

FARE CARDS FOR HACKNEY CARRIAGES

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Summary

Following the decision by the Strategic Licensing Committee to recommend that Council abolish the zones for hackney carriages in Shropshire, a Task and Finish Group was established to recommend a common set of conditions for hackney carriage drivers and vehicles and to fix the fares to be paid in respect of the hire of all hackney carriages (table of fares).

Prior to, and irrespective of the outcome of, the final decision in respect of zones this report sets out the recommendation of the Task and Finish Group for tables of fares to be introduced for the existing five zones.

Recommendation

That Strategic Licensing Committee

Approve the five tables of fares for hackney carriages as set out in Appendix A of this report for consultation in accordance with Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 and;

- i) if no representation is made to be adopted in all existing five zones on 5th March 2011.
- ii) any representation made reported back to this committee for consideration in March 2011.

Report

1. Shropshire Council currently operates five zones for the purpose of licensing hackney carriages, based on the previous Borough and District Council Boundaries. Each zone operates a separate fare card, thus passengers are charged different rates across Shropshire.
2. At its meeting on 23 March 2010 (Minute No. 26), the Council's Strategic Licensing Committee agreed to propose to Council to remove zones. In removing zones, a common Shropshire wide fare card is required. Whilst the decision on whether to de-zone has yet to be taken by Council

(pending the outcome of Strategic Licensing Committees decision on common licensing conditions) the Task and Finish Group are recommending that uniform fares are introduced for all five zones, thus removing the charging anomaly that currently exists.

Consultation.

3. Consultation was undertaken on a draft fare card between 20 December 2010 and 31 January 2011. In addition to providing details of the proposal in writing to all hackney carriage proprietors and private hire operators, a taxi forum was held on 05 January 2011, to enable the trade to express their views.
4. During the consultation period, 91 representations were made. The respondents universally opposed the suggested fare card with the following collective views expressed:
 - The proposed fare card in its current format is unworkable due to its variable rates, not variable distances, and not fair as it is not scalable in proportion to the number of people being carried.
 - The proposed fare card rate reflects an approximate increase of 27% over the current card used in zone 4, this is an excessively large increase in the fare to be charged, with no justifiable reason or request by the trade to increase the fares. This will push passengers away.
 - The fares should not be reduced (reduction in zones 2 and 3) and should be set at a higher rate, as that is the maximum that can be charged and a higher rate allows some zones to discount.
5. Full copies of all consultation responses are available in the members' library.
6. At the taxi forum, there was a consensus that the proposed fare card would be unacceptable, some drivers stated that the increase in fares could price the hackney carriage trade out of the market whilst others felt that the fare proposals were not high enough given the increased fuel and operating costs. There was however agreement that should there be the same fare card for each zone, then an additional tariff (tariff 4) would allow proprietors to charge extra if five or more passengers were being carried.
7. In light of the representations received, the following amendments have been made to the proposed fare card.
 - A new optional tariff 4 added for larger vehicles when carrying 5 or more passengers.
 - Amended to ensure that all fares are in denominations of five or ten pence. (to reduce cash handling issues).
 - The fare cards have also been amended following consultation to address the issue of calibration and have been checked with meter companies to ensure that they are workable.

8. Three alternative fare cards were proposed at the taxi forum and during the consultation. There was a proposal that the existing Zone 4 Card (former Shrewsbury and Atcham) be introduced for all zones, a proposal from a Ludlow proprietor and a proposal from an Oswestry proprietor. The suggested cards are detailed in Appendix B of this report.
9. Following consideration of the alternative fare cards and the consultation responses, a revised fare card is proposed and is set out in Appendix A.
10. Table one summarizes tariff one on the current fares for each zone compared with the proposed tariff one, giving an indication of variation.

Table 1. Hackney Carriage Fares across Shropshire

	Zone 1 Formally Bridgnorth District Council	Zone2 Formally NSDC	Zone 3 Formally Oswestry Borough Council	Zone4 Formally SABC	Zone 5 Formally SSDC	Proposed
1 Mile	£3.00	£3.30	£3.50	£3.20	£3.00	£3.30
5 Miles	£7.40	£10.10	£9.50	£8.52	£7.40	£9.30
10 Miles	£12.90	£18.60	£17.00	£14.92	£12.90	£16.80
Soiling Charge	£100	£50	£100	£50	£100	£100

11. It is important to note that the fare cards are the maximum fare that can be charged. The proprietor can agree a lower fare with the passenger. A meter can also be set at a level lower than the Council's agreed fares on condition that the proprietor displays two fare cards, these being the Council's agreed fare card and one to show lower fees to which the meter has been set.
12. Prior to new fares coming into force, there is a requirement for the table of fares to be advertised in the local paper with a minimum 14-day consultation period. If no representations are received, the fares would be introduced on the date stated. If representations are made, the council must set a date, no later than two months after the proposed implementation date, for which the fares will come into effect, with or without changes.

Conclusions.

13. The Task and Finish Group has considered all representations made during both the consultation period and those made at the taxi forum held on 05 January 2011.
14. The Task and Finish Group recognise that a range of contrary views were submitted during the consultation and that any proposed fares cannot seek to satisfy all those views. The Committee has recommended a tables of fares that, in part meets the requirements of the trade.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)
Current Hackney Carriage and Private Hire license conditions and guidance.

Environmental Appraisal Not relevant

Risk Management Appraisal

Committee must ensure that in setting new fare card the principal purpose of protecting the public is retained.

Community / Consultations Appraisal

Consultation on a proposed fares has been undertaken with the trade and other interested parties. Representations made were considered by the task and finish group. It is necessary for the revised card to be advertised for a period of 14 days.

Cabinet Member Cecilia Motley

Local Member N/A

Appendices

Appendix A- Proposed tables of fares
Appendix B Alternative proposals

Appendix A**HACKNEY CARRIAGE
TABLE OF FARES****Tariff 1****(From 07.00 hrs to 23.00 hrs)**

Flag & First Mile (1,760 yards (1,609 metres))	£3.30
For each 176 yards or uncompleted part thereof (equivalent to £1.50 per mile)	£0.15
Waiting time (equivalent to £18 per hour)	£0.15 per minute

Tariff 2**(23.00 to 07.00 hrs including all day
Sunday and Bank Holidays with the
exception of those listed below)**

Flag & First Mile	£4.95
For each 176 yards or uncompleted part thereof (equivalent to £2.50 per mile)	£0.25
Waiting time (equivalent to £18 per hour)	£0.25 per 50 sec

Tariff 3**(From 00.01 hrs to 24.00 hrs on Easter Sunday,
Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve and
New Year's Day)**

Flag & First Mile	£6.60
For each 176 yards or uncompleted part thereof (equivalent to £3.00 per mile)	£0.30
Waiting time (equivalent to £18 per hour)	£0.30 per minute

Tariff 4**Optional tariff for minibus or larger vehicles where 5 or more passengers are
carried at all times.**

Flag & First Mile	£7.50
For each 176 yards or uncompleted part thereof (equivalent to £3.00 per mile)	£0.30
Waiting time (equivalent to £18 per hour)	£0.30 per minute

Extra Charges

Soiling charge	£100.00
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All of the above fees are inclusive of VAT where applicable
Shropshire Council Tel: 0345 678 9000

Appendix B

1. Proposal to introduce Zone 4 (Former SABC) Existing Fare Card**Hackney Carriage Fares**

Fare 1	Normal day 6.30 am until 23.00 hrs	
	For the first 660 yards (603.5 metres)	£2.60
	For the first mile 1760 yards (1609.3 metres)	£3.40
	For each subsequent 138 yards (126.2 metres) or part thereof	£0.10 = £1.28 per mile
Fare 2	After 23.00 hrs until 6.30 am and Bank Holidays	
	For the first 660 yards (603.5 metres)	£2.90
	For the first mile 1760 yards (1609.3 metres)	£4.00
	For each subsequent 103 yards (94.1 metres) or part thereof	£0.10 = £1.71 per mile
Fare 3	Sunday 6.30 am to 23.00 hrs and Outside Shrewsbury & Atcham Borough Council Area	
	For the first 660 yards (603.05 metres)	£2.60
	For each subsequent 127 yards (116.1 metres) or part thereof	£0.10 = £1.39 per mile
Fare 4	After 18.00 hrs 24 December until 6.30 am 27 December	
	After 18.00 hrs 31 December until 6.30 am 2 January	£3.60
	For the first 660 yards (603.05 metres)	£0.10 = £2.35 per mile
	For each subsequent 75 yards (68.60 metres) or part thereof	
	For 3-5 passengers extra 20p per passenger If carrying or booked for six to eight passengers then following charges apply	
	Fare 1 to be charged at Fare 3	
	Fare 2 to be charged at Fare 4	
	Fare 3 to be charged at Fare 2	
	Fare 4 to be charged at Fare 4	

Extra Charges

Waiting Time	Fare 1 For each period of 27 seconds or uncompleted part thereof	10p = £13.33 per hour
	Fares 2, 3 & 4 For each period of 22 seconds or uncompleted part thereof	10p = £16.36 per hour
Luggage Cleaning Charge	Per Item	£0.20
	Fouling of vehicle by passenger/animal (other than guide dog)	£60.00
Bicycle Call-out Charge		£1.00
Credit Card Payment	Handling charge levied by card company payable	£1.00

2. Ludlow Proposal

Tariff 1

(From 07.00 hrs to 23.00 hrs)

Flag & First Mile (1,760 yards (1,609 metres))	£3.30
For each 176 yards	£0.15
Waiting time	£0.15 per 30 Secs

Tariff 2

**(23.00 to 07.00 hrs including all day
Sunday and Bank Holidays with the
exception of those listed below)**

Flag & First Mile	£4.95
For each 160 yards	£0.20
Waiting time	£0.30 per minute

Tariff 3

**(From 00.01 hrs to 24.00 hrs on Easter Sunday,
Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve and
New Year's Day)**

Flag & First Mile	£6.60
For each 176 yards	£0.30
Waiting time	£0.30 per minute

Extra Charges

Extra Passengers – for each person in excess of two	£0.50
Soiling charge	£100.00

3. Oswestry Proposal

Tariff 1

(From 07.00 hrs to midnight)

Flag & First Mile	£4.00
For each 176 yards or part of	£0.17
Waiting time	£0.17 per 30 Secs

Tariff 2

(Midnight to 07.00 hrs and Bank Holidays)

Flag & First Mile	£6.00
For each 176 yards or part of	£0.22
Waiting time	£0.22 per 30 Secs

Tariff 3

**(From 18.00 hrs 24 Dec to 07.00 hrs 27 Dec &
From 18.00 hrs 31 Dec to 07.00 hrs 02 Jan)**

Flag & First Mile	£8.00
For each 176 yards or part of	£0.34
Waiting time	£0.34 per 30 Secs

Tariff 4

(Optional tariff minibus or larger vehicles where more than 4 passengers are carried at all times except where tariff 3 applies)

Flag & First Mile	£7.50
For each 176 yards or part of	£0.30
Waiting time	£0.30 per 30 Secs

All taxi meters to be calendar dated, Taxi roof light to be illuminated when available for hire and off when hired, controlled by meter.