

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

**LICENSING
COMMITTEE**

4th November 2019

HACKNEY CARRIAGE TABLE OF FARES

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Grubb
Portfolio Holder Consulted	No
Relevant Head of Service	Simon Wilkes – Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services
Wards Affected	All Wards
Ward Councillor Consulted	N/A
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

The Council has responsibility under 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. It is good practise to review the table of fares on a regular basis.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Licensing Committee note the contents of the report and that no further action is required at the present time.

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1 The costs of advertising any proposed variations to the table of fares for hackney carriages would be met from existing budgets held by Worcestershire Regulatory Services.

Legal Implications

- 3.2 Section 65 (1) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 states 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 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.

- 3.3 Section 65(2) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 goes on to state:
- 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.
- 3.4 If no objection to a table of fares or variation is duly made within the period specified in the notice referred to in section 65 (2), 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.
- 3.5 If objections are made and are not withdrawn, the district council must 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.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.6 The Council has responsibility under 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.
- 3.7 Hackney Carriage ("Taxi") fares are made up of an initial hiring charge and a "mileage" rate, both of which are expressed 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.

- 3.8 The table of fares applies only to hackney carriage vehicles. Private hire operators are free to agree their hiring charges in advance with their customers, normally at the time of booking the journey.
- 3.9 The current table of fares can be seen at **Appendix 1**. The current table of fares was approved by the Licensing Committee at its meeting in November 2018 took effect on 16th November 2018.
- 3.10 Prior to table of fares approved in November 2018, the Council's table of fares for hackney carriages had not been amended since 2011, which represented a significant period without any increase to take account of inflation and other relevant cost rises for hackney carriage drivers and proprietors.
- 3.11 Partly for this reason, hackney carriage fares in Redditch were the lowest in Worcestershire and also considerably lower than those payable in other nearby areas including Sandwell, Dudley, Warwick, Stratford-on-Avon, Solihull and Birmingham.
- 3.12 Representatives of the hackney carriage trade in Redditch had requested an increase in the table of fares to address this. The increase originally requested would have seen fares increase in price by between 10% and 15% depending on the time and day of travel.
- 3.13 The increases in the table of fares approved in November 2018 were not as high as originally requested by representatives of the hackney carriage trade in Redditch. This was because whilst Members recognised that hackney carriages fares were significantly lower in Redditch than other districts nearby, they had concerns about increasing fares suddenly in one go and preferred to see a more gradual increase.
- 3.14 Members expressed the view that the table of fares should be regularly reviewed to avoid a situation where a large increase is requested following several years without a review having taken place.
- 3.15 Therefore, as the table of fares has now been in place for one year, Redditch Taxi Association have been approached by officers to see if they would like to request any further increase in the table of fares.
- 3.16 The Chairman of Redditch Taxi Association has confirmed that they do not wish to request any further increase in the table of fares at the present time.

- 3.17 Officers therefore recommend that Members note that this matter has been reviewed and that no further action is required at the present time.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 None

5. APPENDICES

- 5.1 None

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