



Borough of Telford and Wrekin

Cabinet

22 September 2022

Hackney Carriage Fares and Charges

Cabinet Member:	Cllr Richard Overton - Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member: Housing, Enforcement and Transport	
Lead Director:	Dean Sargeant - Director: Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services	
Service Area:	Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services	
Report Author:	Anita Hunt – Public Protection Group Manager	
Officer Contact Details:	Tel: 01952 380733	Email: anita.hunt@telford.gov.uk
Wards Affected:	All Wards	
Key Decision:	Non-Key Decision	
Forward Plan:	N/A	
Report considered by:	SMT - 23 August 2022	

1.0 Recommendations for decision:

- 1.1 Cabinet approves the advertising of the proposed hackney carriage fares and charges.
- 1.2 Cabinet delegates authority to the Director of Neighbourhood & Enforcement, in consultation with the Chair of Licensing Committee, to take all necessary steps to undertake any consultation and introduce any revised fares and charges structure.
- 1.3 Cabinet delegates, authority to the Licensing Committee to undertake any future reviews, amendments and implementation of revised hackney carriage fares and charges.

2.0 Purpose of Report

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- 2.1 The purpose of this report is for Cabinet to approve the consultation of the proposed hackney carriage fares and charges while delegating authority to the Director of Neighbourhood & Enforcement, in consultation with the Chair of Licensing Committee, to implement such amendments.
- 2.2 In addition, the paper seeks delegation to Licensing Committee to consider future requests and take all necessary steps to modify hackney carriage fares and charges whether an increase or decrease.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 There are currently 21 hackney carriages licensed in the Borough. Unlike private hire vehicles, hackney carriages can be hailed or flagged down anywhere. While limited in number, and traditionally more costly than private hire vehicles, they do play an important part in the borough's transport network providing an on demand transport service for those who need it.
- 3.2 In March 2022, the council received requests from its licensed hackney carriage drivers to review and increase the current hackney carriage fares and charges. The last request and review of fares and charges was undertaken in 2011.
- 3.3 In response to the request, the council invited hackney carriage proprietors to propose a revised set of fares and charges. This has been considered and has informed the revised fares and charges structure that requires formal consultation. The proposed fares and charges are attached at Appendix A.
- 3.4 If Cabinet approves the recommendation to consult on the proposed amendments, the revised fares and charges will be advertised for 14 days. If adopted following that period, each vehicle will have a recalibrated meter tested by the council.

4.0 Summary of main proposals

- 4.1 The hackney carriage fares and charges have not been reviewed since 2011. With the significant increase in operating costs alongside the cost of living crisis, the council has received requests from the licensed hackney carriage trade to review the current fares and charges.
- 4.2 The Council has considered the increased cost of fuel as well as the overall rise in the cost of living as part of this review. The proposed changes strike a balance between supporting vehicle proprietors in managing the financial challenges and those who utilise this mode of transport.
- 4.3 Aside from the private car, the Borough benefits from a variety of travel modes which includes bus, train cycling and walking. The council continues to invest in infrastructure upgrades including cycle/walking, such as the Silkin Way, and is currently securing operators to provide new bus routes across the borough which includes a new 'Work Express'. This new service will provide dedicated and

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affordable transport from residential areas such as Sutton Hill, Brookside, Woodside to Halesfield, Hortonwood and Stafford Park employment sites.

5.0 Alternative Options

- 5.1 In reviewing the hackney carriage fares and charges the council has considered both operating costs and those who use this mode of transport as part of a wider transport network.
- 5.2 The current fares and charges could remain unchanged however, there is a risk that this could see a reduction in the number of licensed hackney carriages in the Borough. In-turn, this would have further impacts on those who use this mode of transport and place further pressure on the limited number already operating.
- 5.3 Fares and charges could be increased further than what is proposed however, this will impact on users at a financially challenging time. Furthermore fares and charges could be decreased however this would add further financial challenges to the sector.

6.0 Key Risks

- 6.1 The majority of licensed hackney carriage vehicles in the Borough are solely owned by a proprietor which is their main income stream. Therefore, no change in fares and charges could lead to a reduction in number of hackney carriages licensed within the borough which is already very limited in supply.
- 6.2 An increase in fares could place further pressure on residents against a backdrop of the national cost of living crisis.

7.0 Council Priorities

- 7.1 This proposal supports the following priorities:
 - Every child, young person and adult lives well in their community;
 - All neighbourhoods are a great place to live

8.0 Financial Implications

- 8.1 The fares and charges are income to the vehicle proprietors. The Council will meet the cost of associated activities that arise from a change in fares and charges, such as advertising from existing budgets. The Council does receive licensing income from Hackney Carriages.

9.0 Legal Implications

- 9.1 In accordance with the Local Government (Miscellaneous) Provisions Act 1976 (the Act) the Council may fix rates or fares for the hire of a Hackney Carriage which operates within the administrative area of the Council.

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9.2 Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 provides that a Council may fix the rates or fares and all other charges in connection with the hire or arrangement for hire of a hackney carriage vehicle.

9.3 Any policy change in the fares and charges carries inherent financial risk to the council in the event of a legal challenge. However, this has been mitigated through the completion of an informal consultation and a further 14 day statutory public consultation.

10.0 Ward Implications

10.1 This proposal covers the whole Borough with all wards being affected.

11.0 Health, Social and Economic Implications

11.1 An increase in hackney carriage fares and charges will have some economic benefit to 21 hackney carriage operators in the borough to offset the continued rise in operating costs.

11.2 However, it is acknowledged that an increase in fares could impact on the community alongside the general increase in the cost of living. This is mitigated in part through the council's continued investment in infrastructure and the emerging network improvements to bus services such as the Work Express. These interventions provide alternative transport options alongside hackney carriages.

12.0 Equality and Diversity Implications

12.1 The rise in fares may have an impact on passengers who utilise hackney carriages.

12.2 The council continues to invest in the highway network to provide a safe and accessible transport system; this is alongside investment into improvements in the bus network to provide efficient and affordable transport particularly linking residential areas to our employment sites.

13.0 Climate Change and Environmental Implications

13.1 There are no immediate or anticipated climate or environmental implications associated with revising the Hackney Carriage fares and charges.

14.0 Background Papers

None

15.0 Appendices

A Current and Proposed Fares and Charges

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16.0 Report Sign Off

Signed off by	Date sent	Date signed off	Initials
Finance	17/08/2022	19/08/2022	PT
Legal	17/08/2022	19/08/2022	AL
Director	17/08/2022	19/08/2022	DS