



Regulatory Panel

Date: Wednesday, 08 February 2023

Time: 16:00

Venue: Flensburg Room

Present: Councillor Ruth Alcroft, Councillor Mrs Marilyn Bowman, Councillor Ms Jo Ellis-Williams, Councillor Keith Meller, Councillor Mrs Linda Mitchell, Councillor David Morton, Councillor Paul Nedved, Councillor Tim Pickstone, Councillor David Shepherd, Councillor Peter Sunter, Councillor Dr Les Tickner, Councillor Miss Jeanette Whalen

Officers: Senior Lawyer
Licensing Manager

RP.08/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

RP.09/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest submitted.

RP.10/23 PUBLIC AND PRESS

It was agreed that any items of business in Part A be dealt with in public and any item of business in Part B be dealt with then the public and press were excluded.

RP.11/23 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED - The minutes of the meeting held on 4 January 2023 were agreed as a correct record.

RP.12/23 HACKNEY CARRIAGE TABLE OF FARES REVIEW

The Licensing Manager submitted a report regarding a request to review the Hackney Carriage Table of Fares (GD.05/23).

The Council's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy 2022 stated that the tariff would be reviewed bi-annually or following a request from the trade. The Licensing Manager reported that the tariff was last reviewed in February 2022 and was due to be reviewed in February 2024. However, a request had been made from Carlisle Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Association to consider an increase to the Table of Fares due to the increase in inflation and cost of living. The Licensing Manager reminded the Panel that the last review had increased the national benchmark journey of 2 miles from £5.80 to £6.60.

Carlisle Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Association (the Association) made a request in December 2022 that the table of fares be reviewed. The proposal from the Association was:

- a reduced distance to the first click;
- waiting time increased from 20p to 30p per minute;
- Tariff 1 to start at £3.80 (increase from £3.40);
- Tariff 2 to start at £5.10 (increase from £4.50);
- Tariff 3 to start at £5.60 (increase from £5.10);
- Soiling charge to increase to a maximum of £50 (increase from £35).

In the same period several emails from the Trade had been received by the Licensing Department objecting to any proposed increase. It was therefore decided to gauge a wider view of the Trade prior to reporting to the Panel. Carlisle City Council licenced a total of 235 Hackney Carriage Drivers and 106 Private Hire Drivers (341 licences). 27 drivers held both licences, leaving a total of 314 individuals who were invited to complete a survey. The results of the initial consultation were summarised in section 2.5 of the report and comments were attached as Appendix 2.

In order to review the fares, the Council's Financial Services produced the changes to the RPI to the identified criteria for transport costs since the last review. The changes had been multiplied by the weighting agreed with the Taxi Association with the main costs being fuel, labour, and insurance. The calculations as set out in section 2.6 showed an average increase in costs of 11.68% since the last figure were received in October 2021 and overall inflation was running at 14%. The impact of the proposals on flag fare were set out in the report along with Carlisle's placing within Cumbria and an overview of the Local Government Reorganisation work.

Mr Bray, representing the Association, highlighted the increase to car maintenance, fuel and car purchasing in the last year along with the cost of living crisis. He stated that those in the Trade had felt the impact and the proposed increase was required to ensure they made a decent wage and in some cases, minimum wage. He added that the outcome of the survey supported the proposals.

In response to questions from the Panel, Mr Bray clarified that there was a difference between weekend drivers and weekday drivers. Those working throughout the week tended to receive a salary, whereas those on a weekend undertook rank work and relied on evening economy trade.

In considering the proposals the Panel understood that a new Policy would be developed for the Cumberland Council area, but this may take at least twelve months. The Panel acknowledged the increase in costs for drivers and felt that the soiling charge was too low.

A Member proposed the recommendations in the report with an amendment so that the soiling charge was increase to a maximum of £100, the recommendation was seconded.

Following voting, it was

RESOLVED - That subject to consultation, the Regulatory Panel agreed, other than the reduction in distance to the first 'click', the proposed changes to the Table of Fares for Hackney Carriages;

- waiting time increased from 20p to 30p per minute
- Tariff 1 to start at £3.80
- Tariff 2 to start at £5.10

- Tariff 3 to start at £5.60
- Soiling charge to increase to a maximum of £100

The Meeting ended at: 16:30