



REGULATORY COMMITTEE

Notice of a Meeting, to be held in the Committee Room No. 1 (Fougères Room) - Ashford Borough Council on Tuesday, 19th July, 2022 at 9.30 am.

The Members of the Regulatory Committee are:-

Councillor Howard (Chairman)
Councillor Krause (Vice-Chairman)

Cllrs. Buchanan, Burgess, Feacey, Ledger, Michael, Pickering, Rogers, Shorter,
Smith, Suddards and Wright

Agenda

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| 1. | Apologies/Substitutes | |
| | To receive Notification of Substitutes in accordance with Procedure Rule 1.2(c) | |
| 2. | Declarations of Interest | 1 - 2 |
| | To declare any interests which fall under the following categories, as explained on the attached document: | |
| | a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) | |
| | b) Other Significant Interests (OSI) | |
| | c) Voluntary Announcements of Other Interests | |
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| 3. | Minutes | 3 - 10 |
| | To approve the Minutes of the Meeting of this Committee held on 20 th January 2022. | |
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Agenda Item 2

Declarations of Interest (see also “Advice to Members” below)

- (a) **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI)** under the Localism Act 2011, relating to items on this agenda. The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared, and the agenda item(s) to which it relates must be stated.

A Member who declares a DPI in relation to any item will need to leave the meeting for that item (unless a relevant Dispensation has been granted).

- (b) **Other Significant Interests (OSI)** under the Kent Code of Conduct relating to items on this agenda. The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared, and the agenda item(s) to which it relates must be stated.

A Member who declares an OSI in relation to any item will need to leave the meeting before the debate and vote on that item (unless a relevant Dispensation has been granted).

However, prior to leaving, the Member may address the Committee in the same way that a member of the public may do so.

- (c) **Voluntary Announcements of Other Interests** not required to be disclosed under (a) and (b), i.e. announcements made for transparency alone, such as:

- Membership of amenity societies, Town/Community/Parish Councils, residents' groups or other outside bodies that have expressed views or made representations, but the Member was not involved in compiling or making those views/representations, or
- Where a Member knows a person involved, but does not have a close association with that person, or
- Where an item would affect the well-being of a Member, relative, close associate, employer, etc. but not his/her financial position.

[Note: Where an item would be likely to affect the financial position of a Member, relative, close associate, employer, etc.; OR where an item is an application made by a Member, relative, close associate, employer, etc., there is likely to be an OSI or in some cases a DPI. ALSO, holding a committee position/office within an amenity society or other outside body, or having any involvement in compiling/making views/representations by such a body, may give rise to a perception of bias and require the Member to take no part in any motion or vote.]

Advice to Members on Declarations of Interest:

- (a) Government Guidance on DPI is available in DCLG's Guide for Councillors, at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/5962/2193362.pdf
- (b) The Kent Code of Conduct was adopted by the Full Council on 19 July 2012, and a copy can be found in the Constitution alongside the Council's Good Practice Protocol for Councillors dealing with Planning Matters. See <https://www.ashford.gov.uk/media/2098/z-word5-democratic-services-constitution-2019-constitution-of-abc-may-2019-part-5.pdf>
- (c) Where a Member declares a committee position or office within, or membership of, an outside body that has expressed views or made representations, this will be taken as a statement that the Member was not involved in compiling or making them and has retained an open mind on the item(s) in question. If this is not the case, the situation must be explained.

If any Member has any doubt about any interest which he/she may have in any item on this agenda, he/she should seek advice from the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer, or from other Solicitors in Legal and Democracy as early as possible, and in advance of the Meeting.

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Regulatory Committee

Minutes of a Meeting of the Regulatory Committee held in Committee Room No. 2 (Bad Münstereifel Room), Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford on the **20th January 2022**.

Present:

Cllr. Webb (Chairman);
Cllr. Krause (Vice-Chairman);

Cllrs. Burgess, Feacey, Ledger, Michael, Pickering, Shorter, Wright.

Apologies:

Cllrs. Buchanan, Rogers, Smith, L Suddards.

Also Present:

Environmental Protection and Licensing Team Leader, Principal Litigator, Member Services Manager.

239 Declarations of Interest

Councillor	Interest	Minute No.
Feacey	Made a 'Voluntary Announcement' as he was on the Management Committee of UK LPG.	241, 242
	Made a 'Voluntary Announcement' as he was Chairman of the Ashford Volunteer Centre.	241, 242
Webb	Made a 'Voluntary Announcement' as a Director of the Ashford Volunteer Centre.	241, 242

240 Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of this Committee held on the 19th January 2021 be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

241 Proposed Fee Levels for 2022/23 Licensing Applications

The Environmental Protection and Licensing Team Leader introduced the report which proposed fees for licences for 2022/23 (excluding those previously proposed by the Licensing Committee). He advised that the setting of licensing fees generally allowed the Licensing Authority to recover the costs of processing licence applications, regulation and back office costs associated with the running of the

licensing regime. The fees could not be set so as to be profit making and failure to set fees appropriately did open the Council up the legal challenge. The report also advised of the continuation of the 'green' taxi incentive scheme and gave a summary of licensing activity in 2021.

The Environmental Protection and Licensing Team Leader then drew attention to the proposed fees contained within the report.

Sex Establishment Fees

The report proposed that the fees be retained at the existing level.

Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Fees

It was proposed that fees be increased generally in line with inflation with the following exceptions.

Scrap Metal Dealers Fees

The report recommended an increase in fees broadly in line with inflation (RPI).

In response to a question, the Environmental Protection and Licensing Team Leader advised that Ashford's fees were benchmarked against other Authorities. Whilst it wasn't an 'exact science' as each Authority had its own inspection regimes and other circumstances, generally Ashford was about mid-range and this felt right. He agreed to include such information in future reports.

Recommended:

That (i) that the sex establishment fees as given below be approved.

RECOMMENDED SEX ESTABLISHMENT LICENCE FEES FOR 2022/23

	CURRENT FEES 2021/22	PROPOSED FEES 2022/23
Grant	£3499	£3499
Transfer	£334	£334
Renewal	£334	£334

(ii) that the Hackney Carriage, Private Hire and Operator applications licence fees as given below be approved for the purposes of public consultation.

**RECOMMENDED HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING FEES
2022/23**

	CURRENT FEES 2021/22	PROPOSED FEES 2022/23
Private Hire & Hackney Carriage Drivers Licence (for 1 year)	£72.00	£74.00
Private Hire & Hackney Carriage Drivers Licence (for 3 years)	£149.00	£153.00
Additional driver's licence (adding a licence)	£31.00	£32.00
Hackney Carriage Knowledge Test & Re-test	£59.00	£61.00
Replacement badge / Licence	£12.50	£13.00
Vehicle Licence - New or Renewal (including vehicle plate) for 1 year	£335 - New £300 - Renewal	£346 - New £305 - Renewal
Vehicle Plate Internal / External	£21.00	£22.00
Transfer of Vehicle Licence (with or without vehicle plate)	£35.00	£38.00
<i>Vehicle Inspection - Test Fee (set by contract)</i>	£32.00	£32.00
<i>Vehicle Inspection - Missed Appointment (set by contract)</i>	No Charge	No Charge
Private Hire Operators Licence - New or Renewal (for 5 years)	1-3 vehicles : £143 4-10 vehicles : £474 11-20 vehicles : £947	1-3 vehicles : £147 4-10 vehicles : £483 11-20 vehicles : £960
To increase number of vehicles licensed during duration of Operators Licence	1-3 : £141.00 4-10 : £328.00 11-20 : £475.00	1-3 : £145.00 4-10 : £334.00 11-20 : £483.00
Fee for Returned (Bounced) Cheques	£17.50	£18.00

(iii) that the scrap metal site and collectors fees as given below be approved.

**RECOMMENDED SCRAP METAL SITE AND COLLECTORS LICENSING FEES
2022/23**

	CURRENT FEES 2021/22	PROPOSED FEES 2022/23
Grant Site Licence	£344	£354
Grant Collectors Licence	£231	£237
Renewal Site Licence	£231	£237
Renewal Collectors Licence	£115	£118
Variation	£87	£89
Replacement Licence	£12.50	£12.50

(iv) that the annual licensing summary, at Appendix D to the report, be received and noted.

242 Review of the Hackney Carriage Fare Scale 2022/23

The Environmental Protection and Licensing Team Leader introduced the report and advised that the Committee were asked to recommend a Hackney Carriage Fare Scale to Full Council, based on the information and evidence available to it. The fare scale was designed to protect the public from excessive fares and act as a maximum fare that could be charged. Drivers/proprietors were free to charge less or offer discounts, and this was actively encouraged. He drew attention to a number of points, namely: -

- A very small percentage of the trade (only five of a potential 551 licences) had responded to the call for evidence. This was despite an open invitation and further reminders to respond.
- An email had been received the previous evening and whilst this was not directly in response to the call for evidence, the comments within in were useful and the Environmental Protection and Licensing Team Leader read it to the Committee.
- In recent years 2017 and 2019 had seen 3% increases to the fare scale and 2019 had also seen a 10 pence increase to the drop rate. In each of the other five years there had been no increases.
- Fuel prices had risen steadily month on month since November 2020 and continue to do so substantially.
- Inflation (RPI) stood at 5.2% over the last 12 months.
- Insurance premiums for general vehicles had dropped an average of 10-16% over the past 12 months, bring car insurance costs to their lowest level in six years..

- The local fare rate had dropped slightly when compared to that nationally and a county level. This was currently 10th in Kent out of the 13 Local Authority areas.

In recommending a fare scale, Officers asked the Committee to consider both a percentage change in the drop rate and yardage rates. The drop rate being the minimum charge and the latter being the ongoing fare per so many yards or seconds. Options open to the Committee were a decrease to the current tariffs (including percentage change), no change, or an increase to the current tariff (including percentage change).

The Chairman said that the low level of responses from the trade continued to be disappointing. Low consultation response figures occurred year on year despite more and more efforts to encourage a greater level of response from the trade and it was in their interests to engage more. Another Member agreed and said that what dismayed him most was the fact that the taxi trade was such an important element of what they were all trying to achieve in the Borough. The Council had done everything to could to get people to come forward with evidence. His feeling and instinct was that given what was happening nationally, there should be an increase, but without any firm evidence from the trade it was difficult to come to that conclusion with any real confidence. As responsible elected Councillors he felt it was their responsibility to give everyone a fair opportunity. They wanted and needed the taxi trade to flourish, whilst still providing a fair deal for residents, so this was a difficult balance.

There was a discussion on the practicalities of low emission vehicles being used as taxis and how this tied in with the Council's wider carbon neutral targets. The Environmental Protection and Licensing Team Leader referred to the Green Taxi Initiative to encourage drivers to move to low emission vehicles by waving licensing fees for three years (a £1000 incentive). This was funded via Section 106 monies and was proposed to continue beyond its original March 2022 end date, subject to funding. There were also additional grants available for this from Central Government and Kent County Council and an upcoming event with the Energy Savings Trust on the 8th February to which the trade would be invited to discuss the benefits of moving to green vehicles and undertaking test drives. It did have to be acknowledged though that at present the practicalities of being a taxi driver in this Borough did not lend themselves well to electric vehicles and they did not expect to see a sudden upsurge in numbers. Members asked if there were any opportunities to assist in making green vehicles more attractive such as introducing a token system to allow charging as an alternative to waiting on a rank, or even more generally to making driving taxis a more attractive job option, and if these could be examined over the next 12 months?

A Member asked if taxi drivers could be considered for any business support grants that may still be available coming out of the pandemic. There were a number of small companies and individuals who were operating in the night time economy and providing a service but were clearly struggling.

On balance, Members considered it probably was the right time was right for a fare increase of 3% but to keep the drop rate as it was. It was noted that if there were significant spikes in costs during the year the Taxi Forum could request the Committee to undertake an interim review mid-year. The Council also reviewed the

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fares annually, which was more often than some Authorities who only did it biennially.

A motion was put forward, and seconded, that there should be a 3% increase to fares but no increase to the drop rate. This was voted upon and there was unanimous agreement.

Recommended:

That the Hackney Carriage fare scale for 2022/23 as given in the table below be approved for the purpose of issuing a public notice.

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PROPOSED FARES FOR 2022/23

(a) Fares for distance or time: Rate 1	£
If the distance does not exceed 601 yards, for the whole distance or for the first 191 seconds of waiting time	2.90
For each subsequent 157 yards or uncompleted part thereof	0.20
Or for each subsequent period of 50 seconds of waiting time or uncompleted part thereof	0.20
(b) Fares for certain times and days: Rate 2	
a) For each hire commenced between 00.00 and 07.00	1½ x Rate 1
b) For each hire undertaken on GOOD FRIDAY, EASTER MONDAY, MAY DAY, SPRING BANK HOLIDAY, SUMMER BANK HOLIDAY or any other specifically declared Bank Holiday only.	1½ x Rate 1
(i) Fares for certain times and days: Rate 3	
c) For each hire undertaken on a CHRISTMAS DAY, BOXING DAY or NEW YEAR'S DAY	2 x Rate 1
When the holiday charge (b) or (c) is payable the Night Charge (a) is NOT payable.	
2 Miles - £6.70	
5 Miles - £13.50	
10 Miles - £24.70	

Extras - up to a maximum of £1.20	
(a) for each person (excluding infants in arms) carried in excess of two persons (two children under 10 years of age count as one person) irrespective of distance.	0.20
Note: For the purposes of counting the number of persons <u>that the vehicle is licensed to carry</u>, children under 10 years of age should <u>each be counted as a person</u>. A babe in arms should not be counted as a person.	
(b) for each article of luggage conveyed outside the passenger compartment of the carriage	0.05
(c) for perambulators	0.05
(d) for dogs	0.10

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Agenda Item No: 4
Report To: **REGULATORY COMMITTEE**
Date of Meeting: 19 July 2022
Report Title: **EXCEPTIONAL HACKNEY FARE TARIFF REVIEW**
Report Author: Trevor Ford
Job Title: Environmental Protection and Licensing Team Leader
Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Peter Feacey
Portfolio Holder for: Safety and Wellbeing

Summary: A report to consider an exceptional request for a review of the maximum hackney carriage fare scale in light of increased operating costs.

The decision, based on the information provided, shall be for the Committee to recommend to Council whether to amend the current maximum fare scale, and for that purpose whether to;

- decrease to the current tariffs
- make no change to the current tariffs
- increase to the current tariff

Key Decision: NO

Significantly Affected Wards: The fare scale has implications for all hackney carriage, and metered private hire journeys, across the borough and therefore affects all wards.

Recommendations: **The Committee is recommended to:-**

- **Recommend to Council whether to implement a mid-year change to the hackney carriage fare scale, and if so the details of the recommended change.**

Policy Overview: In December 1996 it was agreed by the Council that the hackney carriage fare scale would be reviewed annually, accordingly this particular review would be considered as an exceptional request in light of current economic circumstance. In setting this fare, a balance needs to be struck between the legitimate aims of the hackney carriage trade to maintain profitability in the face of increasing costs, while protecting the public from excessive fares.

Financial Fares relate to the charges levied by the hackney carriage

Implications:	trade and as such have no direct financial impact on the Council
Legal Implications: <i>Text agreed by Principal Litigator on 7 July 2022</i>	The current policy of an annual review of tariffs, seeks to guide not bind the Council. The proposed mid-term review is a pragmatic approach to calls from the licensed trade in these unprecedented times in light of the current economic impacts on them.
Equalities Impact Assessment:	Not required because the setting of fares in relation to this statutory function is not considered to cause any discrimination. The fees are set in accordance with Government guidance. The council's Taxi Policy is subject to a separate Equality Impact Assessment.
Data Protection Impact Assessment:	N/A
Risk Assessment (Risk Appetite Statement):	The recommendation does not represent a key decision. The consideration assessment indicates low impact in terms of human rights, the environment, legal and staffing implications.
Sustainability Implications:	N/A
Other Material Implications:	N/A
Exempt from Publication:	NO
Background Papers:	None
Contact:	<u>trevor.ford@ashford.gov.uk</u> (01233) 330 397

Report Title:

EXCEPTIONAL HACKNEY FARE TARIFF REVIEW

Introduction and Background

1. The report presents a request for the Committee to consider the hackney carriage fare scale and outlines the consultation with the trade on this matter.
2. This report asks for the Regulatory Committee to review the current fare scale, and if it is deemed a mid-year amendment to the fare scale is appropriate, to recommend an updated fare scale for remainder of 2022/23 to Council, which may be one of the following options:
 - A decrease to the current tariffs
 - No change
 - An increase to the current tariffs
3. The council's current taxi policy states that the hackney carriage fare scale will be reviewed annually. This policy is there to guide, and not to bind, the Committee and as such the request to review the fare scale is presented as an exceptional mid-year request in light of the current economic impacts on the licensed trade.
4. Members are reminded that the fares relate to the charges levied by the hackney carriage trade as opposed to the fees that are essentially the licence charges levied by the Borough Council.
5. It should also be remembered that the legislation governing taxi and private hire vehicles does not allow councils to set fares for private hire vehicles. Private hire proprietors may charge what they wish, although legislation dictates that customers must be advised of the fare beforehand, unless the vehicle is fitted with a taximeter. Customers are therefore recommended to 'shop-around' to achieve value for money.
6. It should be noted that the tariff is the maximum fare that can be charged and operators are free to charge less, or give discounts, should they so wish.
7. In January 2022, Members considered Ashford's fares relative to other areas, and the change in the respective costs, and recommended an increase of 3% to the fare scale. This change was effective as of 1 April 2022.

Proposal

8. The process of setting a fare increase is complex and a balance needs to be struck between the legitimate aims of the taxi trade to maintain commercial

profitability in the face of increasing costs, while protecting the public from excessive fares.

9. Fare increases are implemented by changing the initial (drop) rate and subsequent yardage rate at which the fare increases (e.g. £2.90 for the first 680 yards or 216 seconds, and a subsequent rate of 20p for every 157 yards or 50 seconds)
10. The table below indicates the approximate cost of a journey for various distances on the basis of the current fare and examples of 5, 7.5, 10, and 12.5% increases. The initial drop rate remains fixed at a figure of £2.90, as only one consultation respondent has raised the issue of increasing the drop rate.

Distance	Current rate	5% increase	7.5% increase	10% increase	12.5% increase
2 mile	£6.70	£6.90	£7.10	£7.30	£7.50
5 mile	£13:30	£14.10	£14.30	£14.70	£14.90
10 mile	£24.50	£25.70	£26.30	£27.10	£27.50

11. Fare comparison

With regard to the current fees, although the Private Hire and Taxi Monthly National Fare table (July 2022) shows an out of date fare for Ashford. The actual 2-mile fare of £6.70 places Ashford at joint 90-100th highest in the country, out of a listed 355 local authorities.

When compared to October 2021 our fare scale was at 85-87th highest.

The comparison with respects to other Kent boroughs and districts;

2 Mile Fare	Borough
£8.00	Tunbridge Wells
£7.40	Maidstone
£7.30	Dartford
£7.10	Dover
£7.06	Sevenoaks
£7.00	Tonbridge & Malling
£6.80	Swale
£6.80	Gravesham
£6.70	Ashford
£6.60	Medway
£6.40	Canterbury
£6.21	Thanet
£6.20	Folkestone & Hythe

Prior to January 2022, Ashford's fares were noted as the tenth highest in the county, rising to the ninth highest following the implementation of the 3% increase in April 2022.

Since that time the Tunbridge Wells fare is noted to have increased by £0.80 between the June 2022 and July 2022 PHTM fare tables.

Additionally the Licensing team are aware of reviews of the Hackney Fares under progress at Folkestone and Hythe District Council and Medway Council, who report having not reviewed their fare scale for 10 and 8 years respectively.

We are not yet aware of any other Kent authorities who have conducted a specific fare review based on recent cost rises.

Please refer to *Appendix B* for the national fare tables as provided by Private Hire Monthly.

12. Fuel prices

As members will be aware, fuel prices have increased significantly since the outbreak of war in Ukraine and since the October 2021 fuel price index was used as part of January's review of the hackney fare scale.

According to the AA Fuel Price Index reports the South East's petrol fuel prices have increased significantly over this period, as shown below;

	Pence per litre	
2021	Petrol	Diesel
October	142.1	145.7
November	147.7	151.3
December	147.2	150.8
2022		
January	146.8	150.3
February	149.2	152.8
March	164.7	174.7
April	163.4	177.4
May	167.7	181.3
June	188.7*	198.5*
July	189.5*	198.5*

Please note: In the absence of AA Fuel Price index reports for June and July 2022, confused.com's price comparison was utilised giving the average price of the five cheapest fuel stations within 5 miles of TN23 1PL as at 24 June and 9 July 2022.

Comments by the taxi trade, as part of the fare review consultation, included reference to an RAC article suggesting fuel prices could hit £2.25 per litre by Christmas 2022. This article could not however be located for inclusion in this report.

In order to assist the Committee, the following indicative comparison is shown to highlight the impact of the fuel price changes over a 10 mile fare (20 mile round trip assuming a return to a town centre hackney rank) in a typical diesel hackney vehicle averaging 35mpg or 7.7 miles per litre.

Additional fuel costs

October 2021 - Diesel at 145.7p per litre

July 2022 - Diesel at 198.5p per litre

Difference = +52.8 pence per litre or 36%

Over the 10 mile example fare (20 mile total distance)

October 2021 total fuel cost £3.78

July 2022 total fuel cost £5.16

Additional fuel costs of + £1.38

13. Inflation

According to the Office for National Statistics, RPI stood at 6.9% and 8.4% for the last two quarters.

14. Insurance

According to confused.com's car insurance price index – car insurance prices have increased for the first time in 18 months and now stand 5.4% higher than this time last year, and 7% higher than when the Committee last considered the fare tariff in January.

Members may however wish to note that the figures stated are general to domestic car insurance premiums, rather than specialist private hire or hackney carriage insurance. No taxi specific insurance premium index appears to be available, but as per previous years, we remain open to alternate suggestions should the trade wish to highlight suitable data source(s).

Members may wish to note the information supplied by the trade following changes to their vehicle insurance premiums;

Additional insurance costs (from an independent driver)

October 2021 renewal = £1255.82 based on single annual payment option
October 2020 renewal = £960.20 based on single annual payment option
Increase = £295.62 or 30%

*driver cites no relevant claims and 9 years no claims bonus

If the Committee are accepting of this evidence, the following indicative calculation may assist to compare the impact to an example 10-mile journey.

Over the 10 mile example fare (20 mile total distance)

Based on the submitted annual average mileage of 29,000
Additional vehicle insurance costs of + £0.20

Additional insurance costs (from another independent driver)

May 2022 renewal = £1228.47
May 2021 renewal = £1144.00
Increase = £84.47 or 7.8%

If the Committee are accepting of this evidence, the following indicative calculation may assist to compare the impact to an example 10-mile journey.

Over the 10 mile example fare (20 mile total distance)

Based on the assumed annual average mileage of 30,000
Additional vehicle insurance costs of + £0.06

Additional insurance costs (from a large operator)

This respondent noted vehicle insurance increases across the industry having increased in the last year, they confirmed that as a result of well mitigated risks their vehicle premium has not increased this year.

They did however confirm other insurances relevant to their operation, such as employers, liability, and building insurance have increased in the region of 10%

15. Car prices

Information highlighted in January's Regulatory Committee meeting highlighted that used car prices had risen as much as 25% in recent times, which was attributed to the supply issues associated with Covid19.

Additional evidence submissions from the trade as part of this review have suggested that this has resulted in additional vehicle purchase costs in the

region of £5,000, and that approximately £500-700 of this additional premium is expected to be retained when the vehicles reach their end of life as a taxi after three years.

If members are minded to accept the evidence, referred to in the consultation section of this report, then the following indicative calculation may assist in attributing such costs to a typical journey;

Additional vehicle purchase costs

£5,000 at time of purchase
3 year serviceable lifespan per vehicle
£500-700 retained at time of sale/disposal.
40500 average annual vehicle mileage.
= between 3.5 and 3.7 pence per mile of additional cost

Over the 10 mile example fare (20 mile total distance)

Additional vehicle depreciation costs of between £0.71 and £0.74

16. Business rates

Businesses operating from commercial premises with a rateable value under £12,000 receive small business rates relief, meaning they do not pay business rates. It appears that all operators in the borough fall within this category. As such, it continues to appear appropriate to disregard business rates increase as an influence on the decision.

17. Maintenance costs

Research has highlighted that the last AA Motoring Costs Report available was 2014/2015. The Licensing team therefore remain open to suggestions of an alternative reputable source of data for vehicle running costs.

Members may again wish to note the response from one of the boroughs larger operators as part of the consultation referred to later in this report. That operator runs their own vehicle workshop.

If members are accepting of this evidence as being indicative the additional vehicle running costs, then the following calculation may assist in demonstrating the increased vehicle maintenance costs over an example 10-mile fare.

Additional maintenance costs

2021/22 Workshop costs = £120797.41 or 16.6p per mile

2022/23 Workshop costs (extrapolated) = £143646.58 or 19.7p per mile

* Based on 18 vehicles, averaging 40500 miles each annually

Over the 10 mile example fare (20 mile total distance)

Additional vehicle maintenance costs of + £0.62

In terms of maintenance costs other consultation respondents have cited;

- *Wages (office and workshop) up 5%*
- *Rent for the offices/workshop (inclusive of services) from £1000 to £1200 pcm – up 25%*
- *0w30 fully synthetic motor oil (which we use a lot of) up 53%*
- *Nitrile gloves (1 box weekly by the mechanics) up from £6 to £27 – up 450%*
- *A car wash used to be £5, now it's become £10.*
- *Changing tire used to cost me £55, now it costs me £70/80*
- *Tyre costs decreasing £4.30 between 2021/22 (different brands cited on receipt.*
- *Tyres up 25%*
- *Tyre with fitting –before £99.79 now-£113.20*
- *Front wheel alignment increasing £5.00 between 2021/22*
- *Adblue 10litres was £12 in March 2022, and is now £18.50 (June 2022)*
- *Add bluw before 10liter=£12.49 now-£16.99*
- *the cost of Adblue previously was £12 (March 2022), however, it has risen by 54.17% and is now at £18.50.*
- *A full service was £160 in March 2022, and is now £190 (June 2022).*
- *our local garages used to charge £150, now it's costs £30 more (for a service)*
- *a full service to my taxi vehicle has increased by around £20.*
- *Regular servceing parts before-£111.61 now 125*
- *Labour cost-£70 now-£91.49*

18. If the indicative 10-mile example fare figures cited above (for fuel, insurance, maintenance, and increased second hand car prices) are accepted as being relevant, and having not been taken into account in January 2022's fare review, then the total indicative cost increases for that 10-mile fare are calculated as being between £2.77 and £2.94.

In terms of a percentage fare, this figure equates to approximately an increase of between 10 and 12%

Example increases copied below for reference;

Distance	Current rate	5% increase	7.5% increase	10% increase	12.5% increase
2 mile	£6.70	£6.90	£7.10	£7.30	£7.50
5 mile	£13.30	£14.10	£14.30	£14.70	£14.90
10 mile	£24.50	£25.70	£26.30	£27.10	£27.50
		(+£1.20)	(+£1.80)	(+£2.60)	(+£3.00)

These figures are however indicative, and based solely on the evidence and information submitted to date.

However the above indicative figures does not include other potential costs associated with operating a hackney carriage business that have not been evidenced in detail, for example;

- Accountants fees
- Licensing fees – see *Appendix C* for 2022/23 fees
- Parking charges
- Salary rises – to combat the increased cost of living
- Other inflationary impacts

Equalities Impact Assessment

19. Not required because the setting of fares in relation to this statutory function is not considered to cause any discrimination. The fees are set in accordance with Government guidance. The council's Taxi Policy is subject to a separate Equality Impact Assessment.

Consultation Planned or Undertaken

20. Consultation with the hackney carriage trade was undertaken following the request for an exceptional fare review.
21. Initially this consisted of an email to the five Taxi Forum Representatives to determine whether they supported such a review and whether they would be submitting evidence to support the review.

Two responses were received from the Taxi Forum Representatives, one from the Independent Drivers Representative, and one from the Executive Hire Representative.

A response from the company representative was not expected, due to the closure of Arrow Taxis, however in absence United Taxis submitted indicated support on behalf of themselves and other companies.

Equally, a response from the Private Hire representative was not expected, as they are not bound by this tariff.

22. Following this initial indication of support, and some outline evidence having been submitted and discussed, the wider licensed trade were consulted through the councils regular Taxi Forum Newsletter on the 23 June 2022.

In order to try to elicit a more meaningful response from the wider trade, as opposed to a basic indication of support, this article sought answers to the following questions by the 8 July 2022;

a) *Confirm what percentage change, if any, do you determine is necessary to ensure the commercial viability of the trade whilst protecting members of the public from excessive fares?*

b) *Supply evidence to support b) above.*

** Please note that the Regulatory Committee annually highlight the lack of evidence from the trade to justify the need for increases – accordingly it is unlikely that any exceptional review will proceed unless meaningful evidence/financial information is forthcoming to demonstrate that the current maximum fares are insufficient, and to justify the specific percentage increase suggested. We therefore cannot emphasise more strongly, that any request for an increase needs to be evidenced meaningfully to not only justify an increase but also the specific increase required.*

** Please also be aware that the Licensing team utilise the AA Fuel Price index in any Committee report(s), and accordingly do not require evidence of the fuel price changes across the year to be submitted.*

23. A total of 20 responses were received, and approximately 10 of those contained information beyond basic indications of support.
24. This compares with 153 licensed hackney carriage drivers, as of 28 June 2022.
25. Of those responses, the following provides a breakdown of the fare increases being suggested/sought;

Percentage increase sought	Number of respondents
Unspecified/unclear	3
10%	9
More than 10% (unspecified)	1
10-15%	2
15%	4
20%	1

26. Only one comment was raised with respects to chargeable extras, as per the fare scale, and this relates to the potential for an extra charge to be levied to cover the cost of operating a card payment machine. Whilst this cost is acknowledged, no specific evidence has been submitted to allow the Committee to determine an appropriate potential charge, and it is therefore recommended that the trade submit evidence during the next fare review for this specific issue to be considered if so desired.
27. Given the circumstances over the last 24 months, the Committee, may wish to be aware that licensed drivers (including private hire) have decreased by 80.

It is however likely that the numbers who have stopped working in the trade, but their licence has not yet expired or been surrendered their licence, may potentially be much larger.

The Licensing team are acting, where possible, to assist the trade at this difficult time in recruiting new drivers including by;

- highlighting the availability of work to licensees not currently utilising their licence
- highlighting the availability of work through operators to independent drivers interested in extra work
- liaising with the job centre to promote licensed driving as a career option
- promoting the career option through the Ashford for You residents magazine

28. A copy of the consultation responses received are contained within *Appendix D*.

Other Options Considered

29. It is open to the Regulatory Committee to apply a change (or no change) to the fare rates, as they deem necessary to protect the public from excessive fares, whilst ensuring that the trade can continue to make reasonable profits as a commercial enterprise.

Reasons for Supporting Option Recommended

30. It is proposed that the Regulatory Committee recommend one of the following options, including a percentage change, based on the evidence available.

- A decrease to the current tariffs
- No change to the current tariffs
- An increase to the current tariff

Next Steps in Process

31. The fares proposed must be advertised via a Public Notice in the local press in accordance with Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. If relevant objections were received in response to this notice a further report would be required.

32. If the proposed fare scale is approved by council on the 21 July, and no objections are received to the public notice, the fare scale will take effect on 15 August 2022.

Conclusion

33. Members may additionally wish to take the following into account:

- The quality of evidence and engagement from the trade has improved.
- The following changes in the fare scale have taken place in recent years:
 - 2012 - 5% increase and 10 pence increase to drop rate.
 - 2013 - 3% increase and 10 pence increase to drop rate.
 - 2014 - No change
 - 2015 - No change
 - 2016 - No change
 - 2017 - 3% increase and no increase to drop rate.
 - 2018 - No change
 - 2019 – 3% increase and 10 pence increase to drop rate.
 - 2020 – No change
 - 2021 – No change
 - 2022 – 3% increase and no increase to drop rate
- Members are asked to set maximum levels for fares, although drivers may charge less if they wish.
- The setting of maximum fares are designed to protect the travelling public from excessive fares, and this process cannot be used to create 'affordable fares' for the public thus preventing hackney carriage drivers from making a reasonable commercial profit.

Portfolio Holder's Views

34. *"The taxi industry continues to be significantly affected by the impacts of the pandemic, such as the loss of custom, the loss of drivers, and difficulty in recruiting new drivers. These issues continue to affect the trade, but have now been exacerbated by recent increases to operating costs.*

Members will be conscious that these issues have been highlighted locally through the closure of 'Arrow Taxis' who as one of the largest local firms operated for 41 years.

Whilst the Council must ensure that they protect the public from excessive fares, setting a fare level which is too low and that does not allow a reasonable commercial profit to be made will also result in harm to the service available to the public. Many members of the public rely on the hackney trade to remain independent or to get home safely, especially where alternative transport is unavailable.

Therefore, in order to ensure the viability of the local taxi trade, I support an increase to the maximum fare scale, allowing the Committee to consider and determine the specific increase required at this time."

Councillor Peter Feacey - Portfolio Holder for Safety and Wellbeing.

Contact and Email

35. Trevor Ford - Environmental Protection and Licensing Team Leader
(01233) 330 397
trevor.ford@ashford.gov.uk

APPENDIX A: Current fare table

APPENDIX B: Private Hire Monthly – National Fares Table (July 2022)

APPENDIX C: Taxi licensing fees 2022/23

APPENDIX D: Consultation responses

APPENDIX A: CURRENT FARE TABLE

ASHFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL
AUTHORISED FARES FOR HACKNEY CARRIAGES 2022/23

Fares for distance or time: Rate 1	£
If the distance does not exceed 680 yards, for the whole distance or for the first 216 seconds of waiting time	2.90
For each subsequent 157 yards or uncompleted part thereof	0.20
Or for each subsequent period of 50 seconds of waiting time or uncompleted part thereof	0.20
Fares for certain times and days: Rate 2	
a) For each hire commenced between 00:00 and 07:00	1½ x Rate 1
b) For each hire undertaken on GOOD FRIDAY, EASTER MONDAY, MAY DAY, SPRING BANK HOLIDAY, SUMMER BANK HOLIDAY or any other specifically declared Bank Holiday only.	1½ x Rate 1
Fares for certain times and days: Rate 3	
c) For each hire undertaken on a CHRISTMAS DAY, BOXING DAY or NEW YEAR'S DAY	2 x Rate 1
Note: When the holiday charge (b) or (c) is payable the Night Charge (a) is NOT payable.	

Guide to average expected fares;

2 miles - £6.70
5 miles - £13.30
10 miles - £24.50

**Complaints about this vehicle or driver
should be made to the Licensing Authority;**
Ashford Borough Council, Tannery Lane, TN23 1PL
licensing@ashford.gov.uk
01233-331111

See overleaf for further fare details

Extras - up to a maximum of £1.20	£
(a) for each person (excluding infants in arms) carried in excess of two persons (two children under 10 years of age count as one person) irrespective of distance. Note: For the purposes of counting the number of persons that the vehicle is licensed to carry, children under 10 years of age should each be counted as a person. A babe in arms should not be counted as a person.	0.20
(b) for each article of luggage conveyed outside the passenger compartment of the carriage	0.05
(c) for perambulators	0.05
(d) for dogs (but excluding assistance or guide dogs)	0.10

Rates calculated by time

When the hirer expresses his desire to engage a hackney carriage by time, then the rate of fare shall be calculated by time, such rate or fare being agreed in advance.

Journeys outside Council's area

Fares to destinations outside the Ashford Borough area may be negotiated prior to commencement of the journey, but the fare charged must not exceed the above tariff. If no such agreement is reached then the meter fare only must be charged.

Complaints

Complaints about this vehicle or driver should be made to the Licensing Authority
Ashford Borough Council, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford, Kent, TN23 1PL
licensing@ashford.gov.uk 01233-331111

See overleaf for further fare details

APPENDIX B: Private Hire Monthly – National Fares Table (July 2022)

POS	COUNCIL	2 ML. FARE
1	LONDON (HEATHROW)	£13.40
2	GUILDFORD	£10.00
3	EPSOM & EWELL	£9.80
4	LONDON	£9.80
5	LUTON AIRPORT	£9.70
6	WATFORD (X)	£8.40
7	UTTLESFORD	£8.30
8	CARRICK	£8.20
9	WOKINGHAM	£8.20
10	BRECKLAND	£8.00
11	READING	£8.00
12	TORRIDGE	£8.00
13	TUNBRIDGE WELLS	£8.00
14	ISLE OF MAN	£7.90
15	RESTORMEL	£7.90
16	BRACKNELL FOREST	£7.80
17	BRIGHTON & HOVE	£7.80

POS	COUNCIL	2 ML. FARE
18	SURREY HEATH	£7.80
19	GUERNSEY	£7.70
20	WEALDON	£7.70
21	BASINGSTOKE & DEANE	£7.60
22	EAST AYRSHIRE	£7.60
23	KERRIER	£7.60
24	OXFORD CITY	£7.60
25	RUSHMOOR	£7.60
26	SOUTHAMPTON	£7.60
27	JERSEY	£7.43
28	CHELTENHAM	£7.40
29	HARROGATE	£7.40
30	MAIDSTONE	£7.40
31	MID SUSSEX	£7.40
32	WEST BERKSHIRE	£7.40
33	DARTFORD	£7.30
34	WEYMOUTH & PORTLAND	£7.30

POS	COUNCIL	2 ML. FARE
35	ARUN	£7.20
36	BATH & NORTH EAST SOMERSET	£7.20
37	BCP	£7.20
38	DORSET	£7.20
39	EAST NORTHANTS	£7.20
40	NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE	£7.20
41	REIGATE & BANSTEAD	£7.20
42	ROTHER	£7.20
43	SOUTH GLOUCESTER	£7.20
44	YORK	£7.20
45	ARGYLL & BUTE	£7.13
46	CHELMSFORD	£7.10
47	DOVER	£7.10
48	ISLE OF WIGHT	£7.10
49	MENDIP	£7.10
50	MOLE VALLEY	£7.10

POS	COUNCIL	2 ML. FARE
51	PENWITH	£7.10
52	RUGBY	£7.10
53	HARBOROUGH	£7.09
54	SEVENOAKS	£7.06
55	BROMSGROVE	£7.00
56	EAST LOTHIAN	£7.00
57	EDINBURGH	£7.00
58	HERTSMERE	£7.00
59	SLOUGH	£7.00
60	STEVENAGE	£7.00
61	STROUD	£7.00
62	TONBRIDGE & MALLING	£7.00
63	WELWYN HATFIELD	£7.00
64	WILTSHIRE	£7.00
65	SANDWELL	£6.92
66	COLCHESTER	£6.90
67	EASTBOURNE	£6.90

POS	COUNCIL	2 ML. FARE
68	VALE OF WHITE HORSE	£6.90
69	WORCESTER CITY	£6.90
70	ADUR	£6.80
71	CARADON	£6.80
72	CARMARTHENSHIRE	£6.80
73	EAST DEVON	£6.80
74	EAST LINDSEY	£6.80
75	FIFE	£6.80
76	GLASGOW	£6.80
77	GLOUCESTER	£6.80
78	GRAVESHAM	£6.80
79	HART (X)	£6.80
80	NORTH CORNWALL	£6.80
81	NOTTINGHAM	£6.80
82	SEDGEMOOR	£6.80
83	SOMERSET WEST & TAUNTON	£6.80
84	SWALE	£6.80

POS	COUNCIL	2 ML. FARE
85	TENDRING	£6.80
86	VALE OF GLAMORGAN	£6.80
87	WOLVERHAMPTON	£6.80
88	NUNEATON & BEDWORTH	£6.75
89	TORBAY	£6.75
90	ANGUS	£6.70
91	BRAINTREE	£6.70
92	CHESTER	£6.70
93	CRAWLEY	£6.70
94	EASTLEIGH	£6.70
95	FYLDE	£6.70
96	NORTH SOMERSET	£6.70
97	NORTH TYNESIDE	£6.70
98	SHEFFIELD	£6.70
99	SOUTH LAKELAND	£6.70
100	SWINDON	£6.70
101	SOUTH HAMS	£6.66

POS	COUNCIL	2 ML. FARE
102	BRENTWOOD	£6.60
103	CAMBRIDGE CITY	£6.60
104	CARLISLE	£6.60
105	DUDLEY	£6.60
106	EAST SUFFOLK (NORTH)	£6.60
107	EDEN	£6.60
108	EXETER	£6.60
109	HARLOW	£6.60
110	HAVANT	£6.60
111	HIGH PEAK	£6.60
112	MEDWAY	£6.60
113	MORAY (X)	£6.60
114	NORTH HERTS	£6.60
115	NORWICH	£6.60
116	PLYMOUTH	£6.60
117	RUNNYMEDE	£6.60
118	SCARBOROUGH	£6.60

POS	COUNCIL	2 ML. FARE
119	SHETLAND ISLES	£6.60
120	SOUTH CAMBRIDGE	£6.60
121	TEIGNBRIDGE	£6.60
122	NORTH DEVON	£6.55
123	ASHFORD	£6.50
124	BASSETLAW	£6.50
125	CALDERDALE	£6.50
126	DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL	£6.50
127	HUNTINGDONSHIRE	£6.50
128	LIVERPOOL	£6.50
129	LUTON	£6.50
130	SOUTH SOMERSET	£6.50
131	WORTHING	£6.50
132	BASILDON	£6.40
133	BRISTOL	£6.40
134	CANTERBURY	£6.40
135	COUNTY OF HEREFORD	£6.40

POS	COUNCIL	2 ML. FARE
136	CREWE & NANTWICH	£6.40
137	EAST HAMPSHIRE	£6.40
138	EAST RENFREW	£6.40
139	HASTINGS	£6.40
140	HINCKLEY & BOSWORTH	£6.40
141	IPSWICH	£6.40
142	LEEDS	£6.40
143	LINCOLN	£6.40
144	MALVERN HILLS	£6.40
145	MELTON	£6.40
146	MID SUFFOLK	£6.40
147	NORTH KESTEVEN	£6.40
148	SHROPSHIRE	£6.40
149	SOUTHEND ON SEA	£6.40
150	TAMESIDE	£6.40
151	WAVERLEY	£6.40
152	WEST LINDSEY	£6.40

POS	COUNCIL	2 ML. FARE
153	WINDSOR & MAIDENHEAD	£6.40
154	WOKING	£6.40
155	PERTH & KINROSS	£6.33
156	NEWARK & SHERWOOD	£6.32
157	BLACKBURN	£6.30
158	BURY	£6.30
159	COTSWOLD (Y)	£6.30
160	COVENTRY	£6.30
161	DACORUM	£6.30
162	DARLINGTON	£6.30
163	LEWES	£6.30
164	PEMBROKESHIRE	£6.30
165	SOUTH HOLLAND	£6.30
166	SOUTH RIBBLE	£6.30
167	DUNDEE CITY	£6.28
168	FOREST OF DEAN	£6.27
169	BABERGH	£6.26

POS	COUNCIL	2 ML. FARE
170	REDDITCH	£6.25
171	MIDLOTHIAN	£6.22
172	THANET	£6.21
173	BIRMINGHAM	£6.20
174	CHICHESTER	£6.20
175	DAVENTRY	£6.20
176	DERBY	£6.20
177	EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE	£6.20
178	EAST SUFFOLK (SOUTH)	£6.20
179	FENLAND	£6.20
180	FOLKESTONE & HYTHE	£6.20
181	HORSHAM	£6.20
182	NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE	£6.20
183	NORTHAMPTON	£6.20
184	NORTHUMBERLAND	£6.20
185	PORTSMOUTH UA	£6.20

POS	COUNCIL	2 ML. FARE
186	ROCHFORD	£6.20
187	SOLIHULL	£6.20
188	SPELTHORNE	£6.20
189	ST ALBANS	£6.20
190	STRATFORD ON AVON	£6.20
191	SUNDERLAND	£6.20
192	WEST OXFORD	£6.20
193	WINCHESTER	£6.20
194	WYCHAVON	£6.20
195	WYRE FOREST	£6.14
196	CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE	£6.13
197	ABERDEENSHIRE	£6.10
198	CANNOCK CHASE	£6.10
199	CARDIFF	£6.10
200	CLACKMANNAN	£6.10
201	EAST HERTS	£6.10
202	ELMBRIDGE	£6.10

POS	COUNCIL	2 ML. FARE
203	NEW FOREST	£6.10
204	NORTH WARWICK	£6.10
205	SOUTH AYRSHIRE	£6.10
206	TAMWORTH	£6.10
207	SELBY	£6.06
208	CHARNWOOD	£6.05
209	SCOTTISH BORDERS	£6.05
210	ABERDEEN CITY	£6.00
211	BLACKPOOL	£6.00
212	BOSTON	£6.00
213	BROXTOWE	£6.00
214	BUCKINGHAMSHIRE	£6.00
215	CASTLE POINT	£6.00
216	CONWY	£6.00
217	EAST STAFFORDSHIRE	£6.00
218	GREAT YARMOUTH	£6.00
219	GWYNEDD	£6.00

POS	COUNCIL	2 ML. FARE
220	KETTERING	£6.00
221	KINGS LYNN & WEST NORFOLK	£6.00
222	KNOWSLEY	£6.00
223	LANCASTER	£6.00
224	MILTON KEYNES	£6.00
225	NORTH WEST LEICESTER	£6.00
226	PETERBOROUGH	£6.00
227	RYEDALE	£6.00
228	SOUTH LANARKSHIRE (EAST KILBRIDE)	£6.00
229	SOUTH TYNESIDE	£6.00
230	STOCKPORT	£6.00
231	TEST VALLEY (X)	£6.00
232	THREE RIVERS	£6.00
233	THURROCK	£6.00
234	WARWICK	£6.00
235	WIRRAL	£6.00

POS	COUNCIL	2 ML. FARE
236	BROXBOURNE	£5.90
237	KINGSTON-UPON-HULL	£5.90
238	MANCHESTER	£5.90
239	STAFFORD	£5.90
240	STOKE-ON-TRENT UA	£5.90
241	TANDBRIDGE	£5.90
242	WALSALL	£5.90
243	EAST RIDING	£5.85
244	TEWKESBURY	£5.85
245	BARNSELY	£5.80
246	BARROW IN FURNESS	£5.80
247	BEDFORD	£5.80
248	BRIDGEND	£5.80
249	FAREHAM	£5.80
250	FLINTSHIRE	£5.80
251	HALTON	£5.80

POS	COUNCIL	2 ML. FARE
252	HIGHLAND (X)	£5.80
253	LEICESTER	£5.80
254	LICHFIELD	£5.80
255	NEATH PORT TALBOT	£5.80
256	NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE	£5.80
257	NORTH NORFOLK	£5.80
258	NORTHERN IRELAND	£5.80
259	ORKNEY (X)	£5.80
260	RUTHERGLEN (X)	£5.80
261	SEFTON	£5.80
262	TRAFFORD	£5.80
263	WEST SUFFOLK	£5.80
264	WIGAN	£5.80
265	WYRE	£5.80
266	YNS MON	£5.80
267	CHESTERFIELD	£5.75
268	DONCASTER	£5.75

POS	COUNCIL	2 ML. FARE
269	NORTH EAST DERBYSHIRE	£5.75
270	CAERPHILLY	£5.70
271	GEDLING	£5.70
272	MID DEVON	£5.70
273	MONMOUTHSHIRE	£5.70
274	RENFREWSHIRE	£5.70
275	STIRLING (X)	£5.70
276	SWANSEA	£5.70
277	WARRINGTON	£5.70
278	BRADFORD	£5.60
279	DENBIGHSHIRE	£5.60
280	GOSPORT	£5.60
281	NEWPORT	£5.60
282	NORTH LANARKSHIRE	£5.60
283	RICHMONDSHIRE	£5.60
284	RUSHCLIFFE	£5.60
285	WEST LOTHIAN (X)	£5.60

POS	COUNCIL	2 ML. FARE
286	WREXHAM	£5.60
287	CHERWELL	£5.56
288	NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME	£5.55
289	DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY	£5.50
290	EAST DUNBARTONSHIRE	£5.50
291	EPPING FOREST	£5.50
292	EREWASH	£5.50
293	FALKIRK	£5.50
294	HAMBLETON	£5.50
295	MERTHYR TYDFIL	£5.50
296	OLDHAM	£5.50
297	TORFAEN	£5.50
298	CEREDIGION	£5.46
299	SALFORD	£5.46
300	ALLERDALE	£5.45
301	CLYDEBANK	£5.40

POS	COUNCIL	2 ML. FARE
302	DUNBARTON & VALE OF LEVEN (X)	£5.40
303	ELLESMERE PORT	£5.40
304	HARTLEPOOL	£5.40
305	MACCLESFIELD	£5.40
306	POWYS	£5.40
307	PRESTON	£5.40
308	ROTHERHAM	£5.40
309	MANSFIELD	£5.35
310	INVERCLYDE	£5.34
311	CRAVEN (X)	£5.30
312	NORTH AYRSHIRE	£5.30
313	RIBBLE VALLEY	£5.30
314	SOUTH KESTEVEN	£5.30
315	SOUTH LANARKSHIRE (CLYDESDALE)	£5.30
316	ST HELENS	£5.30
317	VALE ROYAL	£5.30

POS	COUNCIL	2 ML. FARE
318	BLABY	£5.24
319	AMBER VALLEY	£5.20
320	BLAENAU GWENT	£5.20
321	BOLTON	£5.20
322	HAMILTON (X)	£5.20
323	RHONDDA CYNON TAFF	£5.20
324	STAFFS MOORLANDS	£5.20
325	WAKEFIELD	£5.20
326	WEST LANCASHIRE	£5.20
327	CHORLEY	£5.10
328	CONGLETON	£5.10
329	GATESHEAD	£5.10
330	SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE	£5.10
331	COPELAND	£5.00
332	KIRKLEES	£5.00
333	ROCHDALE	£5.00

POS	COUNCIL	2 ML. FARE
334	ROSSENDALE	£5.00
335	SOUTH NORTHANTS	£5.00
336	CORBY	£4.90
337	MIDDLESBROUGH	£4.90
338	TELFORD & WREKIN	£4.90
339	WELLINGBOROUGH	£4.90
340	WESTERN ISLES (X)	£4.85
341	ASHFIELD	£4.80
342	DERBYSHIRE DALES	£4.80
343	HYNDBURN	£4.70
344	BOLSOVER	£4.60
345	BURNLEY	£4.50
346	REDCAR & CLEVELAND	£4.50
347	STOCKTON ON TEES	£4.50
348	OADBY & WIGSTON	£4.40
349	PENDLE	£4.40
350	MALDON	£0.00

POS	COUNCIL	2 ML. FARE
351	RUTLAND	£0.00
352	SOUTH DERBYSHIRE	£0.00
353	SOUTH NORFOLK	£0.00
354	SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE	£0.00
355	WEST DEVON	£0.00

**APPENDIX C: HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING FEES
2022/23**

	CURRENT FEES 2022/23
Private Hire & Hackney Carriage Drivers Licence (for 1 year)	£74.00
Private Hire & Hackney Carriage Drivers Licence (for 3 years)	£153.00
Additional driver's licence (adding a licence)	£32.00
Hackney Carriage Knowledge Test & Re-test	£61.00
Replacement badge / Licence	£13.00
Vehicle Licence - New or Renewal (including vehicle plate) for 1 year	£345.00 – New £305.00 - Renewal
Vehicle Plate Internal / External	£22.00
Transfer of Vehicle Licence (with or without vehicle plate)	£38.00
<i>Vehicle Inspection - Test Fee (set by contract)</i>	£32.00
<i>Vehicle Inspection - Missed Appointment (set by contract)</i>	No charge
Private Hire Operators Licence - New or Renewal (for 5 years)	1-3 vehicles : £147 4-10 vehicles : £483 11-20 vehicles : £960
To increase number of vehicles licensed during duration of Operators Licence	1-3 : £145.00 4-10 : £334.00 11-20 : £483.00
Fee for Returned (Bounced) Cheques	£17.50

APPENDIX D: Consultation Responses

Response #1

Emergency Fare increase

As you know, the cost of fuel has almost doubled over the last year.

The cost of service parts and tyres for my vehicles has also increased far beyond the rate of inflation. It has come to a time when I am faced with making little or no profit for this year.

The consequence of that will end with United Taxis closing down and I would assume that a percentage of the independents will move to other occupations.

I would straightaway say that this is NOT a threat; however given the demise of a major company, Arrow Taxis for exactly the same reasons, it is a real possibility. Their fleet dwindled from around 35 cars to 16 cars before they folded.

No business can function without profit.

Although I am writing on my own behalf as a company owner, the whole trade is in the same position – and therefore I request that the rates of maximum fares be increased to account for the current circumstances.

One thing I am happy to agree to would be that if the fuel and other running costs reduce to “normal” levels I would agree to accept a rate reduction.

I give the following examples of my finances to illustrate the point. Our year end is 31st March so I only have the first 2 months of this year, but I have extrapolated those figures. Please note that the 22/23 figures are for April and May, which are relatively quiet months.

I expect the fuel cost difference to be substantially higher as the biggest hike has been in the last few weeks.

The current price per litre of diesel at BP Beaver garage is £2.00; the forecast in the media is for £2.25 by October.

Fuel:

21/22 full year:	£87,927.29
22/23 extrapolated from the first 2 months:	£105,144.72
	= £17,217.43 extra or 19%

Vehicle maintenance: (including workshop wages and expenses)

Based upon 18 vehicles, each covering an annual average mileage of 40,500:

21/22 full year:	£120,797.41
22/23 extrapolated from the first 2 months:	£143,646.58
	= £22,849.17 extra or 19%

Some examples are:

Wages (office and workshop) up 5%

Rent for the offices / workshop (inclusive of services): from £1000 to £1250 pcm up 25%

Tyres up 25%

0/30 fully synthetic Motor Oil (which we use a lot of) up 53%

Nitrile Gloves (1 box weekly by the mechanics to protect their hands) up from £6 to £27 up 450%

Electricity and all other services for the offices and workshop have increased.

Vehicle Purchase

I am also paying around £5000.00 extra per car I buy over the year before, and whilst I do get a small increase in the selling price after the typical 3 year working life (estimated to be approximately £500-700), it is insignificant and does not amount to the difference.

Insurance

Although vehicle insurance across the industry has gone up this year, because our risks have been well mitigated this year, we have not seen an increase in premiums this year.

However, our various insurances (ie employers, liability, buildings etc) have all gone up in the region of 10%.

Therefore, I believe that as a minimum at the end of this financial year my profits will be down in excess of £40,000.00. Normally the average yearly profit is around £50,000.00.


This is not sustainable.

If a rate increase is approved it will not result in any extra profit for United, as the following example will show:

According to the figures from Digitax, a 10% increase will give an extra £2.60 in revenue over a 10 mile journey. Of this 50% (£1.30) will be retained by the driver, giving him/her a small increase.

A 10 mile journey, unless there is a return journey from the drop off point will actually result in the vehicle covering up to 20 miles and the extra fuel could amount to £2.54. In practice there are returns on a small percentage of journeys, so this figure is somewhat subjective. Independent drivers are even less likely to be presented with opportunities for return journeys, and would be unlikely to see any extra revenue.

In conclusion, I would say that over the last 33 years that I have owned United, I have always been conservative with requests for fare increases. However this time I believe that nothing less than an immediate 10% increase will bring the percentage of my running costs down to a financially viable level.


United Taxis

Response #2

Emergency increase of metered taxi fares

I represent the independent taxi drivers in Ashford, but in this instance I feel it's important to say that we're united as a trade and all very concerned for our livelihoods, businesses and the future of being able to provide a viable taxi fleet for Ashford and wider community.

As you're all very well aware from your own personal lives, costs have spiralled out of control in the last year and beyond, particularly with energy and fuel. Couple that with inflation rates, and even our maintenance costs have risen in most cases above the rate of inflation.

Fuel is by and large the biggest outlay for our trade. Just yesterday (22/06/2022) I filled my car with diesel at Tesco Crooksfoot, who's prices have now touched the £2 a litre mark. A £99 visit saw a 49.52 litre volume. From empty, it now will cost me

£150 to fill my 75 litre tank. RAC have predicted prices of around £2.25 a litre by Christmas, but with the rate it's increasing, I feel we will reach that figure much sooner.

These costs have a major detrimental impact on profits, and as small businesses, or any business in fact, it's only viable if a profit is achievable, not only to sustain what I would consider as a very important service to Ashford's community and beyond.

With the recent news of Arrow taxis closing in July, I think this in itself is a very good indication of how bigger crisis the trade is in. To lose such a long standing and integral company that's serves Ashford is a travesty. I've spoken to Ivan of United taxis and we've discussed our businesses viability. This is a very real and imminent danger to all of us.

The trade is proposing a 10% increase on the mileage element of fares with no increase on the "drop" rate when starting the metered fare. Our reasoning for this is so that the fare paying public is not immediately affected at the start of their journey and as such will remain the same. It is only the distance travelled that would see the increase, which directly affects the viability of the fares. Generally speaking, the majority of fares from, for instance, the train station (from an independent driver aspect) are very local fares for local people. Anything less than a 10% mileage increase would see very little change in a 1-5 mile journey. In fact, even on a 10 mile journey, the metered fare would still only increase by £2.70.

In the past 2-3 years I have been reluctant to put forward any major fare increase as one of the representatives of our trade, to try and remain fair to the public in harder times when they're already experiencing cost of living increases, and not to put them off using our services. The truth is that, that is only sustainable for so long before action is required to keep our trade and the service to the public alive.

I would like to say, though this is not a profit making exercise. It really is to try and offset a massive increase in costs. We are trying to protect a very important public service. If the fuel costs returned to a more normal level, then we'd expect to see a decrease in the metered fare accordingly.

As an indication of how much please see the attached images of fuel receipts. One from 9th November 2021 and one from 22nd June 2022. Even in that short time a massive 55p a litre increase.



In November 2021 it would cost me £108.75 to fill my tank. Fast forward to mid June 2022 and now costs £150.

Based on my average of around 30mpg in November 2021, 500 miles would cost me £112.67. Currently the same mileage costs £151.33. If the projected increase by the RAC is correct, at £2.25 a litre, the same 500 miles will cost £170.25.

We have also seen a major hike in insurance costs. My renewal date is 8th October each year. On the 8th October 2020 my renewal cost was £960.20 premium, rising to £1,098.95 with the credit charge for paying in monthly instalments for 2021-22. For the same period a year later, 8th October 2021-22, my premium went up to £1,255.82, rising to £1,481.87 with the credit charges. An extra £226.05 in one year alone. I have had zero claims in that period and also have the maximum no claims discount allowed (9+ years). Over that period I've averaged approx 29,000 miles per annum.



[Home](#) | [My Loans](#) | [My Contact Details](#) | [Documents](#) | [Linked Loans](#) | [Security Settings](#) | [Messages](#) | [Help](#)

Loans Details

Loan Overview

Account Number :	[REDACTED]	Broker Name :	[REDACTED]
Total Premium :	£ 960.62	Instalments :	10
Renewal Date :	08-Oct-20	Loan Status :	Paid
Credit Charge :	£ 138.33	Arrears on my loan :	£ 0.00
Loan Due To Cancel :	N/A	Representation Date :	N/A
Balance Payable Excluding Deposit :	£ 906.83	Deposit Amount :	£ 192.12
Deposit Collected By :	Broker	Cover Type :	Commercial Vehicle
Insurer :	[REDACTED]	Policy Number :	[REDACTED]

Payment Schedule Items

Arrears on my loan : £ 0.00

Payment Date	Type of Payment	Scheduled Payment Amounts	
		Loan(01)	Total
09-Nov-20	Direct Debit	£ 90.68	£ 90.68
08-Dec-20	Direct Debit	£ 90.71	£ 90.71
08-Jan-21	Direct Debit	£ 90.68	£ 90.68
08-Feb-21	Direct Debit	£ 90.68	£ 90.68
08-Mar-21	Direct Debit	£ 90.68	£ 90.68
08-Apr-21	Direct Debit	£ 90.68	£ 90.68
10-May-21	Direct Debit	£ 90.68	£ 90.68
08-Jun-21	Direct Debit	£ 90.68	£ 90.68
08-Jul-21	Direct Debit	£ 90.68	£ 90.68
09-Aug-21	Direct Debit	£ 90.68	£ 90.68
	Totals	£ 906.83	£ 906.83

[Amend Payment Schedule ▶](#)

09:57 Thu 30 Jun closebrothersbanking.com

You have

Close Brothers
Premium Finance

Home My Loans My Contact Details Documents Linked Loans Security Settings Messages Help Logout

Loans Details

Loan Overview

Account Number :	[REDACTED]	Broker Name :	[REDACTED]
Total Premium :	£ 1255.82	Instalments :	11
Renewal Date :	08-Oct-21	Loan Status :	Active
Credit Charge :	£ 226.05	Arrears on my loan :	£ 0.00
Loan Due To Cancel :	N/A	Representation Date :	N/A
Balance Payable Excluding Deposit :	£ 1481.87	Deposit Amount :	£ 0.00
Deposit Collected By :	N/A	Cover Type :	Commercial Vehicle
Insurer :	[REDACTED]	Policy Number :	[REDACTED]

Payment Schedule Items

Arrears on my loan : £ 0.00

Payment Date	Type of Payment	Scheduled Payment Amounts	
		Loan(01)	Total
20-Oct-21	Direct Debit	£ 134.72	£ 134.72
08-Nov-21	Direct Debit	£ 134.67	£ 134.67
15-Dec-21	Direct Debit	£ 134.72	£ 134.72
10-Jan-22	Direct Debit	£ 134.72	£ 134.72
08-Feb-22	Direct Debit	£ 134.72	£ 134.72
08-Mar-22	Direct Debit	£ 134.72	£ 134.72
08-Apr-22	Direct Debit	£ 134.72	£ 134.72
09-May-22	Direct Debit	£ 134.72	£ 134.72
08-Jun-22	Direct Debit	£ 134.72	£ 134.72
08-Jul-22	Direct Debit	£ 134.72	£ 134.72
08-Aug-22	Direct Debit	£ 134.72	£ 134.72
Totals		£ 1481.87	£ 1481.87

[Amend Payment Schedule](#)

Bank Account Details

Close Brothers Premium Finance part of the Close Brothers group has been helping people pay for insurance premiums for over 35 years pride ourselves giving our customers the best possible service and support.

The cost of servicing and maintenance has risen considerably also, but without listing consumables individually, from an independent driver with one car perspective, it's difficult to evidence just how this impacts on a price per mile to the fare paying public. Ivan Aughty (United Taxis) is evidencing this on a bigger scale with a bigger fleet including workshop costs, so we can better understand and show the Committee the increases and break down to a cost per car per year.

Licensing fees also rise year on year, and while these increases may be in line with inflation, a national average, and increased cost to the Council, we (as a trade) cannot really defend against such increases. Currently, it seems, all expenditure increases are passed on to the trade and we have no real way of neutralising them to make our businesses, independently or as a fleet, viable. The latest 3% increase comes nowhere near to making a dent in our added expenditure.

While traditionally as a representative of the independent drivers, I have always been very conservative about asking for fare increases, and am very keen not to alienate

the very people we rely upon for our trade, but, the fare paying community also rely on us and our town's fleet for their day to day travel needs too. In order for us to continue to serve the town and represent Ashford Borough Council, our businesses have to be viable.

While the fuel costs have primarily induced our request, you can see that it is not fuel alone that has and is having a major impact on our viability.

I hope this goes some way to explain the reasoning behind our request and give an insight for you to consider.

Paul Coombes
Independent taxi representative

Response #3

I think you should start with the 4.30 or 4.90.

Reason being, the cost of fuel and spare parts, to name but few, has risen so high in less than a year, and the fair's not inclined with the price increase. E.g is Arrow taxi, would have been the last to close their door on taxing.

Response #4

Not sure who to see or talk to so start with you sorry.

I'm very close to going the way of arrow taxis fuel is up at least 100% Servicing food even my rent and the electricity I use has all gone up by quite a big margin. The BBC say that fuel prices will reach £2.25 per liter by October.

Fuel alone is taking £100 a week out of my pocket that is for rent and food on the table. 3 weeks ago I was actually £17 down for the week witch means I payed £17 to go to work 12 hours a day. So is there anything ABC and or licensing can do to help. Like reduce plate fees. Extend compliance to once a year or maybe even put fares up by at least 10% to cover costs of running a taxi service.

Response #5

Part 1

I would like to request +10% increase.

Part 2

Thank you very much for responded me. Yes I have lots of evience those are

1. Diesel price it was perliter £1.75 but now a days £1.99
 2. Add blue before 10liter=£12.49 now-£16,99
 3. Regular servicing parts before £111.61 now 125.89
 4. Labour costs-£70 now-£91.49
 5. Tyre with fitting –becore£99.79 now-£113.20
 6. and basic needs for groceries also becomes high.
- if would like copy of all above mentioned I will provide you.

Thanks again

Response #6

I am writing in reply to your email regarding a review of the current Hackney carriage fare tariff.

Over the last year, the cost of living expenses has been increasing rapidly across the country. Prices have been rising every month, with drastic increases in home prices, gas costs and more specifically, fuel costs. Fuel prices have increased by more than 50p a litre over the last few months. Car maintenance and insurance has become infeasible to the point where one of the biggest taxi firms in Ashford is shutting down solely because of this, and more will follow should this problem continue. In terms of the taxi trade, an increase in fair prices is required for this industry to continue. All the evidence of these costs is in front of you- petrol prices has become a national problem; not only fuel, but car insurance and maintaining the car (i.e. parts and labour) is becoming unviable, so what more evidence do you require that will justify an increase in fare tariffs? Bearing this in mind, my recommendation is at least a 10%-15% increase in the fare tariff. This may be viable for the timebeing. Of course we are considering the public's interests, but where the costs of everything is increasingly massively, the public must and will understand the fare increase in the taxi trade.

I hope you will consider all the evidence and circumstances that are right in front of you. Thank you very much.

Response #7

I believe a temporary rise of 10% would be in order and review if and when fuel prices come down . as for proof , is it to simplistic to say look at the news ? We have to live, prices for everything from fuel to car parts to food electric,gas etc etc etc what proof is there needed my actual bank account showing money evaporating I find it unbelievable we have to provide proof

Response #8

I think 20% fare increase will be needed. Other than fuel, car maintenance cost is getting higher and higher. Car wash used to be £5, now its become £10. Changing tire used to cost me £55, not it cost me £70/80 etc etc.

I think this is the right time to do something, otherwise our situation will be like Arrow.

Response #9

Sorry I haven't replied to your emails but the tariffs don't really affect the executive trade

I personally would support an increase in tariffs.

Our rates have gone up and will do so as fuel increase (being the biggest running cost to our business) to give you an idea
Ashford - LHR in January was £120 now is £135 thats fuel & drop off charges .
That's likely to go up to £140 when Diesel goes over £2.00 Liter.

Response #10

Dear Sir/Madam,

26th June 2022

I hope this finds you well. I am an independent hackney taxi driver and am writing to kindly talk about the current situation we are facing as taxi drivers in the current state of the economy.

Below are a few examples of comparisons showing price increases within a three-month period:

In March 2022, a full tank of fuel for my taxi had a cost of £90. As of June 2022, a full tank for my taxi costs £110.

Also, the price of 10 litres of Adblue was £12 in March 2022 , and is now £18.50 (June 2022).

Moreover, the price of a full servicing for my taxi was £160 in March 2022, and is now £190 (June 2022).

Therefore, taking these increases in expenses into consideration, I am kindly requesting the Ashford Borough Council to please consider increasing the taxi fares by 15%.

Response #11

Part 1

Hi licensing I fill we need at least a 10% rise.

Part 2

I emailed you the other day regarding what proff you needed for an emergency tariff increase. Thank you for your response but i fill its a pointless exercise on my part even bothering. I fill you are going to do what you want to do regardless of what the trade wants or needs. All increases in the past 3 years have been based on expenses only. An actual rise in pay for drivers and independents has not happened in years. How do you expect companies such as Arrow to survive and attract drivers, when drivers money is not increasing. How can a company possibly attract drivers. This is only going to hurt customers, when a company the size of Arrow cannot exist no more. This was the company that took on short runs ie supermarket runs because they usually had a car clearing in lots of areas and could take on that work. Now there will be only United that will be able to do it because a independent on such a low start rate will not be interested in that sort of job. The start rate needs to go up considerably to make the short runs profitable to do. I guess you have no intention to do any of this and the hackney carriage trade will just die of death. You will only end up with private hire companies that will be able to charge what they like and no wheelchair accessible vehicle, great for customers. I hope i will receive a response to this email but probably will not.

Response #12

I am writing this email as I would like to add to above examples you have provided. Previously, for airport run from ashford to heathrow airport, £25 worth of fuel was sufficient. Now it costs around £45. This is one example.

Another example is that with servicing of vehicles, our local garages used to charge £150, now it's costs £30 more as they all have raised their prices.

I would like to request an increase on fare of more than 10%.

Response #13

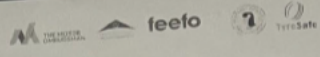
Dear Sir/ Madam

I am an independent hackney taxi driver. Please have a look some evidence between last year and this year. I am kindly requesting Ashford Borough Council. Please increase taxi fare by 10%.

Thank you

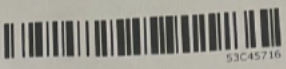


INVOICE



VICTORIA ROAD - TYREW
2 Channel Estate, Vic
TN23 7HJ

Channel Estate, Victoria Road, Ashford,
Ashford@protyre.co.uk



Date: 31/03/21

SALE AMOUNT £350.00
VERIFIED BY PIN

I agree to pay the above final amount
According to the card/merchants issuer
agreement

CUSTOMER COPY

Registration: [REDACTED] Mileage 57964
MOT Due: 29/01/20 Service Due: 01/01/01
Served By: Locking Wheel Nut:

Invoice Number: 53C45716

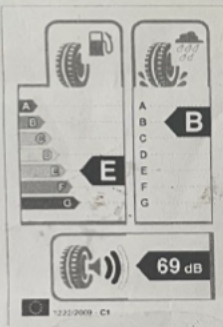
QTY	PRICE	VALUE	PRODUCT CODE	BIN
4	66.67	266.68	2155517ZBUSUBC10	H FLOOR
4	0.00	0.00	RV*	
1	25.00	25.00	TRA1	

TC: 30047015E7AR2E84

350.00 paid by PDQ CARD on card number [REDACTED]

This invoice refers to Advice Not [REDACTED]

Total Number of Units Supplied: 9



Tyre Label applies to the following Stock Item(s):
2155517ZBUSUBC10 215/55R17 SUMITOMO BC100 94W

VAT RATE: 20% TOTAL GOODS: 291.68 TOTAL VAT 58.32 TOTAL 350.00
VAT Reg. No. 876 3353 94

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION PLEASE READ

- PLEASE CHECK YOUR WHEEL NUTS AFTER 50 MILES**
- It is strongly recommended tyres on 4x4 vehicles are used in identical sets of 4 (same size, make, pattern, load index & speed symbol)
- Vehicle manufacturers' recommendations should always be followed

WHAT IS A TYRE LABEL?
A Tyre Label is a snapshot of basic information for consumers purchasing motor vehicle tyres. (Much like the energy labels on white goods) Manufacturers of tyres for cars, light and heavy trucks must specify fuel consumption, wet grip and noise classification of every tyre sold in EU market starting in November 2012. For more info please visit www.protyre.co.uk

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR CUSTOM

VICTORIA ROAD - TYREW
2 Chunnel Estate, Vic
TN23 7HJ

PROTYRE
www.protyre.co.uk

Ashford, Victoria Road
Unit 2 Chunnel Estate, Victoria Road, Ashford, Kent, TN23 7HJ
Tel: 01233 625962
Ashford@protyre.co.uk



DATE: 29/04/22

SALE AMOUNT £209.01

VERIFIED BY PIN

I agree to pay the above final amount
According to the card/merchants issuer
agreement

CUSTOMER COPY

Home Tel: [REDACTED] Mobile Tel: [REDACTED]
Email Address: [REDACTED]
MOT Due: 29/01/20 Service Due:
Service By: [REDACTED] Vehicle Registration: [REDACTED]

INVOICE NUMBER: 53C51180

TC: 661291465A94G1C

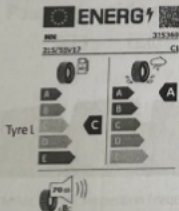
	Qty	Price	Value	Product Code	Bin
FRONT WHEEL ALIGNMENT A	1	30.00	30.00	TRA1	
ENVIRONMENTAL CHARGE	1	2.09	2.09	ENVIRO	
215/55R17 FALKEN ZE914A 94V	2	62.37	124.74	2155517XBUBFA91	DISP
COMPUTER WHEEL BALANCE	2	8.67	17.34	CCBAL	

2155517XBUBFA914A Class: C1, Fuel Code: C, Wet Grip: A, Noise DB: 70, Noise: B

209.01 paid by PDQ CARD on card number [REDACTED]

This invoice refers to Advice Note [REDACTED]

Total Number of Units Supplied: 6



2155517XBUBFA914A

215/55R17 FALKEN ZE914A 94V

VAT RATE: 20%

TOTAL GOODS: 174.17

TOTAL VAT: 34.84

TOTAL: 209.01

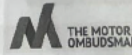
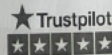
VAT Reg. No. 876 3353 94

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION PLEASE READ

- ⚠ Please check your wheel nuts after 50 miles
- ⚠ It is strongly recommended tyres on 4x4 vehicles are used in identical sets of 4 (same size, make, pattern, load index & speed symbol)
- ⚠ Vehicle manufacturers' recommendations should also be followed

WHAT IS A TYRE LABEL?

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Response #14

Good Morning Sir/Madam,

I hope this email finds you well.

I am writing this email to address current issues.

We are aware of a recent rise in fuel prices, along with this there has also been an increase in insurance price, servicing price but the cost of our service remains the same.

For evidence I have attached last year and this year cost of fuel and Insurance here

Sainsbury's

Helping everyone eat better

BYBROOK
01233 610841

Sainsbury's Supermarkets Ltd
33 Holborn London EC1N 2HT
www.sainsburys.co.uk
Vat Number : 660 4548 36

Fuelling start time: 30/06/2022 22:02

*DIESEL Pump #12
43.16 LTR @ £1.939 £85.35 C

1 BALANCE DUE £85.85
CASH £85.35

CHANGE £0.00

VAT RECEIPT SUMMARY - FUEL ONLY
Rate NET VAT TOTAL
C 20.00% 71.54 14.31 85.85
Vat Number: 660 4548 36

MY NECTAR SUMMARY

**** 6952037

£0.00

ASHFORD
TN23 2ES
Tel: 01233 622441

Wed 23 Jun 2021 22:12:58

Store 1024 POS 1
Op Name

Trans 1062
Manager

SALE

Diesel £58.10
Pump2: 43.39L @£1.339/L

Total £58.10

GBP £60.00

Change Due £1.90

TG Convenience Stores Limited

VAT No.			312 6310 51
VAT Rate	Ex.VAT	VAT	Inc.VAT
20%	43.42	9.68	58.10
Totals	43.42	9.68	58.10

BPme Rewards

Points earned this visit: 43
Points balance: 2305
New points are worth £11.52



Policy Number



Contact




Reference



Date

04/05/2022

Dear Mr 

Taxi Renewal

Thank you for your continued business over the last 12 months, your custom is appreciated. We wish to inform you that your Taxi policy falls due for renewal on 16/05/2022 and our Renewal price is detailed below.

Current Insurer: 

Renewal Date: **16/05/2022**

Renewal Premium:	£1,228.47
Service Charge:	£175.00
Optional Legal Protection:	£39.50
Optional Breakdown Cover:	£99.00
Optional Guaranteed Vehicle Hire:	£60.00
Discount:	(£100.00)
TOTAL AMOUNT DUE:	£1,501.97





Policy Number



Contact



Reference



Date

12/05/2021

Dear Mr

Thank you for arranging your Taxi policy with your cover is in force for 12 months with effect from 16/05/2021

Confirmation of your Price is detailed below:

Premium:	£1,148.59	inc 12% IPT
Service Charge:	£175.00	
Optional Breakdown Cover:	£99.00	
Optional Guaranteed Vehicle Hire:	£25.20	
Discount:	(£303.79)	
TOTAL COST:	£1,144.00	

See overleaf for further details of your cover, including your Statement of Demands and Needs and your payment details.

Please note, we require the following items to be submitted to us as the premium quoted is subject to the receipt of the following documentation:

- Taxi driver's licence & badge
- Vehicle taxi licence
- V5 Registration document - page 1 & 2
- Original proof of 3 years no claims bonus
- Signed Proposal form

Please take the time to read your enclosed documentation. We ask that you check these documents carefully to ensure that the details we hold for you are accurate and that adequate cover is in place.

Should you have any questions regarding your documentation, please contact us on 01903 258578.

Yours sincerely,



With the way the cost of maintaining good service is increasing, I doubt the 3% offered on the table will cover it.

Me and most of my colleagues believe we 'll me needing at least 10-15% increase in our service cost to allow us to continue provide excellent service to public.

So, could I please kindly request you acknowledge all the points mentions above and review and re consider the percentage that can been offered to us.

Kinds Regards

Response #15

I am writing to ask for our 10% rise. What with service parts, tyres, plate, insurance, household bills, fuel, electric, I could go on, but we are all aware of the hard times we are in.

I don't think it unreasonable to a rise as if not, I could go bust; as we are all struggling. Hope to hear some good news from Licensing soon. Thank you

Response #16

I am an independent hackney driver working in Ashford.

I am writing to request that the council increase taxi fare prices to whatever is the maximum possible due to the increase in fuel prices.

From last year, I have experienced almost an £27 increase in filling up the same amount of fuel (see receipts).

Additionally, tyre costs, servicing costs, and insurance costs all have increased as well and so increasing taxi fares is of the utmost importance to cover these increases in expenses.

I hope that you can consider these factors in review of taxi fares.



Response #17

I hope you are doing well. I am an Independent Hackney taxi driver and am getting in contact to kindly discuss the ongoing situation we are facing as taxi drivers in the present state of the economy.

Listed below, I would like to mention a couple of examples of comparisons showing the price increases that has occurred since the beginning of 2022.

On January 2022, diesel cost £1.46 per litre (05/01/2022 Sainsbury's Petrol Station). As of current, the same volume of diesel now costs approximately £2.00 per litre, an increase of 37%.

Also, a full service to my taxi vehicle has increased by around £20. Adding on to this, the cost of Adblue previously was £12 (March 2022), however, it has risen by 54.17% and is now at £18.50.

Due to the fact that petrol prices are continuing to increase, I would like to politely request the Ashford Borough Council to consider increasing the taxi fares by 15%.

Response #18

I am also very concerned like many other taxi drivers based in ashford about the petrol prices. I think I will propose a minimum of 15% increase in the fares if possible. I have enclosed my evidence for diesel receipt for last year and this year. My insurance is due in November and unfortunately my last year insurance

receipt my accountant has got it as he is preparing my tax return. I do remember my last year premium was £1384.00 and I am assuming this year is likely to be higher as usual everything is going up. Please bear in mind this job is my main job and my family relies on my income. Also I want to make the council aware is there anyway council can take actions to those driver who are cherry picking jobs from the rank? Most drivers are doing this now. Example a customer comes to the station rank asking the first driver "do you take card?" Driver replies "where are you going?" customer " Stanhope" driver "no sorry". If that customer said they want to go maidstone the driver will say yes he takes card. It means the driver at the back has to take that Stanhope job or might do the same thing than it can go on and on until a customer finds a decent driver which is bad experience for our trade. The end result is if the driver takes card than he needs to take the customer anywhere. If it's cash only than he needs to display it in his windscreen and the rear windscreen so the customer can see it and the driver behind can see it. I would recommend if the council will consider to let the driver add a very small percentage in the fare if the customer pays by card because the driver has to pay the percentage from his side to the card company. Also if the driver card isn't working than they shouldn't be working in the rank as this may be a excuse for some driver to refuse small jobs. Most of the customers are paying by card now so please take consideration to make card compulsory for drivers. Thank you.

Response #19

Please forward our support for an 10 per cent increase to our meter rates due the 70 pence per litre fuel increased cost

since March 2022 plus all other cost we our facing from other suppliers to our trade eg garage repairs etc and our

own personnel cost of living standards at home eg Gas / electric bills



Response #20

I would like to request to you for an urgent and immediate Hackney Fare Review due to prices hiking up on fuels, adblue, car maintenance and overall rising living costs. In order to sustain taxi trade we need your immediate proper and viable

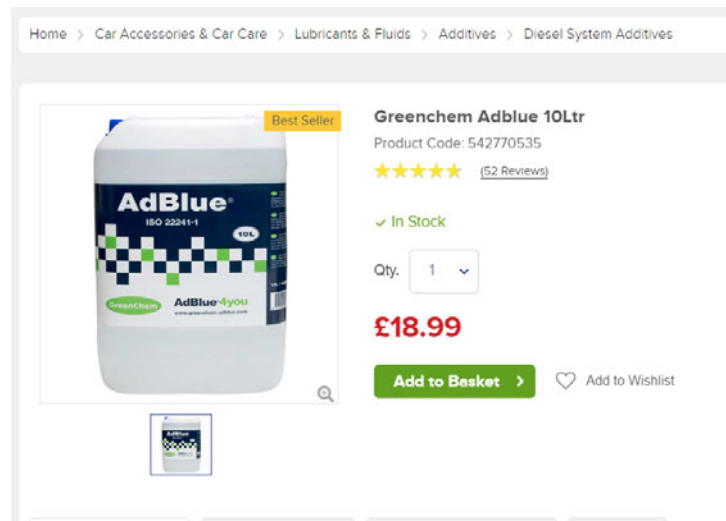
taxi fare review please. I would kindly request you to increase the fare at least by 15% on a current meter fare rate.

Furthermore, I would like to request you to have a look and increase on meter base rate eg. "If the distance does not exceed 680 yards, for the whole distance or for the first 216 seconds of waiting time should increase from £2.90 to at least £5 which will definitely work for both driver and customer equally. Why £5? Many drivers don't want to do the smallest job which is just around £3 fare for a whole journey which is quite irrelevant in current situations due to high expenses and on the other hand customers struggle to find taxis for a short journey.

I hope you will take it seriously and we are all drivers waiting for your positive response as soon as possible.

Please find the attached receipt your kind reference.

Thank you



Sainsbury's

Helping everyone eat better
BYBROOK
01233 610841

Sainsbury's Supermarkets Ltd
33 Holborn London EC1N 2HT
www.sainsburys.co.uk
Vat Number : 660 4548 36

Fuelling start time: 18/09/2021 20:29

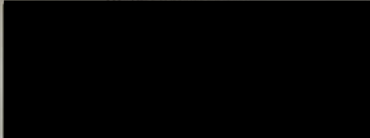
*DIESEL Pump #14
51.89 LTR @ £1.349 £70.00 C

1 BALANCE DUE £70.00
CASH £70.00

CHANGE £0.00

VAT RECEIPT SUMMARY - FUEL ONLY
Rate NET VAT TOTAL
C 20.00% 58.33 11.67 70.00
Vat Number: 660 4548 36

MY NECTAR SUMMARY



Check your Nectar app to see
points earned on offers.

***** For a chance to win *****
100,000 Nectar points
please tell us how we did at
lettuce-know.com



6290059167728900180921

C1296 #7289 20:32:36 18SEP2021
S0059 R167

(cash)

Sainsbury's

Helping everyone eat better
BYBROOK
01233 610841

Sainsbury's Supermarkets Ltd
33 Holborn London EC1N 2HT
www.sainsburys.co.uk
Vat Number : 660 4548 36

Fuelling start time: 08/07/2022 08:32

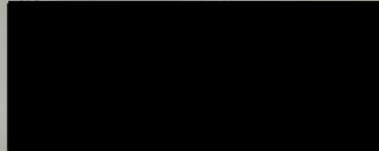
*DIESEL Pump #12
51.48 LTR @ £1.979 £101.88 C

1 BALANCE DUE £101.88
CASH £105.00

CHANGE £3.12

VAT RECEIPT SUMMARY - FUEL ONLY
Rate NET VAT TOTAL
C 20.00% 84.90 16.98 101.88
Vat Number: 660 4548 36

MY NECTAR SUMMARY



Check your Nectar app to see
points earned on offers.

***** For a chance to win *****
100,000 Nectar points
please tell us how we did at
lettuce-know.com



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C2285 #5040 08:36:00 08JUL2022
S0059 R167

Thank you for your visit.



Agenda Item No: 5
Report To: REGULATORY COMMITTEE
Date of Meeting: 19 July 2022
Report Title: Taxi Licensing Policy Review
Report Author: Trevor Ford
Job Title: Environmental Protection & Licensing Team Leader
Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Peter Feacey
Portfolio Holder for: Safety and Wellbeing

Summary:	The purpose of this report is to present an interim review of the councils Taxi Licensing Policy 2017-2022.
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Key Decision: NO

Significantly Affected Wards: All

Recommendations: The Committee is recommended to:-

- i. **Note the Department of Transport (DfT) review of the Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Best Practice Guidance**
- ii. **Recommend the extension of the current Taxi Licensing Policy 2017-2022 until 31 March 2023, with administrative amendments, and the amendment to the frequency of DVLA licence checks.**

Policy Overview: The determination of taxi and private hire driver, operator, and vehicle licence applications is a statutory duty and provides protection to the public ensuring vehicles, operators and drivers are fit and proper for the purposes of providing such services.

Our policy with respects to this subject area guides members of the public, applicants, elected members, and officers on such matters.

Financial Implications: None

Legal Implications: Proposed amendments ensure that changes and updates in legislation are captured within the current policy, whilst taking a pragmatic approach to wait for the publication of new DfT guidance before conducting a full review. This eliminates the risk to the council if one had delayed incorporating the changes, especially in respect of the Taxi and Private Hire
Text agreed by Principle Litigator on 11 July 2022

	Vehicles (Disabled Persons) Act 2022 and ensures public safety
Equalities Impact Assessment:	See Attached
Data Protection Impact Assessment:	N/A
Risk Assessment (Risk Appetite Statement):	<p>Judicial review is a risk if the policy strays beyond the requirements of the act, or restricts legal activities without due and appropriate cause.</p> <p>The extension of the existing policy and the increased DVLA licence checks remain within the scope of the Act and good practice, and ensures that our approach remains legally robust.</p>
Sustainability Implications:	None
Other Material Implications:	None
Exempt from Publication:	NO
Background Papers:	Taxi Licensing Policy 2017-2022 available at; https://www.ashford.gov.uk/media/xfn4o4f/taxi-licensing-policy-dec2020update.pdf)
Contact:	trevor.ford@ashford.gov.uk – Tel: (01233) 330 397

Report Title: Taxi Licensing Policy Review

Introduction and Background

1. The Council adopted the Taxi Licensing Policy 2017-2022 on 12 October 2017, with further amendments being made in October 2018 adopting guidance surrounding the suitability of applicants and licensees, and in December 2020 following the publishing of the 'statutory taxi and private hire vehicle standards'
2. The policy relating to the determination of applications not only guides the decision-maker but also serves to inform an applicant about what they should consider in preparing their application. Furthermore, the policy sets out the standards to which the licensing authority will work and provides confidence to the public that the drivers are fit and proper, and that the vehicles are fit for purpose.
3. The purpose of this report is to present an interim review of this policy, which is due to be reviewed in October 2022.

Proposal

4. At the current time the DfT are reviewing the 'Taxi and Private Hire Best Practice Guidance' which was last issued in March 2010, and is considered well overdue revision.
5. The Licensing team, in liaison with the then Regulatory Committee chair and Safety and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder, fed into the public consultation, which closed on the 20 June 2022.
6. We now await the publishing of the updated guidance document from the DfT
7. In light of the impending DfT guidance document and the current policy document, it is proposed and recommended to 'extend' the effect of the existing policy until 31 March 2023 in order that a single more meaningful review can be conducted in light of any updated guidance.
8. There is however a single interim amendment being sought to update *Paragraph 6.8.4* to increase the checks on existing licensees DVLA drivers licence from annually to six-monthly to tie up with the frequency of other criminal record checks as introduced by the 'statutory taxi and private hire vehicle standards'.
9. This change will further increase public safety, by allowing the Licensing Authority to detect undisclosed convictions or penalty points more quickly, whilst having no additional burden on the licensee. Due to cost savings previously achieved by switching service providers offering this service, this change is not considered to have any significant impact on the application fee.
10. Additionally administrative updates will be include to reflect the legal requirements introduced in June 2022 under the Taxi and Private Hire Vehicles (Disabled Persons) Act 2022. This act amends the duties on drivers and

operators with the aim of ensuring that disabled people can use taxi and private hire service with confidence that they will not be discriminated against.

11. It is otherwise considered that the current policy document is up to date, and not in need of any other immediate or urgent changes.

Equalities Impact Assessment

12. The policy will affect all persons involved or affected in a relevant licensable activity in the Borough, irrespective of gender, race, disability, sexuality or age. Recipients of the policy include holders of licences, members of the council's Appeals Committee, authorities e.g. Kent Police, KCC Schools Transport, Kent Fire & Rescue Service, etc. and all of the Borough's businesses, residents of the borough and those who visit and use local taxi services.
13. An equalities impact assessment is attached as *Appendix A*

Consultation Planned or Undertaken

14. Given the limited scope and impact of the proposed recommendations, no public consultation has been undertaken, nor is proposed. A full public consultation will be undertaken as part of any wider review or update of the Policy following the publishing of the DfT guidance.
15. An informal consultation on these proposals was undertaken with the five Taxi Forum representatives.
16. Only one response was received, from the independent diver representative, who supported the extension of the existing policy to avoid the need to complete two separate reviews, and also supported the more frequent DVLA licensed checks.

Other Options Considered

17. There are as always a number of options available to councils with respects to taxi licensing. This includes conducting a full review of the existing Taxi Licensing Policy prior to the publishing of the DfT guidance, however such a measure in light of the pending DfT guidance does not appear necessary.

Reasons for Supporting Option Recommended

18. It is felt that the options proposed are appropriate to the borough, act to ensure that public safety is protected, and ensure an efficient and effective licensing regime.
19. Overall this approach is recommended to ensure that the policy remains up to date, and can be effectively applied by the council, officers, applicants, and the general public.

Next Steps in Process

20. Once adopted by council, the extended and amended policy will be published and the increased DVLA checks will be implemented immediately.
21. The policy will then be brought back for review following the publishing of the Department for Transport taxi licensing guidance or by the 31 March 2023 as appropriate.

Conclusion

22. The proposed extension and amendment are being made based on good practice, coupled with the clear need to protect the public. The amendments will aid an efficient and effective licensing regime going forwards.

Portfolio Holder's Views

23. "In light of the position regarding the national good practice guidance, I support the extension of the policy, and the proposed amendments which will ensure that our taxi licensing regime remains effective."

Councillor Peter Feacey
Portfolio Holder for Safety & Wellbeing

Contact and Email

24. Trevor Ford
Environmental Protection and Licensing Team Leader
(01233) 330 397
trevor.ford@ashford.gov.uk

Appendix A: Equalities Impact Assessment

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Equality Impact Assessment

1. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is a document that summarises how the council has had due regard to the public sector equality duty (Equality Act 2010) in its decision-making. Although there is no legal duty to produce an EIA, the Council must have **due regard** to the equality duty and an EIA is recognised as the best method of fulfilling that duty. It can assist the Council in making a judgment as to whether a policy or other decision will have unintended negative consequences for certain people and help maximise the positive impacts of policy change. An EIA can lead to one of four consequences:

- (a) No major change – the policy or other decision is robust with no potential for discrimination or adverse impact. Opportunities to promote equality have been taken;
- (b) Adjust the policy or decision to remove barriers or better promote equality as identified in the EIA;
- (c) Continue the policy – if the EIA identifies potential for adverse impact, set out compelling justification for continuing;
- (d) Stop and remove the policy where actual or potential unlawful discrimination is identified.

Public sector equality duty

2. The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on the council, when exercising public functions, to have due regard to the need to:
- (a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
 - (b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - (c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it (ie tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people from different groups).

3. These are known as the three aims of the general equality duty.

Protected characteristics

4. The Equality Act 2010 sets out nine protected characteristics for the purpose of the equality duty:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership*
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

*For marriage and civil partnership, only the first aim of the duty applies in relation to employment.

Due regard

5. Having 'due regard' is about using good equality information and analysis at the right time as part of decision-making procedures.
6. To 'have due regard' means that in making decisions and in its other day-to-day activities the council must consciously consider the need to do the things set out in the general equality duty: eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. This can involve:
- removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
 - taking steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics when these are different from the needs of other people.
 - encouraging people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where it is disproportionately low.

7. How much regard is 'due' will depend on the circumstances. The greater the

potential impact, the higher the regard required by the duty. Examples of functions and decisions likely to engage the duty include: policy decisions, budget decisions, public appointments, service provision, statutory discretion, decisions on individuals, employing staff and procurement of goods and services.

8. In terms of timing:

- Having 'due regard' should be considered at the inception of any decision or proposed policy or service development or change.
- Due regard should be considered throughout development of a decision. Notes shall be taken and kept on file as to how due regard has been had to the equality duty in research, meetings, project teams, consultations etc.
- The completion of the EIA is a way of effectively summarising this and it should inform final decision-making.

Case law principles

9. A number of principles have been established by the courts in relation to the equality duty and due regard:

- Decision-makers in public authorities must be aware of their duty to have 'due regard' to the equality duty and so EIA's must be attached to any relevant committee reports.
- Due regard is fulfilled before and at the time a particular policy is under consideration as well as at the time a decision is taken. Due regard involves a conscious approach and state of mind.
- A public authority cannot satisfy the duty by justifying a decision after it has been taken.
- The duty must be exercised in substance, with rigour and with an open mind in such a way that it influences the final decision.
- The duty is a non-delegable one. The duty will always remain the responsibility of the public authority.
- The duty is a continuing one so that it needs to be considered not only when a

policy, for example, is being developed and agreed but also when it is implemented.

- It is good practice for those exercising public functions to keep an accurate record showing that they have actually considered the general duty and pondered relevant questions. Proper record keeping encourages transparency and will discipline those carrying out the relevant function to undertake the duty conscientiously.
- A public authority will need to consider whether it has sufficient information to assess the effects of the policy, or the way a function is being carried out, on the aims set out in the general equality duty.
- A public authority cannot avoid complying with the duty by claiming that it does not have enough resources to do so.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission has produced helpful guidance on "Meeting the Equality Duty in Policy and Decision-Making" (October 2014). It is available on the following link and report authors should read and follow this when developing or reporting on proposals for policy or service development or change and other decisions likely to engage the equality duty. [Equality Duty in decision-making](#)

Equality Impact Assessment

Lead officer:	Trevor Ford
Decision maker:	Full Council
Decision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy, project, service, contract • Review, change, new, stop 	To agree to the extension of the Taxi Licensing Policy 2017-2022, with amendments.
Date of decision: The date when the final decision is made. The EIA must be complete before this point and inform the final decision.	20 October 2022 (Full Council)
Summary of the proposed decision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aims and objectives • Key actions • Expected outcomes • Who will be affected and how? • How many people will be affected? 	The report seeks to extend the existing policy pending updated best practice guidance from the DfT, to increase the frequency of DVLA drivers licence checks from 12-monthly to 6-monthly, and incorporate administrative updates to reiterate driver/operator responsibilities under the Taxi and Private Hire Vehicles (Disabled Persons) Act 2022.
Information and research: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline the information and research that has informed the decision. • Include sources and key findings. 	Research conducted as part of the revision of the policy includes; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislative changes • Best practice guidance • General gambling licensing research
Consultation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What specific consultation has occurred on this decision? • What were the results of the consultation? • Did the consultation analysis reveal any difference in views across the protected characteristics? • What conclusions can be drawn from the analysis on how the decision will affect people with different protected characteristics? 	See report, informal consultation with Taxi Forum Representatives. No differences in views noted.

Assess the relevance of the decision to people with different protected characteristics and assess the impact of the decision on people with different protected characteristics.

When assessing relevance and impact, make it clear who the assessment applies to within the protected characteristic category. For example, a decision may have high relevance for young people but low relevance for older people; it may have a positive impact on women but a neutral impact on men.

Protected characteristic	Relevance to Decision High/Medium/Low/None	Impact of Decision Positive (Major/Minor) Negative (Major/Minor) Neutral
<u>AGE</u> Elderly	None	Neutral
Middle age	None	Neutral
Young adult	None	Neutral
Children	None	Neutral
<u>DISABILITY</u> Physical	Medium	Positive (minor)
Mental	Medium	Positive (minor)
Sensory	Medium	Positive (minor)
<u>GENDER RE- ASSIGNMENT</u>	None	Neutral
<u>MARRIAGE/CIVIL PARTNERSHIP</u>	None	Neutral
<u>PREGNANCY/MATERNITY</u>	None	Neutral
<u>RACE</u>	None	Neutral
<u>RELIGION OR BELIEF</u>	None	Neutral
<u>SEX</u> Men	None	Neutral
Women	None	Neutral
<u>SEXUAL ORIENTATION</u>	None	Neutral

Mitigating negative impact:

Where any negative impact has been identified, outline the measures taken to mitigate against it.

N/A

Is the decision relevant to the aims of the equality duty?

Guidance on the aims can be found in the EHRC's [Essential Guide](#), alongside fuller [PSED Technical Guidance](#).

Aim	Yes/No
1) Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation	Yes
2) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it	Yes
3) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it	Yes

<p>Conclusion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider how due regard has been had to the equality duty, from start to finish. There should be no unlawful discrimination arising from the decision (see guidance above). Advise on whether the proposal meets the aims of the equality duty or whether adjustments have been made or need to be made or whether any residual impacts are justified. How will monitoring of the policy, procedure or decision and its implementation be undertaken and reported? 	<p>The extension of the policy and amendments are not considered to have any negative impacts on equality.</p> <p>By duplicating the legal duties, on drivers and operators with respects to disabled persons, within our Policy document is is considered to have a minor positive impact on this protected characteristic.</p> <p>The policy will be reviewed following the publishing of the DfT guidance, or prior to 31 March 2023</p>
<p>EIA completion date:</p>	<p>11/06/2022</p>

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