

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Sachin Mathur (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Juliet Barker Smith, Brandon Clayton, Matthew Dormer, Sharon Harvey, Sid Khan, Gary Slim, Jen Snape and Monica Stringfellow

Also Present:

Mr P Bladon

Officers:

Vanessa Brown, Michelle James (Of Worcestershire Regulatory Services)

Democratic Services Officers:

Gavin Day

45. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors David Munro and Paul Wren.

46. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

47. PUBLIC SPEAKING

At the invitation of the Chair, Mr P. Bladon addressed the Licensing Committee, to speak in objection to the variation for the Table of Fares for Hackney Carriages. Mr Bladon had raised an objection to the use of imperial units being shown on the table of fares and had stated that he strongly believed that the tariffs, as detailed on Appendix 1 to the report, should only be given in metric units.

48. HACKNEY CARRIAGE TABLE OF FARES - REQUEST FOR VARIATION CONSIDERATION OF OBJECTION RECEIVED

The Interim Principal Licensing Officer, Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS), presented the report to Members. The purpose of the report was to consider an objection to the proposed increase in the hackney Carriage table of fares.

Chair

Officers detailed that the objector did not raise an objection to the increase in the table of fares and their objection was in relation to the use of imperial units in the table. However, legislation stipulated that any objection to the proposed table, which included the layout, must come to Committee to be considered.

The Measurements regulations 1995 stated as an exemption under section 5(2), that for road signs, distance, and speed measurement, miles and yards remained the lawful unit of measurement. Officers further stated that as a taximeter measured by distance and time it would fall within that exemption and therefore the lawful unit of measurement would be Miles and Yards. Additionally, it was noted that in the UK, odometers measured in Miles and therefore, would be the most easily understood measurement by passengers who may also be drivers.

Officers noted that for matters relating the Taxi Licencing Law, Mr James T H Button was acknowledged as an expert on Hackney Carriage Licencing. Mr Button in his publication "Button on Taxi's: Licensing Law and Practice" stated that taxi fares should be in Miles and Yards, however, it was permissible to include the metric equivalent also.

Therefore, to assist those more familiar with metric measurements, the table of fares detailed both metric and imperial systems and it would be up to the reader to determine which they wished to use to calculate the Fare.

Officers stated that licencing policy had to support the trade and general public, and that as the wider traveling community were more familiar with Miles, it was the stance of Officers that the table of fares should be presented primarily in Miles/yards, this was noted as consistent with the majority of authorities around the country.

After questions from Members, the following was clarified by Officers:

- There was no requirement to present the table of fares in a specific way, with different authorities choosing different ways to measure how fares are calculated and presented. Some Metric, some imperial with a few other systems noted such as the time in the vehicle travelling.
- Although the information was displayed for both imperial and metric, the taximeter would continue to measure the fare in Miles/Yards.
- All Hackney Carriage vehicles must display the tables of fares chart for customers to see, which contained both metric and imperial measurements.

Members stated that when the metric system was adopted, the decision was taken not to change the unit of measurement on the roads due to the Cost, Public understanding and the disruption it would cause. Therefore, the majority of people would be more familiar with Miles, therefore, it would be unfair to those not familiar with metric measurements to suddenly change the system.

Members further noted that a credible reason was not given as to why the table should be changed. As the vast majority of the traveling public and trade were more familiar with imperial measurements and given the cost that would be required to change, Members saw no compelling reason to change the system. However, Members were in support of the use of both metric and imperial measurements to be displayed.

On being put to a vote it was:

RESOLVED that

the table of fares, as detailed at Appendix 1 to the report, be brought into force (without modification) with effect from 1st June 2024.

49. WORK PROGRAMME

No amendments or additions to the work programme were raised.

50. MINUTES

The minutes of the Licensing Committee meetings of 18th Mar 2025 and 8th April 2025 were presented to Members.

RESOLVED that

The minutes of the Licensing Committee meetings held on 18th Mar 2025 and 8th April 2025 were approved as true and accurate records and signed by the Chair.

51. OFFICER UPDATE(S) - ENFORCEMENT AND APPEAL MATTERS

The Legal advisor for the committee detailed to members that a recent taxi appeal which was due to take place in the Magistrates Court had been deferred for a second time due to the court running out of time to hear the case.