

## CITY OF PLYMOUTH

**Subject:** Proposal for a Hackney Carriage Tariff Increase

**Committee:** Licensing Committee (Hackney Carriage)

**Date:** 17 November 2011

**Cabinet Member:** Councillor Jordan

**CMT Member:** Director for Community Services

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**Ref:** ERS/LIC/AN/hct2

**Part:** 1

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### **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. The Committee agreed a proposed new tariff table on the 2 September 2011, which was then advertised through a public notice, in accordance with the Plymouth City Council Act 1975.

This report outlines the objections received to the proposed changes to the tariff. After considering these objections Members can set a further date for implementation of the Tariff, either with or without modification.

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### **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

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**Other Implications: e.g. 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.

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**Recommendations and Reasons for recommended action:**

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

1. Decide whether any modifications should be made to the table of Fares contained in Appendix I after consideration of the objections.
2. Authorise that the table of fares, with any amendments, come into force on the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2011 or a date to be determined by the Committee, but no later than the 3 January 2012.

The commencement date should be as early as reasonably practicable to allow the new fare table to be implemented by drivers. This period will allow officers time to notify the trade of the change and arrange for the printing of the new tariff

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**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.

Amend the tariff to remove all or some of the extras – 3 objections were received but the extras are supported by the PLTA which represents a significant number of drivers and proprietors.

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.

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**Background papers:**

[Licensing Committee \(Hackney Carriage\) – 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2011. Item 58](#)

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**Sign off:**

Fin		Leg	<b>AG/13173/ 31.10.11</b>	HR		Corp Prop		IT		Strat Proc	
Originating SMT Member											

## Report

1. The Hackney Carriage tariff of fares are fixed and from time to time amended by this Authority. This has no effect on private hire charging which is not set by the Council.
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. 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 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. This date must be no later than 2 months after the date of closure of consultation specified in the advertised public notice.
3. At a Committee meeting on the 2 September 2011 a draft table of fares was approved for advertising through a public notice. This is contained in Appendix 1. In response to the public notice dated the 3 October 2011 three objections were received. The objections are contained within Appendix 2.
4. The objections questioned the need for a fare increase and the implications on their ability to compete with private hire companies. One objection also questioned the need for extras and the likelihood of the mis-use of extras leading to overcharging.
5. The tariffs, including extras, 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. Extras can be added at the discretion of the driver and are therefore subject to potential mis-use. Officers, however, very rarely receive complaints regarding the use of extras. The tariff table has to be displayed within all hackney carriage vehicles to allow passengers to calculate the approximate cost of their journey.
6. 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

## **Recommendations**

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

1. Decide whether any modifications should be made to the table of Fares contained in Appendix 1 after consideration of the objections.
2. Authorise that the table of fares, with any amendments, come into force on the 1 December 2011 or a date to be determined by the Committee, but no later than the 3 January 2012.

The commencement date should be as early as reasonably practicable to allow the new fare table to be implemented by drivers. This period will allow officers time to notify the trade of the change and arrange for the printing of the new tariff

# APPENDIX 1

## 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](mailto: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

Objection Number	Comment
1	<p>As a Plymouth Licensed Hackney Carriage Driver myself I strongly disagree with the proposed increases. We are losing trade to private hire companies as we are too expensive already WITHOUT further increases.</p> <p>Furthermore all extras should be abolished as far too many drivers abuse this and overcharge people greatly and as a matter of course.</p> <p>Please reconsider these increases as it will greatly affect those of us who are out there trying to earn a honest living without necessary overcharging.</p>
2	<p>I personally don't think we should be increasing fares in the current financial climate, although I can understand why other members of the trade want it.</p> <p>What I object to is the EXTRA 50 pence from midnight. I have been told this is to encourage drivers to stay out after 12. I feel this will do more harm than good. Drivers will only stay out if it is busy. All that will happen is we will lose out to private hire.</p>
3	<p>Just a small line to let you know, I am not in favour of a hike in price after midnight especially in a recession hit time period . The best way would be to have a small increase in just the running mileage , therefore longer distance increased price subtly .</p>