

Licensing Committee

17 July 2024

Increase in Taxi Fares for Dorset Zone

For Recommendation to the Portfolio Holder

Cabinet Member:

Cllr G Taylor, Public Health, Environmental Health, Housing, Community Safety and Regulatory Service

Local Councillor(s):

All Councillors

Executive Director:

Jan Britton, Executive Lead for Place

Report Author: Aileen Powell

Title: Licensing Team Leader

Tel: 01258 484022

Email: aileen.powell@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Report Status: Public

Brief Summary: To start the process to consider increasing the maximum level of fares that can be charged by Hackney Carriage Proprietors in the Dorset, excluding the Weymouth and Portland, zone.

Recommendations: To recommend to the Cabinet Member for Public Health, Environmental Health, Housing, Community Safety and Regulatory Service that they authorise the undertaking of a consultation exercise on the suggested tariff increase with the Hackney Trade in the Dorset Zone and members of the public.

Reason for Recommendation: To ensure openness and transparency in the Council's decision making, and to ensure that those persons affected by changes are given the opportunity to have an input into it.

1. **Background**

- 1.1 The Dorset Council Taxi Licensing Policy split the Council's area into two zones, see paragraphs 2.16 - 2.19 of the Policy which is attached in full at Appendix 1.
- 1.2 Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 sets out the legislative provisions for setting the tariff. The legislation is attached at Appendix 2.

2. **New Fares**

- 2.1 The fares for the Dorset Zone were last changed in April 2022, when the new Taxi Licensing Policy came into effect. Prior to this they were changed by the various predecessor Councils on an 'ad hoc' basis as and when the trade requested it.
- 2.2 The Weymouth Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Association have requested further small rises each year. Until now no similar request has been received from the Trade in the rest of Dorset.
- 2.3 The existing tariff can be found at Appendix 3.
- 2.4 The request for the increase has been received from Wimborne Minster Cars and would add 40p to the first mile and 20p to each subsequent mile on the day rate, which would also increase the night tariff and the Christmas Day tariff.
- 2.5 There is also a request for an additional extra of a booking fee. The full proposed Tariff is attached at Appendix 4.
- 2.6 Before any increase can be agreed a full consultation needs to be held with all Hackney Carriage Proprietors in the Dorset zone, followed by a public consultation at a later date.

3. **Financial Implications**

The funding for the public consultation of the fares will come from existing budgets. The Taxi and Private Hire Licensing regime is self-funding, so any advertising costs are met from this. There are no further financial implications for Dorset Council arising from the recommendations of this report. However, subject to the outcome of the consultation, passengers may see an increase in the amount they are charged for their journeys.

4. **Natural Environment, Climate & Ecology Implications**

There are no negative implications arising from the recommendations contained within this report in terms of meeting the Council's climate change obligations.

5. **Well-being and Health Implications**

There could potentially be an impact on the health and wellbeing of the public if the hackney carriage fares are set too high, which could make this form of transport inaccessible to some. The same could however be said if the fares are set too low resulting in a reduction of vehicles as they become uneconomical to run.

6. **Other Implications**

There are no other implications arising from the recommendations contained within this report in terms of impacts on other service areas within the Council.

7. **Risk Assessment**

HAVING CONSIDERED: the risks associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: Low

Residual Risk: Low

8. **Equalities Impact Assessment**

An EqIA was prepared as part of the wider Dorset Council Taxi Licensing Policy consultation.

9. **Appendices**

Appendix 1 Dorset Council Taxi Licensing Policy

Appendix 2 Legislation

Appendix 3 Existing Tariff

Appendix 4 Proposed Tariff

10. **Background Papers**

Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976