



Portfolio Holder Report

Consideration of Responses following consultation to increase the Taxi Tariff

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Purpose of the Report

1. Following a request by the Taxi Trade, a request was made to increase the Taxi Tariff (Taxi Meter Rates) following a significant increase in the cost of fuel and cost of living.
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Recommendation

2. That the Portfolio Holder for Licensing, in conjunction with the Lead Specialist of Environmental Health consider the responses to the Consultation before determining whether to agree to the Taxi Fares increase.
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Background

3. Following a request by the taxi trade to increase the meter fares in accordance with the increase to the cost of living and the fuel increases, the Portfolio Holder and the Lead Specialist for Environmental Health, in line with the Constitution of the Council, must consider the responses to the Consultation and determine whether to permit the increase to the Taxi Meter Fares chargeable by the Hackney Carriage Trade.
4. Within the Council Constitution dated November 2020, under the Scheme of Delegation to Officers – Part 3 of the Constitution, section 6 (item 25) within this document, item number 70 states:

70 In consultation with the relevant Portfolio holder, to review hackney carriage fares – following representations by taxi operators - and, subject to the necessary consultations, to agree any increases within the cumulative inflation rate which has prevailed since the previous increase.

The power to exercise this function has been delegated to the Portfolio Holder in consultation with The Lead Specialist for Environmental Health.

Report Detail

5. A notice containing the proposed variation to fares, the date by which objections must be received and how to make objections was published in the Western Gazette on 7 July 22. A notice was also displayed at the Petters Way office during the consultation period.
6. A survey was created on Citizen Space to gather views and this survey was also shared on the Council's social media platforms on 09 July 22.



Consultation Outcome

7. 25 responses were received during the consultation period. 23 of these were via the Citizen Space survey and 2 of these were via email.
The responses can be seen at **Appendix 1 and Appendix 2**.
8. Of the responses 13 were from hackney carriage (taxi) drivers and/or licence holders, 8 of the responses were from people who use taxi services and 2 of the responses were from people who were from 'other category'.
9. 7 objections were received.
10. 2 of the objections were from taxi drivers/taxi licence holders. One commented that the increase should be 30 to 40% to avoid a decrease in income when inflation and other rises in costs are considered.
11. Other objections were from members of the public who use taxis and the comments include:
 - The cost of running taxis is increasing but the money in the passengers' pockets isn't increasing.
 - An increase to fares could lead to an increase of taxi alternatives.
 - The increase should be in line with the benefits increase in April.
 - An increase to costs would lead to less use of taxi services.
 - Taxi prices are high enough already.
12. It is also noted that people who agreed with the increase also provided comments to support their opinion on the increase and these comments were:
 - Since 2016 business costs have increase significantly and drivers need to be able to charge a fair price.
 - One company may have to cease trading if there are more increases to running costs.
 - The increase is long overdue, being around 15%.

Financial Implications

13. There are no financial implications to the Council. Advertising costs are calculated and met from within the service element of the fees and charges levied by the Council to the Taxi Trade.

Council Plan Implications

14. To promote a strong and growing economy with thriving urban, rural and land based businesses and improving productivity

Equality and Diversity Implications

15. A full impact assessment was carried out and the mitigating factors identified within it were carried out. This item is included as **Appendix 3**

Privacy Impact Assessment

16. There are no changes to how personal data is handled.

Background Papers

- SSDC Taxi Fare Formula Setting (as agreed in April 2016)