

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO AND DECISION OF LICENSING COMMITTEE ON 10 DECEMBER 2021

SUBJECT: Review of the fare structure for hackney carriages after consultation

REPORT AUTHOR: Glenn James, Licensing Officer

DATE: 22 November 2021

EXTN: 01903 737681

AREA: Place

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The fares charged to customers using Hackney Carriages (Taxis) are reviewed and set each year. This report provides information to be considered for the setting of fares for the period of 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. It is requested that a recommendation is made to Full Council to set taxi fares to be effective 1 April 2022.

It is recommended that Full Council delegate the matter of fare setting to the Licensing Committee.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

To recommend to Full Council to agree the fare structure of no increase for 2022/23, as advertised. The fare structure shall come into effect 1 April 2022.

To recommend to Full Council that the approval of taxi fares is delegated to the Licensing Committee.

1. BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 Each year hackney carriage licence holders are consulted regarding the fares charged to customers. The fare structure is advertised in a local newspaper, inviting comments for a period of fourteen days.
- 1.2 After the consultation period has ended the proposal and any comments that have been received are brought to the committee for final agreement. If objections to the proposed fares are received and are not withdrawn, the committee shall set a further date, not later than two months after the first specified date (in this case 1st April 2022) on which the table of fares shall come in to force with or without modifications after consideration of the objections.

- 1.3 If no objections are received and the committee does not make any modifications, the fare structure comes into effect on 1st April 2022.
- 1.4 This year officers consulted with members of the taxi trade by email, asking for their comments regarding the taxi fares. A total of 261 drivers were consulted. 16 responses asked for no increase; 12 responses asked for an increase but no amount of was suggested; 8 responses requested an increase with a suggested amount of increase provided.
- 1.5 The last increase in the fares was in April 2021 when it was agreed 20p would be added to the first mile and 20p added to each subsequent mile. These increases equate to £4.50 for the first mile and £2.50 for each subsequent mile. 42 drivers recalibrated the taxi meter to the increased fares therefore the majority of drivers were continuing to operate on previous tariffs.
- 1.6 Officers have monitored fuel prices throughout the year and there has been a steady increase from April 2021. Having taken into consideration the increase in fuel, officers have proposed no increase of the fares for the period 2022/23.
- 1.7 The proposed fare structure was advertised in a local newspaper, circulating in the district, for a period of not less than 14 days. Any comments or objections received will be circulated at the meeting.
- 1.8 If members are minded to agree any modifications to the proposed fare structure, they may decide a new date, not later than two months after the originally proposed date, this being 1st April 2022, when the modified fares will take effect.
- 1.9 If no objections or modifications to the fees are agreed the proposed fees will take effect from 1st April 2022.
- 1.10 If diesel prices reach the trigger level of £1.50/ltr for a period of one month, then the fare would increase by 10p on the first and subsequent miles until March 2023. To avoid any delay, it was appropriate to advertise that part of the proposed fees at the same time as the normal fees.
- 1.11 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 section 65
- (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 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 fare or variations 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 latter.

(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 purpose 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.

(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.

1.12 It is recommended that the Licensing Committee recommend to Full Council that future matters in relation to fare setting are delegated to the Licensing Committee. To do so in accordance with the new Committees structure, a constitutional amendment is required.

2. PROPOSAL(S):

2.1 To recommend to Full Council to agree the fare structure of no increase for 2022/23, as advertised. The fare structure shall come into effect 1st April 2022.

2.2 To recommend to Full Council that the approval of taxi fares is delegated to the Licensing Committee.

3. OPTIONS:

3.1 To alter the fare structure, giving full details of any modification to the fare structure and set a date when the modified fare structure comes into effect. This shall not be later than 2 months after 1st April 2022.

4. CONSULTATION:		
Has consultation been undertaken with:	YES	NO
Relevant Town/Parish Council		✓
Relevant District Ward Councillors		✓
Other groups/persons (please specify) The taxi trade has been consulted with. This exercise is undertaken on an annual basis.	✓	
5. ARE THERE ANY IMPLICATIONS IN RELATION TO THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL POLICIES: (Explain in more detail at 6 below)		
Financial		✓
Legal	✓	
Human Rights/Equality Impact Assessment		✓
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act		✓
Sustainability		✓
Asset Management/Property/Land		✓
Technology		✓
Other (please explain)		✓
6. IMPLICATIONS:		
The authority should consider and set fares to ensure that a suitable maximum amount is set for charges to be made to the travelling public.		

7. REASON FOR THE DECISION:
 To discharge responsibilities in accordance with Section 65 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:
 Responses to trade consultation.