up 20p instead of £2.96 or £3.08. This would make the meters easier to be calibrated.”

Wayne Buckle – Independent

"Its been long overdue for a fare increase. I Wayne Buckle totally agree with the tariff increase.

Comments By Persons Opposed To The Increase:

Mr D Bingham

“I think it is wrong for taxi companies to dictate meter prices as most of their fares are pre-booked fixed fares off the meter. It should also be 1 proprietor 1 vote not how many vehicles he or she owns. That's not democracy and the Council should understand this.”

Rory Stein - DTOA

I would like to propose a change in the flag start price only to leave the yards alone

Tariff 1	£3	First Mile	£3.96
Tariff 2	£3:50	First Mile	£4.70
Tariff 3	£4:00	First Mile	£5.60

Paul M Scott - Independent

"I do not agree with the proposed increase and believe the flag drops should be increased by 10% as well

Tariff 1	£2.20
Tariff 2	£2.75
Tariff 3	£3.30

To give an overall increase across the board with the proposed 11 clicks per mile of 10% Also all the waiting time periods should be set on 36 seconds.

Eric D Grunblat – Blackwell Cars

Diesel has now risen above the 90p per litre mark and has in many places reached 92p. This represents a 20% increase in the last 12 months. I also noted that in your proposal, you have made no change to the waiting time. On today’s congested roads, a considerable amount of time is spent stationary or, at best, moving slowly, that out turnover is limited to £12.00 per hour.

During discussions I had with Barry Pearson, last year, I understood that he thought a more substantial increase would be appropriate and that he wanted to see Tariff 2 increased to tariff 1 plus 50% and that Tariff 3 would be scrapped. My own feelings are that there should be an increase in our flagfall to £3.00 and that waiting time should be nearer £18.00 per hour. It would also make our jobs easier if fares were set in units of 20p