



LICENSING COMMITTEE
Monday, 17 October 2022

Subject	Proposed Taxi Fare Increase
Report by	Councillor Mary Rudd – Cabinet Member for Community Health
Supporting Officer	Martin Clarke Licensing Manager and Housing Lead Lawyer 01502 523226 Martin.clarke@eastsuffolk.gov.uk

Is the report Open or Exempt?	OPEN
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Category of Exempt Information and reason why it is NOT in the public interest to disclose the exempt information.	Not applicable
Wards Affected:	All Wards

Purpose and high-level overview

Purpose of Report:

For the Licensing Committee to consider objections and comments received following a consultation regarding the proposed increase to the hackney carriage fares tariff in the North of the East Suffolk district.

Options:

- 1) To consider the objections and make no modifications to the proposed increase to the hackney carriage fare tariff for the North of the district.
- 2) To consider the objections and make modifications to the proposed increase to the hackney carriage fare tariff for the North of the district.

Recommendation/s:

That the Committee considers the objections, determines whether to make any modifications to the proposed hackney carriage fares tariff for the North of the district and sets a date when the new fares will come into force.

Corporate Impact Assessment

Governance:

Licensing is a Council function exercised by Licensing Committee and Licensing Sub-Committees.

ESC policies and strategies that directly apply to the proposal:

Hackney carriage and private hire licensing policy

Environmental:

No impact

Equalities and Diversity:

No impact

Financial:

No impact

Human Resources:

No impact

ICT:

No impact

Legal:

No impact

Risk:

No impact

External Consultees:

Licensed Hackney Carriage Drivers within East Suffolk.
Members of the public.

Strategic Plan Priorities

Select the priorities of the Strategic Plan which are supported by this proposal: (Select only one primary and as many secondary as appropriate)		Primary priority	Secondary priorities
T01	Growing our Economy		
P01	Build the right environment for East Suffolk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P02	Attract and stimulate inward investment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P03	Maximise and grow the unique selling points of East Suffolk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P04	Business partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P05	Support and deliver infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
T02	Enabling our Communities		
P06	Community Partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P07	Taking positive action on what matters most	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P08	Maximising health, well-being and safety in our District	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P09	Community Pride	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T03	Maintaining Financial Sustainability		
P10	Organisational design and streamlining services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P11	Making best use of and investing in our assets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P12	Being commercially astute	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P13	Optimising our financial investments and grant opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P14	Review service delivery with partners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T04	Delivering Digital Transformation		
P15	Digital by default	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P16	Lean and efficient streamlined services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P17	Effective use of data	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P18	Skills and training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P19	District-wide digital infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T05	Caring for our Environment		
P20	Lead by example	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P21	Minimise waste, reuse materials, increase recycling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P22	Renewable energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P23	Protection, education and influence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
XXX	Governance		
XXX	How ESC governs itself as an authority	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How does this proposal support the priorities selected?			

Licensing plays an important role in the themes in the Council's Strategic Plan of growing our economy and enabling our community's Hackney carriage (and private hire vehicles) are a key part of the public transport system, enabling people without their own private transport or without easy access to other means of public transport to travel for education, employment, and entertainment, to shop and to attend medical appointments or deliver/receive care.

Background and Justification for Recommendation

1 Background facts	
1.1	<p>The Council is responsible for licensing hackney carriage and private hire drivers and vehicles, and private hire operators. It has the power to set and vary fares for hackney carriages under section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.</p> <p>Section 55 of the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 prohibits the driver of a hackney carriage from charging more than the set fare.</p>
1.2	<p>On 1 August 2022, the Licensing Committee approved the new fares proposed by a group of licensed hackney carriage drivers. The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 provides that the proposed new fares are published, and objections invited.</p>
1.3	<p>The notices were published in two local newspapers on 12 August 2022 and were displayed for a period of 14 days at the Council's offices. All licensed hackney carriage drivers in East Suffolk were sent a letter. The consultation ended on 26 August 2022.</p> <p>Two objections were received.</p> <p>One comment was received from a Private Hire Operator regarding the calculation of the initial waiting time. It would appear that the proposal submitted by the group of hackney carriage drivers did not include a correct calculation for the initial waiting time and this had gone unnoticed at the last Licensing Committee meeting.</p> <p>The initial waiting time, as stated in the proposal, would have caused a negative effect for passengers as it would have meant that the meter would have dropped to the next payment quicker than it should have done. The time difference is only a matter of a few seconds but nonetheless, the Licensing Authority should ensure that the fare calculations are fair to both drivers and passengers. There is a set calculation that Licensing Authorities should use to</p>

	<p>determine time and distance and this is what agents for meter companies use to calculate and calibrate their meters.</p> <p>This calculation has now been used and has been checked by an independent meter agent. The amended initial waiting time is included in the proposed tariff fare table attached as Appendix A.</p> <p>The two objections and the comment regarding the initial waiting time are attached as Appendix B.</p>
1.4	<p>Section 65 (4) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 provides that the district council must consider any objections, if they are not withdrawn, and 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 after consideration of the objections.</p> <p>The first specified date was 26 August 2022 as indicated by the public notice placed in two local newspapers and the Council's offices on 12 August 2022.</p> <p>The adjustment to the initial waiting time must be added to any new fare tariff table since this was an error.</p> <p>The two objections should be considered by the Licensing Committee.</p>

2 Current position

2.1	The current North fare tariff table is attached as Appendix C .
2.2	<p>On 1 August 2022, the Licensing Committee approved the new fares proposed by a group of licensed hackney carriage drivers subject to the removal of the luggage charge.</p> <p>The proposed new tariff fare table is attached as Appendix A.</p>
2.3	Two objections have been received regarding the proposed tariff increase.
2.4	One comment was received regarding the initial waiting time on Tariffs 1, 2 and 3 being incorrect.

3 How to address current situation

3.1	The Licensing Committee will need to consider the two objections and decide whether to make any modifications to the proposed North fare tariff table which was published on 12 August 2022.
3.2	The adjustment to the initial waiting time must be added to any new fare tariff table since this was an error.

4 Reason/s for recommendation	
4.1	To determine whether any modifications should be made to the proposed hackney carriage fares tariff as approved on 1 August 2022 and published on 12 August 2022.
4.2	To comply with the requirements to determine applications for an increase in a fare tariff in accordance with the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

Appendices

Appendices:	
Appendix A	Proposed new North fare tariff table – approved 1 August 2022 (with amended initial waiting times)
Appendix B	Two objections and one comment regarding the proposed North fare increase.
Appendix C	Current North fare tariff table