

**Surrey Heath Borough Council**  
**Licensing Committee**  
**16 February 2022**

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**Hackney Carriage (Taxi) Fares**

<b>Strategic Director/Head of Service</b>	Nick Steevens
<b>Report Author:</b>	Helen Lolley
<b>Key Decision:</b>	No
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All

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**Summary and purpose**

The purpose of this report is to seek approval of the proposed taxi fares, as provided in the attached Taxi Fare Chart, Annex A.

Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 (the Act) provides that a district or borough council may set local taxi fares for journeys within its area by means of a table or scheme of fares.

The current fares were set in 2012 and these have been revised following a process that was set out in reports to the Licensing Committee (LC) in July and October 2021.

**Recommendation**

The Committee/Council is advised to RESOLVE that

- (i) The revised updated Fare Chart, Annex A, is approved for introduction from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022.

**1. Background and Supporting Information**

- 1.1 The Act includes provisions that allows the Council to set local taxi fares for journeys within our area by means of a table or scheme of fares. Our current Fares Chart is attached as Annex B. There is no power to set Private Hire (PH) vehicle fares.
- 1.2 The current fares were set in 2012 and it seemed appropriate to review these fares as we had received requests from some members of the trade for us to carry out a review.

- 1.3 At the LC meeting in July 2021 details of the process for reviewing taxi fares were provided based on the starting point of notionally increasing fares by the annual CPI for each year 2012-2021.
- 1.4 It was resolved that further consultation on the proposed updated fares should be undertaken with the trade with a view to any resulting amendments being considered by the LC at its next meeting.
- 1.5 The outcome of this trade consultation was presented to the LC at its meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2021. It was reported that we had received 4 written and 2 verbal responses. Five of the responses were in support of an increase in fares whilst 1 written response suggested that increasing fares would put the trade at a financial disadvantage.
- 1.6 Following a discussion with Councillors Bates and Adams it was proposed that we continue with the proposed figures as the basis for the fare increase.
- 1.7 The LC in October 2021 resolved that the proposed new taxi fares be put to public consultation by way of an advert in the local media and through the Council's social media channels.
- 1.8 A notice was placed in the local press on the 29<sup>th</sup> December 2021 (Annex C).
- 1.9 On the 30<sup>th</sup> December we received a representation from a member of the trade which resulted in some additional information regarding the price per mile being added to the Fare Chart and a decision to restart the consultation process.
- 1.10 A further representation from the same member of the trade was received on the 4<sup>th</sup> January 2022, after consideration it was not felt necessary to make any further changes to the public notice or Fare Chart. Copies of the representations are attached as Annex D.
- 1.11 A second Notice was placed in the local press on the 12<sup>th</sup> January 2022. Annex E. The notice period ended on the 26<sup>th</sup> of January 2022.
- 1.12 We have received no further representation on the proposed Fares Chart, therefore no further changes are proposed to the Fare Chart (Annex A) as the concerns have been addressed as outlined. The issue raised on the 4<sup>th</sup> January has been addressed directly.
- 1.13 The Fare Chart (Annex A) is now ready for consideration and approval by the LC.

## **2. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 2.1 The Act sets out a process for updating Taxi fares. We have followed this process closely providing reports to the LC in July and October 2021.on both

the process and our progress. The LC has been given the opportunity to approve each stage of this process.

- 2.2 We have consulted with the trade who are broadly in agreement with the proposed uplift of Taxi fares.
- 2.3 This has resulted in an updated Taxi Fare Chart, Annex A, which will come into effect 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 if approved tonight.

### **3. Proposal and Alternative Options**

- 3.1 That approval is given to the updated Taxi Fare Chart Annex A.
- 3.2 Alternatively the LC may choose not to approve the proposed increase in fares. In this case the current fare chart would continue to be used. Annex B.

### **4. Contribution to the Council's Five Year Strategy**

- 4.1 The review of taxi fares is in line with the Council's 2022-2027 five year strategy priorities regarding economy and effective and responsive Council.

### **5. Resource Implications**

- 5.1 There are no resource implications with the exception of officer time involved in arranging for the meters to be updated and for updating the Council's web site. The cost of updating meters will be covered by the trade and incorporate the bank holiday change in June 2022.

### **6. Section 151 Officer Comments:**

- 6.1 None.

### **7. Legal and Governance Issues**

- 7.1 The Council as Licensing Authority under section 65 of the Act is permitted to set local taxi fare journeys within its area.

### **8. Monitoring Officer Comments:**

- 8.1 None.

### **9. Other Considerations and Impacts**

#### **Environment and Climate Change**

- 9.1 None.

## **Equalities and Human Rights**

9.2 No direct impact.

## **Risk Management**

9.3 The Act sets out the legal process we are required to follow when updating Taxi fares, we have followed this process closely to minimise any risks to the Council.

## **Community Engagement**

9.4 As part of the consultation process we have engaged with both the Taxi trade and more widely with the Community.

## **Annexes**

Annex A: Revised Fare Chart- revised as part of the consultation process

Annex B: Current Fare Chart 2021/2022

Annex C: .Notice placed in local press 29<sup>th</sup> December 2021

Annex D: Copies of representations received on 30<sup>th</sup> December 2021 and 4<sup>th</sup> January 2022.

Annex E: Second Notice placed in local press – restarting consultation process 12<sup>th</sup> January 2022.

## **Background Papers**

Surrey Heath- Hackney Carriage (Taxi) and Private Hire Licensing Policy 2021-2026.