

CITY OF PLYMOUTH

Subject: Proposal for a Hackney Carriage Tariff Increase

Committee: Licensing Committee (Hackney Carriage)

Date: 2 September 2011

Cabinet Member: Councillor Jordan

CMT Member: Director for Community Services

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Ref: ERS/LIC/AN/hct

Part: 1

Executive Summary:

There have been negotiations 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 tariff.

This report outlines the proposed changes to the tariff. The new tariff must be subject to a public notice in accordance with the Plymouth City Council Act 1975 prior to coming into effect.

Corporate Plan 2011-2014:

This report links to the delivery of the corporate improvement priorities, in particular:

- Delivering sustainable growth – The hackney carriage trade employ a significant number of people and support local businesses through their activity. Hackney carriages form part of the successful public transport system and visitor experience.
 - Providing more and better culture and leisure activities – Visitors views of the City may be influenced by a well presented vehicle or driver. These vehicles form as essential part of the public transport system.
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Implications for Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications: Including finance, human, IT and land

The costs of advertising and implementing the proposed increase, will met from the hackney carriage trade account.

Additional costs of printing and signage at the taxi ranks will also be met from the hackney carriage trade account

Other Implications: e.g. Section 17 of the Crime Disorder Act 1998, Community Safety, Health and Safety, Risk Management and Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion:

Any increase in the hackney carriage 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.

Recommendations & Reasons for recommended action:

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

1. Approve, or amended if necessary, the Hackney Carriage Tariff in Appendix 3 to this report, as proposed by officers, for the reasons given in this report.
2. That Members resolve to authorise the advertising of the Tariff agreed in recommendation 1 as required by the Plymouth City Council Act 1975, and to allow the Tariff to come into effect four weeks after the period allowed for objections should no objections be received.

Alternative options considered and reasons for recommended action:

Not to approve a fare increase – There has been no tariff increase, except a 10p fuel surcharge, since 2008. 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 taxi usage by the public. Additionally any increase will affect low income earners as they form a significant user of taxis.

Background papers:

None

Sign off:

Head of Fin	CoSF ED111 2 003	Head of Leg	AG/124 34/2.8.1 1	Head of HR		Head of AM		Head of IT		Head of Strat. Procur.
Originating CMF Member										

Report

1. The Hackney Carriage tariff of fares are fixed and from time to time amended by this Authority. The last increase was approved by this Committee on 16th June 2008. This has no effect on private hire charging which is not set by the Council. The current tariff is contained in Appendix 1
2. The power to enable the Council to fix the rates of fares for the hire of Hackney Carriages within the City is provided for in section 23(1) of the Plymouth City Council Act 1975.
3. The remainder of Section 23 of the Plymouth City Council Act is concerned with the advertising and bringing into effect the table of fares after the fourteen day period permitted for the receipt of objections. If objections are received and not withdrawn, Members after considering those objections can set a further date for implementation of the Tariff, either with or without modification.
4. The tariffs set by the Council are the maximum fares that can be charged. Drivers are able to request lower amounts and negotiate fares for travel outside of the City boundaries. The tariff table 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
5. The tariff table has to be displayed within all hackney carriage vehicles to allow passengers to calculate the approximate cost of their journey.

The Plymouth Licensed Taxi Association (PLTA) at their AGM on the 7th June 2011 agreed to request an increase to the current tariff. The PLTA suggested tariff is contained in Appendix 2.

6. As part of the tariff review the layout of the table has been reviewed. Appendix 2 contains a revised layout designed by the Council's design studio and contains the increases requested by the PLTA. This will be resized and formatted as necessary to match the existing dimensions. The final version will conform to the corporate visual identify and publications requirements.
7. In principle officers have no objections to the proposed increase in the flag fall levels proposed by the PLTA. Other matters, in particular the numbers of extra charges are a matter of concern and have been discussed at previous tariff setting meetings. It was certainly the recommendation of officers to remove unnecessary extras. Extra charges should be completely justifiable and reflect additional costs associated with the passenger's journey.
8. The primary role of the new tariff layout should be one of clarity of use and the changes are given below with explanation for each. These matters for debate are as follows:

Extra Charges - Plymouth Railway Station

9. The present arrangements are that First Great Western requires providers of taxi services from its main line station to tender for the contract to work the rank at the station entrance.

Plymouth Taxis Limited is the current provider of that service, after successfully bidding for that contract. The costs incurred by winning that contract are then passed on to individual drivers who apply for a station permit that allows them to work the rank at the station. Drivers have been permitted to charge an extra on the fare meter for every journey from the railway premises. Officers consider this extra fee could present a less than favourable image of the city to visitors; a passenger should not have to pay to protect a driver's potentially advantaged market position.

10. The rank at the Railway Station is the second busiest rank in the city, but unlike the other ranks operating in the city only 95 (numbers will vary) vehicles are permitted to obtain fares from this stand (figures taken from the 2007 survey of unmet demand). During the last unmet demand survey there were 3700 hackney carriage departures taking 5650 passengers from the station during the survey period. This would indicate that this is a lucrative rank with a greater earning potential for drivers operating within this restricted market.
11. Further information for Members to consider on this point will be considered in the Part 11 (Private Meeting) which is to follow on the Agenda. The information to be considered is not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972

Extra Charges - River Tamar Toll

12. There has been an inclusion on the existing tariff of a "River Tamar Toll" of £1.00. This was considered necessary for transparency. Passengers wishing to undertake journeys out of the Plymouth Licensing district have two options. They can either negotiate a fare for the journey with the driver before commencement of the journey, or run the journey on the meter. If the meter is used, the tariff applies.
13. The last tariff did not make reference to the tag which allows discounted travel over the bridge. The Committee should again consider both the need for the extra charge and if justified whether it should be set at the full cost of £1.50 or the tag reduced rate of £0.75, or marked on the tariff as "CURRENT RATE FOR A RETURN JOURNEY". Matters to consider are:
 - The tag is available free of charge, only the credit amount is payable upfront
 - The tag is available to all who apply
 - Some vehicles are shared by multiple drivers and they will need to come to an amicable arrangement regarding transferring money to the tag and between each other.
 - Where a tag is present passengers may be overcharged.
14. It may be argued that the Toll is not a legitimate charge as the toll is incurred after the completion of a journey outside the City boundary and the passenger journey had ended prior to toll being required.
15. Other Authorities near major bridges have a mixture of approaches. Those Authorities surrounding the Severn Crossing remain silent on the matter leaving the journey to be negotiated. One Authority (Dartford) uses the current advertised rate approach.

Extra Charges - Any legitimate charges incurred during or as a result of the journey to be charged as extras

16. This was proposed by the PLTA in 2008 but not accepted in the final tariff. This would completely challenge the aim of the tariffs by reducing the transparency of the fares and

allowing greater opportunity for over charging.

Extra Charges - Carriage of luggage

17. This extra was removed in the last tariff as part of the aim to reduce the number of extras and improve consistency and transparency of the charging system. The PLTA have proposed the following extra charge (30p):

For each parcel carried outside the passenger compartment and for each other item larger than 61cm x 45cm x 15cm (2' x 1'6" x 6") 4.2 litre

Environmental Levy

18. The current licensing policy contains provision for a levy to be added in order to allow vehicle owners to financially assist in the provision of newer vehicles in order to comply with the policy requirements on meeting vehicle emission standards. The PLTA have not requested this separate fee at this time.

Fuel Surcharge

19. The PLTA have requested that the next fuel surcharge be added when fuel reaches £1.40 per litre. The Committee should consider whether the surcharge is likely to come into effect too soon given the frequent increase in fuel rises. Members may wish to consider whether a higher fuel price should be used.

Tariffs

20. In order to attract more drivers to support the evening and night time economy an additional tariff band has been suggested that operates after midnight. This now breaks the day into 3 bands further broken down by different days of the week. This makes the tariff complex but can be more easily understood by way of a table, where numbers 1-5 relate to tariffs 1-5 respectively:

Period	6am – 7 pm	7 pm – Midnight	Midnight – 6 am
Weekdays			
Monday - Saturday	1	2	3
Sunday	2	3	4
Bank Holidays	2	3	4
Christmas Eve	1	5	5
Christmas day	5	5	5
Boxing Day	5	5	5
31st December	1	5	5
1st January	5	5	6

Recommendations

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

1. Approve, or amended if necessary, the Hackney Carriage Tariff in Appendix 3 to this report, as proposed by officers, for the reasons given in this report.
2. That Members resolve to authorise the advertising of the Tariff agreed in Recommendation 1 as required by the Plymouth City Council Act 1975, and to allow the Tariff to come into effect four weeks after the period allowed for objections should no objections be received

Appendix I

Effective from: 14.07.2008

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. **A refusal to pay the metered or negotiated fare is an offence and may lead to prosecution.**

Tariff 1 (Day) - Applies Mon - Sat between 6am & 7pm (excluding bank holidays)

Tariff 2 (Night) - Applies Mon - Sat between 7pm & 6am (excluding bank holidays)

Distance *200 yards = approximately 182.88 metres

For any distance up to 200 yards

For the next 200 yards or part thereof

For each subsequent 400 yards or part thereof

Tariff 1 (Day)

£2.50

30p

30p

Tariff 2 (Night)

£3.00

30p

30p

Example 1 mile journey no waiting time / extras

£4.00

£4.50

Example 2 mile journey no waiting time / extras

£5.30

£5.80

Note that fares may be higher than shown if there are delays or heavy traffic.

Waiting Time

For each completed period of 90 seconds

30p

For each completed period of 60 seconds

30p

Extra Charges (All Tariffs)

For carriage of each additional passengers in excess of 2

20p

Entrance to MoD property or booking fee

40p

For each un-caged animal (excluding assistance dogs)

20p

From Plymouth Railway Station (subject to permit)

40p

River Tamar Toll

£1.00p

For any soiling of the vehicle inside or out, a charge of

£50 + Metered fare

No fare shall be taken for: any child under 3 years, one carer escorting a wheelchair passenger, or one child passenger between 3 and 12 years old.

Fuel: A 10p surcharge will be added to each fare once fuel oil reaches £1.30 a litre at Exeter Street Garage with a further 10p added for each subsequent increase of 10p per litre.

Destinations Outside of Licensing District.

The fare for any hiring 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 a meter where there is a prior contract with a Public Authority or for a period in excess of an hour.

Sunday & Bank Holiday Surcharges

Sundays & Bank Holidays = + 50p

Christmas Season

7pm 24/12 until 6am 27/12 & 7pm until midnight 31/12 & 6am 01/01 until 6am 02/01 = **Tariff 1 + 50%**

New Years day

Midnight until 6am = **Tariff 1 + 100%**

Want to Comment or Complain?

If you want to comment or complain about your journey in this taxi, please contact Plymouth City Council on (01752) 304141. Please ensure you have the vehicle licence number or driver badge number.

Thank you for using a Licensed Plymouth Taxi

Appendix 2

PLTA suggested Table of Fares

Made by virtue of the Plymouth City Council Act 1975

Notice is hereby given that Plymouth City Council have in pursuance of section 23 Plymouth City Council Act 1975, made the following table given in respect of Hackney Carriages within the city. 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 on the following day.

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	
For each person over 12 years of age in excess of two	20p
Two persons over 3 years and under 12 years (count as one for the table of fares)	20p
Entrance to MOD establishments, booking fee, or from Plymouth Railway Station (subject to permit).	40p
For each parcel carried outside the passenger compartment and for each other item larger than 61cm x 45cm x 15cm (2' x 1'6" x 6") 4.2 litre	30p
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
No extra charge is to be charged for any child under 3 years or any child over 3 years and under 12 years not exceeding one.	

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. Any legitimate charges incurred during or as a result of the fare paying customer's journey will be charged for. 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.

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.

ADDITIONS: See Fare Table 20/03/2006

D Extra Charges

For each parcel carried outside the passenger compartment
and each other item larger than 61cm x 45cm x 15cm (2' x 1'6" x 6") 20p

E 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 ran on the METER. Any legitimate charges incurred during or as a result of the fare paying customer's journey will be charged as extras. 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.

Appendix- 3

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 £1.50 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.