

Report of	Meeting	Date	Item no
Mark Broadhurst, Service Director Health and Wellbeing	Licensing Committee	27 September 2018	5

APPLICATION FOR THE VARIATION OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARES

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide Members of the Licensing Committee with information to assist them at a hearing to consider a proposal from the Wyre Hackney Carriage (Taxis) Association for a variation in the maximum fares which may be charged by hackney carriages licensed by Wyre Council.

2. Outcomes

- 2.1 To recommend to Cabinet any amendments to the table of fares for Wyre licensed hackney carriages.

3. Recommendation

- 3.1 That Members reconsider the table of fares for hackney carriages within the Borough in the light of the proposal from the Wyre Hackney Carriage Association for a variation in the maximum scale of charges.

4. Background

- 4.1 The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 allows district councils to fix the maximum rates of fares for hackney carriage journeys (but not for private hire vehicles which are determined by market forces). No time period however is set for the review of such fares.
- 4.2 The last variation, resulting in an increase in the tariff, was approved by the Licensing Committee in March 2011 and implemented on 20 April that year. It was for an average increase of 5.09% (tariff 1) and 4.65% (tariff 2). A copy of the current table of fares for Wyre is attached at **Appendix 1**.
- 4.3 The provision of taxis is an integral part of the transport infrastructure and is particularly influential in the transportation of individuals late at night when bus services have ceased. The provision of affordable taxis assist in community

safety by ensuring people are removed from town centres safely and helps to reduce the incidence of drink driving.

- 4.4** Hackney carriages are a vital form of transport for the disabled who may have difficulties accessing other forms of public transport. It is important therefore that fares are maintained at a level which will encourage investment in DDA compliant and low emission vehicles yet remain affordable to disabled people.

5. Key Issues and Proposals

- 5.1** On 19 July 2018 the recently reformed Wyre Hackney Carriage Association, representing the five hackney carriage companies and independent hackney proprietors, submitted a proposal to vary the tariff for hackney carriage journeys in the Borough and vary the start time for tariff 2 from Monday to Thursday and separately on a Friday. A copy of their proposal is attached at Appendix 2.
- 5.2** The proposal consists of five options, the first two of the options are for varying the start time of tariff 2 and the other three options are for varying the yardages of tariffs 1 and 2 and if implemented will have the following effects on the existing tariffs:-

1) Option 1 is to change the start time of tariff 2 from 11:00pm to 10:00pm for hiring's on Monday to Thursday inclusive. This option is considered by the taxi trade as not to affect daytime shoppers during the week.
2) Option 2 is to change the start time of tariff 2 from 10:00pm to 8:00pm for hiring's on a Friday. This option is to realise a slightly higher earning potential on Friday's only.
The following three options affect the base distance travelled and flag fall distances. Of these options only 1 (or none) could be accepted (the metric conversions to metres are approximate):
3) Option 3 - Tariff 1: Decrease the base yardage from 505yds to 450yds (461.77m to 411.48m) and decrease the flag fall yardage from 210yds to 180yds (192.02 to 164.59m). Tariff 2: Decrease the base yardage from 400yds to 375yds (365.76m to 342.90m) and decrease the flag fall yardage from 160yds to 140yds (146.30 to 128.02m).
4) Option 4 - Tariff 1: Decrease the base yardage from 505yds to 475yds (461.77m to 434.34m) and decrease the flag fall yardage from 210yds to 190yds (192.02 to 173.74m). Tariff 2: Decrease the base yardage from 400yds to 380yds (365.76m to 347.47m) and decrease the flag fall yardage from 160yds to 145yds (146.30 to 132.59m).
5) Option 5 - Tariff 1: Decrease the base yardage from 505yds to 490yds (461.77m to 448.06m) and decrease the flag fall yardage from 210yds to 145yds (192.02 to 132.59m). Tariff 2: Decrease the base yardage from 400yds to 390yds (365.76m to 356.62m) and decrease the flag fall yardage from 160yds to 150yds (146.30 to 137.16m).

5.3 Members will notice that within the proposal there is the potential to be selective around which of the options they approve, or alternatively, Members may consider rejecting the entire proposal.

5.4 An analysis of the cost of journeys under the current tariff 1 and what they would cost with the percentage increase if one of the Association's proposals were approved is attached as Appendix 3 (options 3, 4 and 5). Tariff 1 is the weekday tariff operating from Monday to Friday with Tariff 2 operating during the evening, weekends and Bank Holidays. Tariff comparisons are normally based within the trade on a distance of 2 miles at tariff 1.

Current fare	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
£5.60	£6.20 + 10.71%	£6.00 + 7.14%	£5.80 + 3.57%

5.5 Appendix 4 shows the comparison of tariff tables of fares for neighbouring councils, over a set distance of 2 miles on tariff 1 and including their recent variations. These figures are confirmed in the national Private Hire & Taxi Monthly magazine issued during September 2018:

Fylde - increased 1st February 2018 - £6.10

Blackpool - increased July 2018 - £5.80

Lancaster - increased 1st July 2017 - £5.60

Preston - increased 2017 - £6.00

5.6 Members are now asked to consider the tariff variation proposal from the Wyre Hackney Carriage association and agree their recommendation to the Cabinet.

5.7 Following the decision of Cabinet, the Council must advertise its intention to vary the table of fares in accordance with the provisions contained in section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, which require:

(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.

Financial and legal implications	
Finance	There are no direct financial implications for the Council in setting the fares for hackney carriages, excepting the statutory advertising cost in a local newspaper.
Legal	The power to set the fares for hackney carriages is contained in section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. No such powers exist for the regulation of private hire fares.

Other risks/implications: checklist

If there are significant implications arising from this report on any issues marked with a ✓ below, the report author will have consulted with the appropriate specialist officers on those implications and addressed them in the body of the report. There are no significant implications arising directly from this report for those issues marked with an X.

risks/implications	✓ / x
community safety	✓
equality and diversity	✓
sustainability	x
health and safety	x

risks/implications	✓ / x
asset management	x
climate change	x
data protection	x

Report Author	Telephone no	email	date
David Parry	887225	david.parry@wyre.gov.uk	13/09/2018

List of background papers		
Name of document	date	where available for inspection
Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy	V05 1 April 2018	Licensing Section

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1	Current Wyre table of tariffs
Appendix 2	Wyre Hackney Owners Association variation request
Appendix 3	Comparison of proposed Wyre journey costs on tariff 1 and 2
Appendix 4	Comparison of costs of neighbouring boroughs