

Author: Group Director, Environment and Regeneration

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

- To consider proposals to increase Hackney Carriage fares from 1 June 2008.

Recommendation

The Sub-Committee is asked to: -

- Agree that the revised fare chart as set out in Appendix 'B' be advertised as required by Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 and, if no objections are received, to implement the new fares on and from 1 June 2008
- Agree in principle to an annual review of hackney carriage fares, the calculation matrix to be the subject of a separate report to be submitted to this Sub-Committee for approval.

1. Reasons

- 1.1 Requests have been received from the hackney carriage trade to increase hackney carriage fares to reflect increases in the price of fuel.
- 1.2 To revisit a request to the Licensing Committee in November 2007 to approve a fare rise proposed by the Swindon Taxi Drivers' Association. As only 50 drivers responded to the ballot held in October 2007 the Committee were reluctant to approve the proposed rise, and instead requested officers to hold discussions with the trade in an attempt to justify the fare rise.

2. Detail

- 2.1 Meetings have been held between the Chair of the Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Sub-Committee and representatives of the Association it was agreed to hold a further ballot to determine the level of support among the hackney carriage trade for the revised fare scale.
- 2.2 Officers have compiled a chart showing the current average fare applying in each area of the United Kingdom, with a detailed breakdown for Local Authorities in the South West region. This is attached at Appendix D.

Appendix D shows average increases in hackney carriage fares across the United Kingdom for the last eight years.

- 2.3 Also attached at Appendix E is a chart showing the proposed revised fares applying to journeys of one to five miles, and the comparison with current private hire fares. This shows that the proposed Hackney Carriage fares will mean an increase of £1 to each fare across the board for a typical journey of one to five miles.
- 2.4 The ballot of Hackney Carriage drivers was held in April 2008 and the results were as follows:
- | | | |
|-----|---|-----|
| 2.5 | Number of ballot papers issued | 212 |
| | Fare chart submitted by Swindon Taxi Drivers Association: | 73 |
| | No changes to fares at present: | 8 |
| | Spoiled ballot papers | 4 |
- 2.6 The proposed fares (as submitted by the Swindon Taxi Drivers' Association) are shown as Appendix "B". The fare chart currently in force is shown as Appendix "A".
- 2.7 The last fare increase was in December 2004.
- 2.8 Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 states that "a district council may fix the rates or fares [for hackney carriages] within the district as well as for time as distance ..." and when a table of fares is varied the revised fare table must be published in at least one local newspaper. Such notice shall specify the period, not less than 14 days from the date of publication of the notice, within which the manner in which objections to the table of fares can be made".
- 2.9 Should any objections be received, the 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.
- 2.10 As agreed with the Chair of the Licensing Committee, in order to conduct a systematic review of fares, officers will carry out an annual review of hackney carriage fares in February of each year, the calculation matrix to be the subject of a separate report to this Committee.
- 2.11 Officers are of the opinion that the requested fare rise is reasonable and will go some way towards compensating hackney carriage drivers for the recent rises in the cost of fuel.

Alternative Options

- Fares may remain as they are at present, in accordance with the fare chart dated December 2004.

Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

There are no direct financial implications to the Council itself arising from this report.
There are no procurement issues arising from this report. The costs of managing the

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Rod Collett on 01793 466109 or e-mail rcollett@swindon.gov.uk.

Council's Hackney Carriage responsibilities are met from existing budgets.

Links to Corporate Plans and Policies (in particular to Swindon 2010 Promises)
A Healthy and Caring Place; An Economically Prosperous Place; An Environmentally Friendly Place; A Safe Place.

Consultees

The Director of Finance (s.151 Officer) and the Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted on all reports.

Background Papers and Appendices

- Appendix "A" – Current fare chart currently in force, dated December 2004.
- Appendix "B" – Proposed fare chart from June 2008.
- Appendix "C" – Minutes of the Licensing Committee held on 29 November 2007
- Appendix "D" – Analysis of current Hackney Carriage fares
- Appendix "E" – Comparison of fares: Hackney Carriage versus Private Hire