

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO LICENSING COMMITTEE

DECISION

meeting date: TUESDAY, 6 SEPTEMBER 2022
title: HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARES
submitted by: CHIEF EXECUTIVE
principal author: STEPHEN BARKER, SOLICITOR

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To seek Committee's views about whether Hackney Carriage fares should be reviewed.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities

- Community Objectives -
- Corporate Priorities -
- Other Considerations -

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Hackney Carriage fares were set by Committee on 10 August 2006 and last reviewed in 2017. Those fares are set out in Appendix 1 to this report.

2.3 The mechanism for setting fares for Hackney Carriages is set out in the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, section 65. This section provides that a district Council may:

- fix the rates or fares within its district as well for time as for distance; and
- fix all other charges in connection with the hire of a vehicle or with the arrangements for the hire of a vehicle.

2.4 When a district council wishes to vary the table of fares, it must publish, in at least one local newspaper circulating in the district, a notice setting out the table of fares and the period (which shall not be less than 14 days from the first publication of the notice) within which, and the manner in which, objections to the proposed table of fares can be made. A copy of the notice has to be deposited at the Council offices and available for inspection at all reasonable hours for a period of 14 days from the date of first publication. If no objection is received, or all objections are withdrawn, the new table of fares comes into operation on the date of expiration of the period specified in the notice, or the date of withdrawal of the objection, whichever is the later. In the event that an objection is received, a further report would be brought to Committee, setting out details of the objection.

2.8 Once the fares are set, it is an offence under section 58 of the Town Police Clauses Act (TPCA) 1847 to charge more than the fare shown on the meter, plus any legitimate extras.

2.9 Section 54 of the TPCA allows agreement to be made in advance of hiring a Hackney Carriage that a sum less than that shown at the end of the hiring will be paid, and once

such an agreement has been made it is an offence for the driver to demand more than was agreed in advance.

3 ISSUES

3.1 Committee will appreciate that fares and charges have not been increased for 16 years. Hackney Carriage drivers have been content with this, as fares remained competitive with the level of charges for private hire vehicles. However, in the course of 2022, the costs of providing the service have increased significantly due to a number of factors including, in particular, the cost of fuel. It should be noted that the average price of fuel at present (based on government statistics is £1.71.14 (unleaded) and £1.82.92 (diesel), compared to 95.74p (unleaded) and 97.93p (diesel) in 2006. This is placing considerable economic pressure on the Hackney Carriage licence holders and whilst the increase in fees will also have an impact on the public, it is considered proper that the fares are increased given the substantial length of time since they were set. The proposed increase has been set at a rate which will reflect the increase in costs to drivers but not impact too heavily on the public. The increase in the cost of valeting a vehicle is based on the actual current cost of this to licence holders. It is recommended that fares and charges should be increased as set out in Appendix 1.

3.4 It is proposed that the matter be discussed at the annual taxi meeting scheduled for 21 September 2022, which will allow the licence holders the opportunity to present any consultation responses they wish before the end of the relevant period. It is also proposed that the fares should be reviewed annually going forward.

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications

- Resources }
 - Technical, Environmental and Legal }
 - Political }
 - Reputation }
 - Equality & Diversity }
- The Council has a duty to provide an effective system of Hackney Carriage Licensing and review of the fares contributes to the process. Costs for advertising etc will be met from existing budgets.

5 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

5.1 Approve the proposed fares set out in Appendix 1 to this report.

5.2 Authorise the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to advertise the proposed table of fare as required by legislation.

STEPHEN BARKER
SOLICITOR

MARSHAL SCOTT
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

For further information please ask for Stephen Barker, extension 3216.