

General Licensing Committee

23 October 2024

Increase in Taxi Fares for Dorset Zone

For Recommendation to the Portfolio Holder

Cabinet Member and Portfolio:

Cllr G Taylor, Health and Housing

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 authorise the statutory public consultation on the proposed Hackney Carriage tariff increase in the Dorset area, excluding the Weymouth and Portland zone.

Recommendations

To recommend to the Cabinet Member for Health and Housing that they:

- Authorise the undertaking of the statutory public consultation on the suggested tariff increase.
- Agree that the new tariff will come into effect on 1 January 2025 if no objections are received after the public consultation.

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 A.
- 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 B.

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 consultation with the trade has resulted in 26 responses in favour of the increase, with one proprietor against it apart from the addition of a booking fee and one just wanting the first mile price raised.
- 2.3 Before any increase can be agreed a statutory public consultation needs to be held. If no objections are received the changes could be implemented from 1 January. If responses are received from the public the matter will be brought back to the General Licensing Committee to consider the objections.

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 A Dorset Council Taxi Licensing Policy

Appendix B Extract of Legislation

Appendix C Existing Tariff

Appendix D Proposed Tariff

10. **Background Papers**

Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976