



Democratic and Member Support

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TAXI LICENSING COMMITTEE

Thursday 13 July 2017
10.00 am
Council House, Plymouth

Members:

Councillor Kelly, Chair
Councillor K Foster, Vice Chair
Councillors Bowie, Carson, Mavin, Rennie and Singh.

Members are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business overleaf.

For further information on webcasting, attending Council meetings and how to engage in the democratic process please follow this link <http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/accesstomeetings>

Tracey Lee
Chief Executive

Taxi Licensing Committee

AGENDA

1. Apologies

To receive apologies for non-attendance submitted by Committee Members.

2. Declarations of Interest

Members will be asked to make any declarations of interest in respect of items on this agenda.

3. Minutes

(Pages 1 - 4)

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2017.

4. Chair's Urgent Business

To receive reports on business which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be brought forward for urgent consideration.

5. Appeal Cases

The Committee will be provided with the results of the judgement on appeal cases that went to Court.

6. Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licence Fees

(Pages 5 - 14)

The Director of Public Health will submit a report on the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licence Fees.

7. Proposal for a Hackney Carriage Table of Fares Increase

(Pages 15 - 24)

The Director of Public Health will submit a report on the Proposal for a Hackney Carriage Table of Fares increase.

8. Exempt information

To consider passing a resolution under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the press and public from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that it (they) involve(s) the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph(s) 1, 2 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended by the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Part II (Private Meeting)

Agenda

Members of the public to note

that under the law, the committee is entitled to consider certain items in private. Members of the public will be asked to leave the meeting when such items are discussed.

9. Confidential minutes (Pages 25 - 30)

To confirm the confidential minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2017.

10. Application for the grant of a Hackney Carriage Driver's Licence - AIM (Pages 31 - 40)

The Director of Public Health will submit a report on an application for the grant of a Hackney Carriage Driver's Licence.

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Taxi Licensing Committee

Thursday 15 June 2017

PRESENT:

Councillor Kelly, in the Chair.
Councillor Foster, Vice Chair.
Councillors Bowie, Mavin, Rennie and Singh.

Apology for absence: Councillor Carson.

Also in attendance: Steve Forshaw (Senior Enforcement Officer), Andrea Gilbert (Lawyer),
(Helen Wright (Democratic Advisor).

The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 1.30 pm.

Note: At a future meeting, the committee will consider the accuracy of these draft minutes, so they may be subject to change. Please check the minutes of that meeting to confirm whether these minutes have been amended.

1. **To note the appointment of Chair and Vice Chair**

The Committee noted the appointment of Councillor Kelly as Chair and Councillor Foster as Vice Chair for the forthcoming municipal year 2017/18.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Bowie declared a personal interest in minute 10 and advised that she would leave the room when considering this matter.

3. **Minutes**

Agreed that the minutes of the meetings held on 27 April 2017 and 11 May 2017 are confirmed as a correct record.

4. **Chair's Urgent Business**

There were no items of Chair's urgent business.

5. **Appeal Cases**

The Committee was advised that there were two appeals scheduled to be heard in the near future.

6. **Schedule of Meetings for the Forthcoming Year**

The Committee wished to register its disappointment that the July meeting date had been changed without prior consultation following agreement of the calendar of meetings at the City Council meeting on 20 March 2017.

The Committee noted the schedule of meetings for the forthcoming municipal year 2017/18.

7. **Exempt information**

Agreed that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the press and public from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended by the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

8. **Confidential minutes**

Agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 27 April 2017 are confirmed as a correct record.

9. **Application for the Grant of a Private Hire Vehicle Driver Licence- AB**

The Committee –

- (a) considered the report from the Director of Public Health;
- (b) heard from AB and his non-legal representative;
- (c) took the above report and all that was said into consideration.

The Committee agreed to depart from its guidelines and grant AB's application for a Private Hire Driver's Licence with no requirement to complete any of the usual pre-requisites; the grant of this licence was however subject to the condition that AB attends a Child Sexual Exploitation and Adult Safeguarding Course within 12 months of the issue of this licence.

10. **Review Status of Hackney Carriage Driver Licence - MW**

The Committee –

- (a) considered the report from the Director of Public Health;
- (b) heard from MW and his non-legal representative;
- (c) took the above report and all that was said into consideration.

The Committee agreed that having taken the above into account, MW would be issued with a 28 day suspension to be taken consecutively and that he would be required to re-sit the vehicle safety module of the VRQ in 'Transporting Passengers by Taxi or Private Hire' or its equivalent and complete this on or before 27 September 2017. MW would also be required to attend a Child Sexual Exploitation and Adult Safeguarding course within 12 months.

(Councillors Mavin and Rennie voted against the decision to suspend the licence for 28 days).

(Please note: there is a confidential part to this minute)

11. **Review Status of Hackney Carriage Driver Licence - AM**

The Committee –

- (a) considered the report from the Director of Public Health;
- (b) heard from AM;
- (c) took the above report and all that was said into consideration.

The Committee agreed to issue AM with a warning which would lie on his file and in line with the Council's Taxi Licensing Policy he would be required to complete the VRQ driver qualification in 'Transporting Passengers by Taxi and Private Hire', or its equivalent, within 12 months; he would also be required to attend a Child Sexual Exploitation and Adult Safeguarding course within 12 months.

(Councillor Bowie returned for the remainder of the meeting and Councillor Foster left the meeting).

Councillor Singh was appointed as Vice Chair for the remainder of the meeting).

(Please note: there is a confidential part to this minute).

12. **Review Status of Hackney Carriage Driver Licence - AB**

The Committee –

- (a) considered the report from the Director of Public Health;
- (b) heard from AB;
- (c) took the above report and all that was said into consideration.

The Committee agreed that having taken the above into account; AB would be issued with a seven day suspension to be taken consecutively; he would also be required to re-sit the VRQ in 'Transporting Passengers by Taxi or Private Hire', or its equivalent and complete this within the next 12 months of the issue of this licence; he would also be required to attend a Child Sexual Exploitation and Adult Safeguarding course within the next 12 months.

(Please note: there is a confidential part to this minute)

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Plymouth City Council

Subject: Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licence Fees
Committee: Taxi Licensing Committee
Date: 13 July 2017
Cabinet Member: Councillor Riley
CMT Member: Ruth Harrell (Director of Public Health)
Author: Rachael Hind (Licensing Service Manager)
Contact: Tel: 01752 308794
e-mail: Rachael.hind@plymouth.gov.uk
Ref: RH/Fees 17/18
Key Decision: No
Part: I

Purpose of the report:

Plymouth City Council regulates the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire industry through the licensing framework set out in the Plymouth City Council Act 1975. Fees for licences should be set at a figure which will recover the full cost of the licensing administration including enforcement. The budgets for licensing are operated as two trading accounts, one for Private Hire and the other for Hackney Carriage.

A review of the current fees has been undertaken to balance the two trading accounts. A report outlining a new fees structure was considered at the Taxi Licensing Committee on 11 May 2017 and the Committee approved the advertisement of the proposed fees which was published in the Herald on Tuesday 23 May 2017. All taxi drivers, vehicle proprietors and operators were written to and provided with a copy of the fees notice and were given until 13 June 2017 to make objections.

Two objections were received (please see Appendix 2).

The Corporate Plan 2016 - 2019

This report links to the delivery of the City and Council priorities.

In particular:

Growing Plymouth: By economic prosperity through an efficient public transport network.

Caring Plymouth: Providing consumer confidence.

**Implications for Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:
Including finance, human, IT and land**

The Hackney Carriage and Private Hire accounts have been subject to periods of both excessive surplus and deficit over the last 10 years. However we are now starting to spend more than we recoup from the fees. As such the proposed fee increases as per Appendix I are projected to ensure both accounts are able to sustain their balances without going into significant deficit over the next few years.

Future annual reviews will ensure that any changes in projected income or expenditure are identified and appropriate action taken to adjust fee levels.

Both accounts are separate trading accounts and have no effect on general fund accounts.

Other Implications: e.g. Child Poverty, Community Safety, Health and Safety, Risk Management:

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 puts a statutory duty on every Local Authority to exercise its various functions with due regard to the need to do all that it reasonably can do to prevent crime and disorder in its area.

Lower income groups are a significant user of the hackney carriage and private hire trade. Increases in fee levels have an influence on fare levels. Fee levels should be reasonable so as not to adversely affect fares charged.

Equality and Diversity

Has an Equality Impact Assessment been undertaken? Yes

Recommendations and Reasons for recommended action:

The Committee resolve to:

Approve the new fee structure as set out in the Fees Table in Appendix I which is to commence on the 1st August 2017.

Reason

The fees need to be set at a level to ensure the accounts do not go into deficit. The Hackney Carriage taxi reserve account was in surplus by £61,831 and the Private Hire taxi reserve account in surplus by £113,570 as of the 7 March 2017 (forecast). However if the fees are not increased then the Hackney Carriage account surplus is predicted to fall to £29,696 by the start of 2018/19 and will be £3,384 in deficit by the start of 2019/20. The private hire account surplus is predicted to fall to £24,339 and will be in deficit by £66,518 at the start of 2019/20 if we do not increase the fees on an annual basis.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

Consideration was given to a larger increase in fees, however the proposed increases to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire account will achieve a surplus without causing hardship to the trade. If the fees are not increased then both accounts will be in deficit within three years and the fees will have to be increased significantly in later years to ensure the accounts balance.

Published work / information:

None.

Background papers:

Please refer to the original committee report which can be found at:

<http://web.plymouth.gov.uk/modgov?modgovlink=http%3A%2F%2Fdemocracy.plymouth.gov.uk%2FFileListDocuments.aspx%3FCId%3D566%26amp%3BMid%3D7674%26amp%3BVer%3D4>

Sign off:

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Originating SMT Member													
Has the Cabinet Member(s) agreed the contents of the report?													

Report

1.0 Background Information

A review of the current fees has been undertaken to ensure the two trading accounts do not go into deficit as the fees for licensing the trade should be set at a figure that will recover the full cost of the licensing administration.

At the Taxi Licensing Committee on 11 May 2017 the Committee approved the advertisement of the proposed fees with a period for responses of 21 days. The advertisement was published in the Herald on Tuesday 23 May 2017. All taxi drivers, vehicle proprietors and operators were written to and provided with a copy of the fees notice and were given until 13 June 2017 to make objections.

2.0 Legal Framework

- 2.1 The Council may make a charge for the grant of the licences for drivers of Hackney Carriages and Private Hire vehicles by virtue of Section 11(2) of the Plymouth City Council Act 1975; and for the grant of Vehicle and Operators' Licences under Section 28 of the Plymouth City Council Act 1975 (the Act). The fees must be considered reasonable with a view to recovering the costs of issue and administration (including compliance) of the licence. The fees must be advertised in accordance with the provisions of the Act and if any objections are received these must be considered by the Committee for a final decision to be taken as to whether the advertised fees will be modified in light of objections, or whether the fees will be implemented as advertised. The fee structure approved by the Committee would come into effect within two months from the closing date of the advertised consultation.

3.0 Objections

- 3.1 Two objections were received regarding the fees increase. Please see Appendix 2. The matters raised are discussed below.
- 3.2 The objections are regarding the amount of the increase and that the increase is not in line with inflation. The fees need to be increased by the amount proposed to ensure the accounts are kept out of deficit. The fees will have to be reviewed each year and increased accordingly. The fees have not been increased since 2012.

4.0 Fee Changes for 2017/18

4.1 Hackney Carriage Account

It is proposed that the Hackney carriage licence fees for drivers and vehicles are increased by 15%.

The account should retain an acceptable level of surplus in order to even out any major changes in expenditure or income from year to year. It was agreed at the Committee in 2015 that this balance should be in the region of a £50,000 surplus.

At the start of the 2017/18 financial year the account is predicted to be £61,831 in surplus, however by the start of 2018/19 financial year it is predicted to fall to £29,696 and will be £3,384 in deficit by the start of 2019/20 if we do not increase the fees.

As there had been a surplus for many years, the fees were significantly reduced in 2015. There is a need to increase the fees this year or the surplus be not be sufficient to prevent significant fee increases later on and to ensure we have a sufficient surplus to cover any unforeseen expenses. By increasing the fees by 15% this year we will be able to maintain a better surplus but these fees will have to be reviewed and increased on an annual basis.

The majority of fees are still lower than they were in 2014/15 and are lower than the majority of other councils in Devon – see appendix 3 for comparison table of other authority charges.

4.2 **Private Hire Account**

It is proposed that the private hire licence fees for drivers and vehicles are increased by 20%.

At the start of the 2017/18 financial year the account is predicted to be £113,570 in surplus, however by the start of 2018/19, it is predicted that this will fall to £24,339 (surplus) and will be in deficit by £66,518 at the start of 2019/20 if we do not increase fees on an annual basis.

There has been a reduction in new drivers. In 2015/16 there were 108 new Private Hire Drivers and seven new Hackney Carriage drivers. In 2016/17, there were only 59 new Private Hire Drivers and two new Hackney Carriage Drivers.

Therefore by increasing the fees by 20% this year and reviewing it each year, we would be in a better position in the next three years and this will prevent a huge hike in fees, especially if we continue to have a reduction in new drivers.

5.0 **Future Budget Risks and Management**

- 5.1 Further work will be ongoing this year to enable easier online applications. We have employed a temporary member of staff this year to assist with the officers to ensure the trade can obtain suitable appointments and a prompt turnaround of applications. It also ensures that general enquiries or drop-ins to the taxi office can be dealt with when the enforcement officers are out of the office. We will continue to monitor the activities and streamline our processes to reduce costs where possible.

6.0 **Conclusion**

- 6.1 The Committee members need to consider the objections and the effects on not increasing the fees on the trade accounts. If we do not increase the fees by the proposed amounts we will go into a larger deficit which may mean larger increases in future years.
- 6.2 The impact of fee changes will be reviewed annually and any necessary alterations will be approved as set out in the Council's scheme of delegation.

APPENDIX I

Proposed Fees for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licences 2017/18**Hackney Carriage Fees**

Licence	Proposed Fee
Vehicle Licence	£210.00
1 Year Drivers Licence	£112.00
3 Year Drivers Licence	£238.00
Duplicate Licence	£8.00
Vehicle Transfer	£30.00
Drivers Test	£85.00
Knowledge of Plymouth Test	£45.00
Driver Application Fee	£45.00
Replacement ID Card Fee	£10.00
Replacement Plate	£13.00
DVLA Licence Check	£18.00
Licence surrender and refund fee	£15.00
Temporary licence for replacement vehicle	£45.00
Change of vehicle registration number	£35.00

Private Hire Fees

Licence	Proposed Fee
Vehicle Licence	£117.00
1 Year Drivers Licence	82.00
3 Year Drivers Licence	£160.00
Duplicate Licence	£8.00
Vehicle Transfer	£30.00
Drivers Test	£85.00
Knowledge of Plymouth Test	£45.00
Driver Application Fee	£45.00
Operator Application Fee	£135.00
Operator Fee (per vehicle)	£3.80
Replacement ID Card Fee	£10.00
Replacement Plate	£13.00
Replacement Door Sticker	£5.00
DVLA Licence Check	£18.00
Licence surrender and refund fee	£15.00
Temporary licence for replacement vehicle	£45.00
Change of vehicle registration number	£35.00

APPENDIX 2: LETTERS OF OBJECTIONS

Objection number	Comments	Response from Licensing Manager
1	<p>I object to these proposed increases.</p> <p>I do understand that the increases are necessary but object to the amount of the increase. UK inflation is around 2.3% whereas your increases average out at over 20%. I believe this to be totally unacceptable.</p> <p>I would like to know your reasons for the increases and why it was decided to increase at such a high rate. Where is this money being spent, is it for licensing or being used in other areas?</p> <p>In your letter the first paragraph states this proposal yet in the very next paragraph it says fees will take effect on the 14 June 2017 – which of those statements is true?</p>	<p>The fees have not increased for many years and there is no longer a suitable level of surplus in the accounts. If we do not increase the fees our accounts will be in deficit in future years.</p> <p>The taxi accounts are operated as two trade accounts, one for Private Hire and the other for Hackney Carriage. They are ring fenced and the money is purely used for the administration and enforcement of taxi licensing. As it is a trade account, any surplus money is carried forward each year.</p> <p>Unfortunately we need to increase the fees as we are not recovering the full costs of the process with the current fees. Whilst 20% is a significant increase, Plymouth has one of the lowest licence fees for taxi drivers in the South West and will continue to do so even with the planned increases in our fees.</p> <p>The fees for the driver licences and vehicle licences for Hackney carriages have gone up by 15 per cent and private hire by 20 per cent. The rest of the charges have gone up based on cost recovery. We have not increased our taxi licencing fees since 2012.</p> <p>We are currently reviewing the way we operate by looking at putting applications online to save time and we will continue to make savings where we can, however the charges have to be increased to ensure we cover our costs.</p> <p>The full report that was discussed at the Licensing Committee on 11 May 2017 can be seen at http://web.plymouth.gov.uk/modgov?modgovlink=http%3A%2F%2Fdemocracy.plymouth.gov.uk%2FielistDocuments.aspx%3FCId%3D566%26amp%3BMid%3D7674%26amp%3BVer%3D4</p> <p>If there had been no objections then the fees would have taken effect on 14 June 2017. As we have received objections then unless the objections are withdrawn, a separate Committee hearing will be arranged so that the objections can be discussed. You will be invited to attend the committee hearing so that you can discuss your objections with the committee members.</p>
2	<p>I am writing to ask you not to increase the taxi fees.</p>	<p>As above.</p>

	<p>The increased prices are disproportionately high compared with taxi drivers' earnings and inflation.</p> <p>E.g. relicensing a private hire vehicle proposed rise from £97 to £117. The increase of £20 is about 10 times the rate of inflation. It can represent a morning's profit for a driver.</p> <p>My operator has not increased the dates for at least 18 months.</p> <p>To fund for the increase, drivers would need to overcharge passengers, accept lower earnings or work longer hours. This is unreasonable. Please do not increase the fees.</p>	
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APPENDIX 3: LOCAL AUTHORITY FEES COMPARISON TABLE

	Plymouth 2012 charges	Plymouth current	Plymouth proposed	Torbay	Cornwall	Exeter	East Devon	North Devon	Mid Devon	West Devon	South Hams
Hackney Carriage											
Vehicle Licence	318.75	182	210	175	235	340	262	204	194 (176 renewal)	117.6 (168 if non wheelchair accessible)	110 (228 if non wheelchair accessible)
1 Year Drivers Licence	164.1	97	112	186	122	99	104	138	122 (108 renewal)	101	135
3 Year Drivers Licence	354.9	206.5	238	287	205	235	229	301	249 (232 renewal)	272	360
Vehicle Transfer	27	27	30	79			80	no fee	24	50	50
Temporary Licence for replacement vehicle	39	39	45	79	92				75		
Replacement card	10	10	10		16				7	15	15
Duplicate licence	5	5	8		16			no fee			
Replacement plate	11	10	13		26		46	no fee	17	20	29
Private Hire											
Vehicle Licence	120	97	117	154	235	262.5	262	142	186 (176 renewal)	157.00 (or 109.90 wheelchair accessible)	100 (216 if non wheelchair accessible)
1 Year Drivers Licence	91.6	68.5	82	186	122	99	104	138	122 (108 renewal)	101	101
3 Year Drivers Licence	185	132.5	160	287	205	235	229	301	249 (232 renewal)	272	272
Vehicle Transfer	27	27	30	79	53		80	no fee	24	50	50
Temporary licence for replacement vehicle	39	39	45	79	92				75		
Duplicate licence	5	5	8		16			no fee		15	10
Replacement plate	11	11	13		26		46	no fee	17	20	29
Replacement card	10	10	10		16				7	15	10

Plymouth City Council

Subject:	Proposal for a Hackney Carriage Table of Fares Increase
Committee	Taxi Licensing Committee
Date:	13 July 2017
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Riley
CMT Member:	Ruth Harrell (Director of Public Health)
Author:	Graham Hooper (Senior Officer, Intelligence and Licensing)
Contact:	Tel: 01752 304533
e-mail:	graham.hooper@plymouth.gov.uk
Ref:	GHO/Tariff/2017
Key Decision:	No
Part:	I

Executive Summary

Under Section 23 of the Plymouth City Council Act 1975. Plymouth City Council (the Council) has the power, although not obliged, to set the maximum table of fares (Fares Tariff) for Taxis.

There have been discussions between officers and members of the Plymouth Licensed Taxi Association (PLTA) concerning proposals put forward by the PLTA for an increase in the Hackney Carriage Fares Tariff. This report outlines the proposed changes to the Tariff.

The Committee is asked whether or not to recommend the proposed variation of the fares for the hiring of Hackney Carriages within the City. In accordance with the Plymouth City Council Act 1975, any variations will need to be advertised and an opportunity given for objections to be made. Any objections must be duly considered, prior to coming into effect.

The Corporate Plan 2016 – 2019

This report links to the delivery of the City and Council priorities.

In particular:

Growing Plymouth: By economic prosperity through an efficient public transport network.
Caring Plymouth: Providing consumer confidence.

**Implications for Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:
Including finance, human, IT and land**

If the proposed Tariff change is agreed, there will be a cost to the Council in terms of giving public notice and printing new Fares Tariff cards, which would be met from the existing Hackney Carriage budget.

Additional costs of printing and signage at the Taxi ranks will also be met from the Hackney Carriage trade account

Vehicle proprietors would also need to have their meters re-Tariffed, which would carry a cost payable directly by them to a calibration company.

Other Implications: e.g. Child Poverty, Community Safety, Health and Safety, Risk Management:

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 puts a statutory duty on every Local Authority to exercise its various functions with due regard to the need to do all that it reasonably can do to prevent crime and disorder in its area.

Any increase in the Hackney Carriage Fares Tariff, may have an impact on the lowest income group using Hackney Carriage services, but this should be considered against the need for a Hackney Carriage proprietor or driver to be able to earn a living wage and allow for investment in replacement vehicles from the provision of those services.

Equality and Diversity

Has an Equality Impact Assessment been undertaken? Yes

Recommendations and Reasons for recommended action:

It is recommended that Members consider the information contained in this report and

1. Approve, or amend if necessary, the Hackney Carriage Table of Fares in Appendix 2 to this report, as proposed by officers, for the reasons given in this report.
2. That Members resolve to authorise the advertising of the Table of Fares agreed in recommendation 1 as required by the Plymouth City Council Act 1975, and to allow the Table of Fares to come into effect four weeks after the period allowed for objections should no objections be received.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

Not to approve a fare increase – There has been no Fares Tariff increase since 2011. Given the increase in the cost of living an increase at this time is reasonable.

Increase more than requested – The trade must balance any increase with any negative affect on Hackney Carriage usage by the public. Additionally any increase will affect low income earners as they form a significant user of Hackney Carriages.

Published work / information:

None.

Background papers:

None.

Sign off:

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Originating SMT Member													
Has the Cabinet Member(s) agreed the contents of the report?													

Report

1. The common term for Hackney Carriages is Taxis and this term is used in the report. A customer can flag down a Taxi in the street or at Taxi ranks without booking unlike private hire vehicles which must always be booked in advance of the journey.
2. Under section 23 (1) of the Plymouth City Council Act 1975 (PCCA 1975), the Council is responsible for setting the maximum fares and other costs that drivers may charge a customer for using Taxis in the City.

Members should note that drivers may charge a lower fare or offer a discount if they wish and negotiate fares for travel outside of the City boundaries.

The Council does not have powers to set fares for journeys in private hire vehicles.

3. The Fares Tariff should be set to enable:
 - Sustainable income for drivers
 - Future investment in vehicles
 - Clearly set rates that minimise the opportunity for over charging or confusion
4. A table of fares has to be displayed within all Taxis to allow passengers to calculate the approximate cost of their journey.
5. Section 23 of the PCCA 1975 prescribes the process for advertising and bringing into effect the table of fares after a fourteen day period permitted for the receipt of objections.
6. The PCCA 1975 also requires Taximeters to be fitted in every licensed vehicle. Once set, all drivers must display the maximum fare on their Taximeter. This ensures consistency across all Taxis and provides public confidence, which assists in meeting the growing and caring Plymouth corporate priorities.

Reason for Change

7. The Fares Tariff was last reviewed in September 2011 and since then has remained at the present level. Like many other business sectors, the Taxi trade is facing financial pressures in the current economic climate. Since the last review and particularly over the last 3 years the Retail Price Index (RPI), which represents the change in the cost of living, has steadily risen.
8. The Taxi trade, represented through the Plymouth Licensed Taxi Association (PLTA) at the quarterly liaison meeting with Council Taxi Licensing Officers requested that the maximum permitted fares chargeable by Taxis in Plymouth be varied and increased to take account of cost of living changes. The proposed variations are set out in the following sections.

Proposed Tariff Changes

- 9. The existing Table of Fares is set out in Appendix 1.
- 10. The PLTA suggested Table of Fares is set out in Appendix 2 and the proposed changes are summarised below.
- Consolidation of Fare Tariffs and reduction in number from 6 to 5.

The PLTA suggest removing Tariff 4 which applies on Sundays and Bank Holidays from midnight to 6 am. The day will remain divided into 3 bands further broken down by different days of the week, however would be consolidated over 5 Tariffs.

The suggested changes to the Tariff can be more easily understood in the following table where numbers 1-5 relate to Tariffs 1-5 respectively:

Table 1, Tariffs and Time Periods

Period	7am - 7pm	7pm - Midnight	Midnight – 7am
Weekdays (Mon-Sat)	1	2	3
Sunday	2	3	3
Bank Holidays	2	3	4
Christmas Eve	1	4	4
Christmas Day	5	5	5
Boxing Day	4	4	4
3 1st December	1	4	5
1st January	4	4	4

- Change of unit of distance measurement from yards to fraction of a mile

The suggested move from yardage to fraction of a mile will alter the respective distances that the Fares Tariff charges relate to, however this will allow passengers to more easily understand the distance travelled and calculate the approximate cost of their journey.

- Reduction of threshold of the fuel surcharge

The PLTA have requested that the fuel surcharge is to be added when fuel (Diesel) reaches £1.30 per litre at Exeter Street Service Station, currently set at £1.40. The additional 10 pence charge for each subsequent increase of 10 pence per litre will remain unchanged.

Members may consider whether the surcharge is likely to come into effect too soon given the frequent increase in fuel rises and therefore may wish to consider whether the existing higher fuel price should be retained. The price of fuel (Diesel) as of the 7th June 2017 at Exeter Street Service Station was 113.7p per litre.

11. There are no proposed changes for the following extra charges:

- Additional passengers (after the second)
- Entrance to MOD establishments, booking fee or from Plymouth Railway Station
- For each uncaged animal (except service dogs), and for any soiling of the vehicle, inside or out.
- Out of City charges.

Comparison with the National Average and Other Devon Authorities

12. In terms of the national context, as at June 2017, Plymouth was ranked 187 out of some 366 local authorities which regulate Taxi fares (Source Private Hire and Taxi Monthly – June 2017).
13. When comparing the cost to travel 2 miles for Fares Tariff 1 with the national average and other Devon authorities who regulate Taxi fares it can be seen that Plymouth, at £5.70 is slightly under the national average of £5.74 and that with Mid Devon, has the lowest fares in the County currently £0.49 under the Devon average as shown in Table 2 below:

Table 2, Comparison of costs to travel 2 miles on Fares Tariff 1

Devon Authority	Ranking	£ 2 mile (Tariff 1)	Proposed
Exeter C C	1	6.60	-
North Devon D C	2	6.55	-
Torbay	3	6.39	-
East Devon D C	4	6.30	-
Torrige	5	6.25	-
Teignbridge B C	6	6.20	-
South Hams D C	7	6.00	-
Mid Devon D C	8	5.70	-
Plymouth C C	9	5.70	6.00
Current Devon Average	-	6.19	-
National Average	-	5.74	-

14. Table 3 below shows the effect of the proposed rate increases on current Plymouth Fares for travelling 1 to 5 miles on Fares Tariff 1.

Table 3, Cost and Percentage increase per distance

Distance	Flag Rate (£)	Current (£)	Proposal (£)	% Increase
1 Mile	3.00	4.50	4.50	0
2 Mile	3.00	5.70	6.00	5.26
3 Mile	3.00	7.20	7.50	4.17
4 Mile	3.00	8.40	9.00	7.14
5 Mile	3.00	9.60	10.50	9.38

Conclusion

15. A balance needs to be struck between the legitimate right of the trade to a viable livelihood and the needs of the travelling public. However, like many other business sectors, the Taxi trade is facing financial pressures in the current economic climate and there has been no increase in Taxi fares since September 2011. There are, therefore, arguments to support the proposed fare increase.
16. The proposed Fares Tariff increase put forward would keep fares broadly in line with the national average and other Devon authorities and help to offset the rise in RPI over recent years.
17. The reduction of the number of Fares Tariff from 6 to 5 and the alteration of units of distance measurement from yards to fractions of a mile will provide a simplified more user friendly Table of Fares sheet to allow passengers to more easily calculate the approximate cost of their journey.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Members consider the information contained in this report and

1. Approve, or amend if necessary, the Table of Fares in Appendix 2 to this report, as proposed by officers, for the reasons given in this report.
- 2.. That Members resolve to authorise the advertising of the Table of Fares agreed in Recommendation 1 as required by the Plymouth City Council Act 1975, and to allow the Table of Fares to come into effect four weeks after the period allowed for objections should no objections be received.

Appendix I

Existing Tariff Table

HACKNEY CARRIAGE TABLE OF FARES



Made by virtue of Section 23 of the Plymouth City Council Act 1975

The driver must not refuse, without reasonable excuse, to take a hirer or would be hirer, to any place within the licensing district, Section 53, Town Police Clauses Act 1847.

Tariff One Applies on Monday to Saturday from 6am to 7pm

Tariff Two Applies on Monday to Saturday from 7pm to midnight, and Sundays and Bank Holidays from 6am to 7pm

Tariff Three Applies on Monday to Saturday from midnight to 6am, and Sundays and Bank Holidays from 7pm to midnight.

Tariff Four Applies on Sundays and Bank Holidays from midnight to 6am

Tariff Five Applies from 7pm on Christmas Eve to 6am on 27 December; and from 7pm to midnight on 31 December and from 6am on 1 January to 6am on 2 January.

Tariff Six Applies on New Years Day from midnight to 6am.

Distance	Tariff one	Tariff two	Tariff three	Tariff four	Tariff five	Tariff six
For any distance up to 200 yards	£3.00	£3.50	£4.00	£4.50	£4.50	£6.00
For the next 200 yards or part thereof	30p	30p	30p	30p	45p	60p
For each subsequent 400 yards or part thereof	30p	30p	30p	30p	45p	60p

Waiting time	Tariff one	Tariff two	Tariff three	Tariff four	Tariff five	Tariff six
For each completed period of 60 seconds		30p	30p	30p		
For each completed period of 90 seconds	30p				45p	60p

Extra charges

Each additional passenger after the second (accompanied children under the age of 3 are not charged, two children between 3 and 12 to be charged as one)	20p
Entrance to MOD establishments, booking fee, or from Plymouth Railway Station (subject to permit).	40p
For each uncaged animal (except working guide and hearing dogs)	30p
Fuel - to be added to each hiring if and when fuel oil is £1.40 at Exeter Street garage with a further 10p for each subsequent increase of 10p per litre	10p
For any soiling of the vehicle, inside or out	£50

Out of city and extended period hirings:

The fare for any hiring with a destination outside the licensing area can be negotiated with the driver **before the commencement of the journey** or run on the meter. Hirings may be undertaken without the use of the meter where there is a prior contract with a public authority or for a period in excess of one hour. Toll charges at current rate for return journey

GOOD OR BAD SERVICE?

Please let us know
by calling
01752 304141
or email
taxi.licensing@plymouth.gov.uk

Please ensure you have the vehicle licence number or driver badge number and quote the date and time.

Appendix 2

Proposed Tariff

HACKNEY CARRIAGE TABLE OF FARES



Made by virtue of Section 23 of the Plymouth City Council Act 1975

The driver must not refuse, without reasonable excuse, to take a hirer or would be hirer to any place within the licensing district, Section 53, Town and Police Clauses Act 1975

Applies to **ALL** journeys within the City boundary, and to journeys outside the City boundary unless agreed otherwise between driver and hirer, **PRIOR** to the hiring being commenced. Fares detailed below are the **MAXIMUM** fares that may be charged. Hiring's may be undertaken without the use of the meter where there is a prior contract with a public authority or for a period in excess of one hour. No other charges may be made.

- Tariff 1** Applies on Monday to Saturday from 7 am to 7 pm
- Tariff 2** Applies on Monday to Saturday from 7pm to Midnight, and Sundays/Bank Holidays from 7am to 7pm
- Tariff 3** Applies on Monday to Sunday from midnight to 7am and Sundays/Bank Holidays from 7pm to midnight
- Tariff 4** Applies from 7pm on Christmas Eve to 7am on Christmas Day, and from 7am on Boxing Day until 7am on 27 December, and from 7pm to midnight on 31 December and from 7am on New Year's day to 7 am on 2 January
- Tariff 5** Applies from 7am on Christmas Day until 7am on Boxing day, and on New Year's day from midnight until 7am

Distance	Tariff 1	Tariff 2	Tariff 3	Tariff 4	Tariff 5
For any distance up to one tenth of a mile	£3.00	£3.50	£4.00	£4.50	£6.00
For the next one tenth of a mile	£0.30	£0.30	£0.30	£0.45	£0.60
For each subsequent one fifth of a mile	£0.30	£0.30	£0.30	£0.45	£0.60

Waiting Time	Tariff 1	Tariff 2	Tariff 3	Tariff 4	Tariff 5
For each completed period of 60 seconds		30p	30p	45p	60p
For each completed period of 90 seconds	30p				

Extra Charges

- Each additional passenger after the second (accompanied children under the age of 3 are not charged, two children between 3 & 12 to be charged as one). **20p**
- Entrance to MOD establishments, booking fee, or from Plymouth Railway Station (subject to permit). **40p**
- For each uncaged animal except guide, hearing or other assistance dogs. **30p**
- Fuel - to be added to each hiring if and when fuel oil is £1.30 at Exeter Street service Station with a further 10p for each subsequent increase of 10p per litre. **10p**
- For any soiling of vehicle, inside or out **£50**
- Toll charges at current rate for return journey

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