



**SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL
LICENSING COMMITTEE**

Report of: Chief Licensing Officer

Date: 29th January 2013

Subject: Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing

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Business and Strategy, Place Portfolio

Summary: Report – Hackney Carriages Fares Review –
(Determination of Fares)

Category of Report: OPEN

**Report of the Chief Licensing Officer to the Licensing Sub Committee 29th
January 2013.**

Hackney Carriage Licensing – Hackney Carriage Fares review

1. Purpose

- 1.1 At its meeting of 18th October 2005, the Licensing Board agreed a Policy to review Hackney Carriage fares on an annual basis.
- 1.2 This item was deferred from a previous meeting of the Licensing Sub Committee held in November 2012 this was to allow the Trade Association to submit quantifying information in respect of their requests.

2. Legal requirements

- 2.1 Section 60(1) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 "The City Council may fix rates or fares within the district as well for time as distance, and all other charges in connection with the hire of the hackney carriages by means of a table made or varied in accordance with the provisions of this section".
- 2.2 There is no legal requirement that the Council must fix fares but it has long been the practice in Sheffield that it does so.

Many of the current byelaws relating to Hackney Carriages are based on the fact that the Council does fix the maximum fares.
- 2.3 Where the Council does elect to fix fares it can from time to time vary those fares. The practice in Sheffield has been to review fares at the request of the recognised trade Sheffield Taxi Trades Association (STTA) only. Although it would be possible for individuals who are affected or aggrieved to request changes to fares structures and policies.
- 2.4 Section 60(2) Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

(a) "When a district Council make or vary a table of fares they shall publish in at least one local newspaper circulating the district a notice setting out the table of fares or the variation thereof and specifying the period, which shall not be less than 14 days from the date of the first publication of the notice, within 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 a period of 14 days from the date of first publication thereof be deposited at the offices of the Council which published the notice, and shall be at reasonable hours be open to the public inspection without payment.

2.5 Section 60(3) Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

"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 variations will come into operation on the date of the expiration of the period specified in the notice or the date of the withdrawal of the objection or, if more than one, of the last objection, which ever date is the later."

2.6 Section 60(4) Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

"If an 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."

3. Background

3.1 The Trade association were asked to submit further information as to the request they had made, this was to include details of how much per mile at the current charges were profit/wage for a driver and how much made up of costs for a driver. Any information supplied is attached at appendix A of this report.

4.0 Consultation

4.1 Representatives of the trade associations have been invited to attend this meeting. There has been no consultation meeting held since the original hearing date for this review.

4.2 If changes are made to the fares the Council has a legal obligation to advertise this to allow for objections to the changes. See section 2.5 This open meeting and the advertisement is the only Public/User consultation that takes place when these matters are discussed.

4.3 If objections were received the Council would have to reconvene the Licensing Sub Committee to consider the objection see section 2.6

4.4 Any changes then would come into effect from a future date stated at the objection hearing.

5 Options

5.1 The options available to the Committee are wide ranging from leaving the fares as they are and review again in 12 months time.

5.2 The Committee may implement any change to the hackney carriages fares without any requests.

5.3 The Committee may implement an increase or decrease in Hackney Carriage fares.

- 5.4 Licensing Committee may consider allowing a % of fare costs to cover the costs of charges to drivers and allow the growth in the use of cards for payments. Suggestions are a maximum of 10% of any fare would easily cover the costs of administration and charges.
- 5.5 The Committee could make changes to the fares to allow for a more open and easily understandable fares structure with the introduction of new fares and using a more user friendly yardage calculation than in previous years. Examples of these options are detailed in the presentation by officers.
- 5.6 Determine that the current fares structure is appropriate and not increase the fares.
- 5.7 Determine that the current fares are too high or too low and decrease or increase the fares as appropriate.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 That members consider the information available and any submissions made and determine whether to take any action in relation to Hackney Carriage Fares.
- 6.2 That member's delegate authority to the Chief Licensing Officer to take the necessary steps to implement the decision reached. If an increase or decrease in fares is implemented, this will include the preparation of a fares table (which will include metric equivalents of distances) and the advertisement of the proposed increase.
- 6.3 There is a legal requirement to advertise any changes to Hackney Carriage in the Local Press giving an opportunity for objections to be raised to the changes, in writing within 14 days of the date of the advert.
- 6.4 The Chief Licensing Officer is required to report back to the Committee any objections to the proposed increase/decrease that are received.
- 6.5 Implementation date for changes would be beyond the 14 days after the advert had been placed and only if there had been no objections received.

7 Financial implications

- 7.1 There are no financial implications for the Council in this proposal except for the costs of advertising in the local press of any increase/decrease (previous cost approx £2700).

29th January 2013

Steve Lonnia
Chief Licensing Officer.
Head of Licensing

Rec 27/12/12



11th December 2012

To whom it may concern

Over the last few years, taxi insurance has increased dramatically. Below is a guide as to how much taxi insurance policies have risen, over the last 3 years:

2009 – 2010 15% Increase
2010 – 2011 25% Increase
2011 – 2012 20% Increase

The rise is due to the fact that many underwriters have pulled out of the market. This reduces the number of underwriters who are offering taxi insurance. Henceforth, this reduces competition within the market. This leaves the few underwriters who are selling taxi insurance, to dictate the terms, conditions & prices.

Yours Sincerely

S Ullah
Manager



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