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Report to the Licensing Committee

7th November 2006

Hackney Carriage Fares 2006 - 2007

1. Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to consider the hackney carriage table of fares for 2006 – 2007.
- 1.2. The last increase in the hackney carriage fares took place in December 2005 and a copy of the current table of fares are set out in **Appendix A**.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. The Committee is requested to consider the following options made by the Crawley Taxi Association;
 - 2.1.a. that the initial hiring amount of £2.80 remain unchanged but that the initial hiring distance be reduced from the current 1 mile (1,760yds) to 1,564yds, with the current drop of 20p for each subsequent 196 yards to remain unchanged, and relative increases for tariffs 2 (x1.5) and 3 (x2) of the CBC table of tariffs.
(This will have the effect of not showing any immediate increase on the meter at the beginning of the hiring but increasing the charge for any journey, regardless of length, by at least 20p save for journeys of less than 1,564yds).
 - OR
 - 2.1.b. that the current initial hiring amount of £2.80 for the first 1,759yds be increased to £3.00 with the meter showing £3.20 for a distance of 1,760yds, with the current drop of 20p for each subsequent 196yds to remain unchanged, and relative increases for tariffs 2 (x1.5) and 3 (x2) of the CBC table of tariffs.
(This will have the effect of showing any new increase immediately on the meter at the commencement of the hiring)
 - 2.1.2. that 'waiting time' of 20p per each period of 52 seconds be changed to 20p per each period of 50 seconds
(Increase from £13.85 - £14.40 per hour 'waiting time')

2.1.3. that the Committee consider the following change to "Tariff 2";

"Applies to all hiring's begun between midnight and 6am, including all Bank Holidays, plus all hiring's from 18.00hrs to 23.59hrs on the 24th December and from 18.00hrs on New Years Eve to 23.59hrs on January 1st .
(bringing forward the commencement of the x1.5 tariff from 00.01 New Years Day to 18.00hrs on New Years Eve)

2.1.4. that all other tariffs and extra charges unless already mentioned remain unchanged from the current tariff table.

- 2.2 If the Committee so decide to accept the proposals, that they grant permission to advertise any decision made by Members in the local press and resolve to adopt the table of fares as set out in the **Appendices** together with any other inclusion or exclusion so resolved.
- 2.3. Following the advertisement it is recommended that the Committee meet to consider any objection that may be lodged within the specified time period; If no objection is received it is recommended that the Committee resolve to approve the proposals with an implementation date set for the 1stDecember 2006.

Angela Tanner

Head of Environmental Services.

3 Background

- 3.1 The Council as Licensing Authority for the Borough of Crawley is the appropriate authority in accordance with Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, "the Act", to set hackney carriage fares.
- 3.2. It is the Council's informal policy to consult with the relevant trade association to establish an appropriate 'table of fares' for the forthcoming period.
- 3.3. Following consultation with the trade, a report is drafted and presented for the consideration of the Licensing Committee.
- 3.4. The report may include trade proposals along with Officers views who may propose alternative options.
- 3.5. Following Committee approval and based on the information provided, a fare structure for the coming period is published in the form of a public notice in the local press. A statutory period of not less than 14 days is allowed for any objection(s).
- 3.6. A copy of the notice shall for the period of fourteen days from the date of the first publication thereof be deposited at the offices of the council which

published the notice and shall at all reasonable times be available to public inspection without payment.

- 3.7. If objections are received, they are reported back to the Licensing Committee for due consideration. The Committee may then decide to proceed with the advertised table of fares or amend it, having taken into account any objection.
- 3.8. If, however, no objection is received, the proposed table of fares will take effect on the date specified by the Committee.
- 3.9. The table of fares set by the Committee will continue in that form until such time as the Committee determine. The Council's standard practice is to review these fares annually.

4. Content

- 4.1 The current table of fares came into effect on the 1st December 2005. (as set out in **Appendix A**)
- 4.2. Following consultation with the trade, the Council received a letter dated 1st August 2006, which outlined the trade's proposals (copy of the letter attached as **Appendix B**).
- 4.3. The Council may propose an alternative table of fares; however it is felt the proposals put forward by the trade this year are reasonable and require no further amendment.
- 4.4. A comparison of the current hackney carriage fare tariff with the new proposed tariff may be viewed at **Appendix C**.
- 4.5. A comparison of charges with that of the neighbouring authorities may also be viewed at **Appendix D**.
- 4.6. On the 24th October 2006, the Council received a petition containing details of 54 licensed drivers who suggested that a reduction in the 'running mile' was not in the best interests of their trade and they would prefer an increase to the starting 'fare/flag'. A copy of this petition is attached as **Appendix E**

5. Ward Members' Views

- 5.1. The Council has not on this occasion consulted or sought the views of Ward Members as this matter does not come under any one particular area.

6. Staffing, Financial and Legal Implications/Powers

- 6.1. There is no extra staffing or financial implications to the Council.
- 6.2. Following approval of the revised structure of fares, a public notice will be placed in the local press, with a copy available for inspection at the Town Hall; any objection received within the fourteen day period will need to be considered.

- 6.3. There are time periods specified in the legislation regarding the period of time allowed for objection. Unlike other sections of the Act which allow for objectors or aggrieved persons to appeal to a magistrates court, Section 65(4) allows for all objections to the proposed table of fares to be referred to the licensing authority by which the original decision was made.
- 6.4. Article 1 of the First Protocol of the Human Rights Act entitles every person the right to the peaceful enjoyment of their possessions which includes the holding of a licence and the impact of a fare which affects someone's livelihood or the means of earning it. In setting a fare tariff the Council must consider both the impact on the public and also on those whose livelihood is affected and balance those competing interests.

7. Links to the Community Strategy and Corporate Plan

- 7.1 The proposals contained in this report relate to the following key areas of the Community Strategy

Local Economy	✓	Health and Social Care
Affordable Housing		Community Safety
Lifelong Learning		Local Environment

The following key principles are applicable:-

(i) Working together	✓
(ii) Dignity, respect and opportunities for all	✓
(iii) Leaving no-one behind	✓
(iv) Making it last	✓

This report achieves the following aims as set out in the Corporate Plan

Providing high quality services	✓	Giving exemplary customer service and satisfaction	✓
Being financially efficient and well managed	✓	Developing motivated, positive and empowered staff	✓

8 Reasons for the Recommendation

- 8.1. The fare consultation is very important to the hackney carriage trade and also their customers, the public. Members will need to determine the hackney carriage fare structure which reflects the wider interests of the general public.
- 8.2. The Committee can decide to keep the current table of fares without making any changes or approve the table of fares put forward by the trade.

- 8.3. The Committee may also make any changes to the table that it considers reasonable and appropriate.
- 8.4. The views of the trade are very relevant, however they are but one factor to be considered, they are only one factor to be considered.

9 Background Papers

- Letter from The Crawley Taxi Association dated 1st August 2006
- 2005 -2006 Tariff Card
- Correspondence with neighbouring authorities
- Petition from licensed drivers

Contact Officer:- Mike Lyons
Direct Line:- 01293 438698

The Appendices identified in this report are not available in electronic form.