

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To consider a request from the Aylesbury Hackney Carriage Association for a variation in the tariff of fares.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Principal Licensing Officer be authorised to conduct the statutory consultation in accordance with Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 in respect to the proposed new tariff as set out in Appendix 2 to this report
- 2.2 That, if no objections are received, the Principal Licensing Officer to progress the adoption of the new tariff for the rural zone in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Environment and Living who will make the final decision on adoption.
- 2.3 That, if any objections are received and not withdrawn, they are reported to this Committee for further consideration.

3 Supporting information

- 3.1 The present tariff for hackney carriage fares in respect of taxis operating in Aylesbury Town were last reviewed in April 2010. The fares in respect of rural hackney carriages, i.e. those operating outside of Aylesbury Town, were reviewed in November 2016. The current fares in respect of both categories of hackney carriage are shown in Appendix 1.
- 3.2 Local authorities have the power to set fares for hackney carriages under section 65 of the Local government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. In varying the fares the Council must publish in at least one local newspaper the proposed tariff for a period of not less than 14 days and invite objections. A copy of the notice shall also be available for inspection at the council offices.
- 3.3 The Aylesbury Carriage Taxi Association, which represents the taxi drivers operating in Aylesbury Town, has proposed a new tariff on behalf of their members as shown in Appendix 2. The Aylesbury Town taxis are purpose built wheelchair access taxis that are permitted to ply for hire and operate from ranks in the Aylesbury town centre. In accordance with the Council's significant unmet demand policy these taxis are limited to a maximum of 50. There has been no request from the rural taxis to have their current fare levels reviewed.
- 3.4 With year on year increases in insurance and fuel, the association are requesting this increase to off-set some of their losses. Within the proposed new structure, the basic fare (tariff 1) for the first 3/4 of a mile will remain unchanged at £3.00. It is then proposed that the fare be charged at 10p per 1/16 of a mile (110 yards), which represents a 23% increase from the current rate of 10p per 1/13 of a mile. Beyond 5 miles the proposed fares will remain the same at 10p per 1/16 of a mile. The proposed waiting time tariff is amended from 40 second intervals to 30 second intervals. For journeys involving 5 or more passengers it is proposed the next highest tariff is used; the current tariff arrangements include an additional flat charge for additional passengers however it is reported by drivers that this leads to disputes with customers who mistakenly believe they are being overcharged when the additional charge is added to the meter at the end of the journey.

- 3.5 Additional tariffs reflecting an increase in fares according to the circumstances as described is then proposed. Tariff 2 applies to journeys between 11pm and 6am, bank holidays and Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve after 6pm. Tariff 3 applies to Boxing day and New Year's Day. Tariff 4 applies to Christmas Day. The current fare for additional luggage has been removed and a new 'soiling' charge has been included.
- 3.6 Finally reference to fares for journeys outside the district and the payment of booking fees has been included. For journeys ending outside the District hackney carriage drivers do not need to comply with the approved fares (i.e. use the meter) providing the fare is agreed with the customer in advance, otherwise the meter must be used. Hackney carriages used for private hire work can not charge more than equivalent maximum on the approved table of fares. Furthermore the fare can only be charged from the point the journey starts, i.e. no fare can be charged for travelling to the pick up point (Section 67, LGMPA 1976). However a booking fee can be charged, providing it is included in the approved table of fares.
- 3.7 It is important to note that even with proposed increase in fares Aylesbury Vale would continue to present one the cheapest fares for an average 2 mile journey when compared to the tariffs of other authorities. Appendix 3 shows a current tariff comparison for a two mile journey by local authority area. A 2 mile journey on tariff 1 of the proposed new fares would equate to £5.00, which would place Aylesbury 316 lowest out of 358 listed.
- 3.8 Once agreed, the new tariffs are calibrated on to the taxi meter, which automatically calculates the fare depending on the journey distance, time of day and other criteria indicated. The meter is "calendar controlled" which ensures that the tariff is set within the meter itself and cannot be altered by the driver. The hackney carriage proprietors have discretion to charge less than is displayed on the meter but are not permitted to charge more.

4 Options considered

- 4.1 No other options considered.

5 Reasons for Recommendation

- 5.1 The rise in tariffs is requested by the Aylesbury Hackney Carriage Association which represents the taxis operating within the Aylesbury Town area. The fares have not been revised for a considerable time and an increase is needed to reflect the increase in running costs. Even allowing for the proposed increase, Aylesbury will continue to offer one of the lowest tariffs in the Country.

6 Resource implications

- 6.1 There are financial implications in placing an advert in a local paper. This additional cost be considered when the next licence fee review takes place.

Contact Officer	Simon Gallacher Ext 5083
Background Documents	None