

1. **REPORT TITLE** **Hackney Carriage Tariff**
- Submitted by:** **(Democratic Services Manager)**
- Portfolio:** **(Safer Communities)**
- Ward(s) affected:** **(All)**

Purpose of the Report

To inform Cabinet of a request from the Chairman of the Hackney Carriage Association to change the commencement time of tariff 2 and to request that Cabinet make a decision on whether to implement the requested change.

Recommendations

That Cabinet consider the request from the Chair of the Hackney Carriage Association.

Reasons

The setting of the tariff is a function of the Cabinet.

1. **Background**

The tariffs (or fares) that are charged by Hackney Carriages can only be increased or altered with the approval of the Cabinet. The Chairman of the Hackney Carriage Association has submitted a formal request (attached) that the time at which tariff 2 commences, which is currently midnight, be changed to commence at 22.00 hrs.

The current tariffs are as follows:

Tariff 1		Tariff 2	
If the distance does not exceed 780 yards	£2.20	For hirings begun after midnight but before 06.00am	£3.00
For each subsequent 140 yards or part thereof	10p	For each subsequent 160 yards or part thereof	15p

The proposed tariffs are:

Tariff 1		Tariff 2	
If the distance does not exceed 780 yards	£2.20	For hirings begun after 22.00 but before 06.00am	£3.00
For each subsequent 140 yards or part thereof	10p	For each subsequent 160 yards or part thereof	15p

2. Issues

- i. The requested change to the tariff was considered by the Public Protection Committee on 3rd November 2015. The Public Protection Committee was not in agreement with the requested amendments to the tariff for the following reasons:
 - a) Concerns that the increase in tariff would discourage people from coming into the Town Centre and that there could be a detrimental impact to the night time economy of the Town Centre.
 - b) That the increase could deter people from using the hackney carriages.
 - c) That people visiting the cinema or the New Vic Theatre where performances were finishing after 22.00 would be adversely affected.
 - d) That there could be a detrimental impact on students at Keele who use hackney carriages.

In favour of the proposals there was also a comment that the increase could lead to people leaving home earlier and therefore spending more time in the Town Centre.

The Committee voted to reject the requested increase.

- ii. Following the meeting of the Public Protection Committee the Chair of the Hackney Carriage Association has put forward the following points in favour of the proposed increase.
- iii. **Reasons for the requested increase as put forward by the Chair of the Hackney Carriage Association**
 - a. Should there not be an increase in tariff 2 the trade would look to increase the basic tariff 1 rate which they consider would have more of a detrimental impact on the town centre, specifically their more elderly customers.
 - b. There has been no increase in the basic tariff for approximately 7 years.
 - c. There has been a large increase in the number of hackney carriage vehicles from around 60 to 220 since the Council deregulated the number in August 2012.
 - d. Clubs are now only opening until 2am when they used to remain open until 3am.
 - e. The cost of maintaining the hackney carriages has increase since the Council agreed to extend the permitted age limit of the vehicles only if they can be proven to be in exceptional condition.
 - f. The move of the taxi rank from Hassel Street to the lower end of the High Street has had a detrimental impact on trade.
- iv. The Chair of the Hackney Carriage Association has requested that he be permitted to address the Committee in order to answer any questions that Members may have.
- v. Should the Cabinet agree to the proposed increase, a notice must be published in a local newspaper, stating the proposed fares or the variation to the fares.
- vi. This notice must specify a date, not less than 14 days from the date on which the notice is first published. That date has two functions:

- (a) it is the date by which any objections must be lodged; and
 - (b) it is the date on which the revised fares will come into effect if either -
 - (i) no objections are received; or
 - (ii) any objections received have been withdrawn before that specified date.
- vii. The notice must also state where objections should be addressed and how they can be made.
- viii. A copy of the notice must be available to the council offices for inspection, free of charge, 'at all reasonable hours' (LG(MP)A 1976, S65(1)(b)).
- ix. Once the objection period (usually 14 days) has expired, if there have been no objections received or those received have subsequently been withdrawn, then the new fares take effect, either at the end of the objection period or when the last objection is withdrawn (LG(MP)A 1976 s65(3)).

However, if objections are made and are not withdrawn, then the Cabinet must consider the objections.

In the light of those objections (although it must consider them, cabinet does not have to vary the proposed fare as a result of them), a second date must be set, which cannot be more than two months after the first date specified, when the new fares come into force.

3. **Options Considered**

- a) That the proposed increase in the hackney carriage tariff from 22.00 be implemented.
- b) That the proposed increase in the hackney carriage tariff from 22.00 be rejected.

4. **Proposal**

That Cabinet consider the above options.

6. **Outcomes Linked to Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Priorities**

- *creating a cleaner, safer and sustainable Borough*
- *creating a Borough of opportunity*

7. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 allows the Council to set the maximum costs and fares that drivers may charge the public for journeys taken in a taxi. In this context "the Council" means the Executive by virtue of The Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 (as amended).

8. **Financial and Resource Implications**

The possible detrimental effect on the night time economy of the Town Centre as considered by the Public Protection Committee.

9. **Major Risks**

The possible detrimental effect on the night time economy of the Town Centre as considered by the Public Protection Committee.

Possible safety issues if people choose not to use hackney carriages.

10. **Key Decision Information**

This is a key decision as it will impact on more than 2 wards in the Borough.

11. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

Recommendation from the Public Protection Committee on 3rd November 2015.

12. **List of Appendices**

- A. Letter from the Chair of the Hackney Carriage Associations.
- B. Current table of tariffs.
- C. Tariff Sheet for Stoke on Trent City Council