

REGULATORY AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**31 JANUARY 2024**

REPORT TITLE	REVIEW OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARES
REPORT OF	DIRECTOR OF LAW AND CORPORATE SERVICES

REPORT SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is for the Regulatory and General Purposes Committee to consider objections received in respect of a proposed increase to the Hackney Carriage Fares.

The Wirral Plan sets out a number of priorities for the council to consider. The content of this report supports the priority of working for a prosperous, inclusive economy - helping businesses to thrive and creating jobs and opportunities for all.

This matter affects all Wards within the Borough.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Regulatory and General Purposes Committee is recommended to re-consider the proposed increase in Wirral Council's Hackney Carriage Fares approved by this Committee on 23 November 2023, in light of objections received.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 On 23 November 2023 the Regulatory and General Purposes Committee resolved that a proposed revised table of Hackney Carriage Fares would come into effect on 21 December 2023 should no objections be received. Objections to the proposal have been received and it is therefore necessary that this Committee re-consider the proposed increase in fares in light of these objections.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The Committee must re-consider the proposed revised table of Hackney Carriage Fares in light of the objections received and it has the option to make no amendments to the proposed revised table of fares or make amendments in light of the objections received.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The current Hackney Carriage Fares are divided into the following Tariffs:

Tariff 1	Day Rate (6:00am to 9:59pm)
Tariff 2	Night Rate (10:00am to 5:59am) Public and Bank Holiday Day Rate (inc Easter Sunday) (6:00am – 9:59pm)
Tariff 3	Public and Bank Holiday Night Rate (inc Easter Sunday) (10:00pm – 5:59am)
Tariff 4	Christmas and New Year Day and Night Rate

Christmas is defined as the period from 6:00pm on Christmas Eve until 05:59am on the day after Boxing Day.

New Year is defined as the period from 6:00pm on New Year's Eve until 05:59am on the day after New Year's Day.

- 3.2 On 23 November 2023 the Regulatory and General Purposes Committee considered a proposal from Unite the Union to increase the Hackney Carriage Fares. Members resolved that the proposed increase to the Hackney Carriage Fares be approved subject to any objections being received as part of the consultation process.

The proposal submitted by Unite the Union to amend the Hackney Carriage Fares is as follows:

- Tariff 1 (Day Rate): Maintain the initial hiring distance of 300 yards and the initial hiring charge at £3.60. Reduce the subsequent charging distance from 207 yards to 175 yards but maintain the charge of 20p per subsequent charging distance.
- Tariff 2 (Night Rate): Remove Bank Holidays and Public Holidays night rate from Tariff 2 and move this to Tariff 3. Reduce the initial hiring distance from 1392 yards to 300 yards and decrease the initial hiring charge from £5.00 to £3.80. Reduce the subsequent charging distance from 172 yards to 165 yards and increase the subsequent distance charge from 20p to 25p.
- Tariff 3: (Public and Bank Holidays Rate): Add Bank Holidays and Public Holidays night rate to Tariff 3 (this was previously part of Tariff 2). Reduce the initial hiring distance from

1160 yards to 300 yards and decrease the initial hiring distance charge from £5.00 to £4.50. Increase the subsequent charging distance from 120 yards to 165 yards and increase the subsequent distance charge from 20p to 25p.

- Tariff 4 (Christmas and New Year Rate): Reduce the initial hiring distance on from 880 yards to 300 yards and increase the initial hiring charge from £5.00 to £5.70. Increase the subsequent charging distance from 107.5 yards to 165 yards and increase the subsequent distance charge from 20p to 40p.
- In addition to the fare and associated tunnel fees, introduce a £5.00 additional charge for any journey terminating in Liverpool.

- 3.3 A table showing the current Hackney Carriage Fares is attached at Appendix 1 to this report. A table showing the proposed Hackney Carriage Fares is attached at Appendix 2 to this report. A table showing the effect of the proposed increases is attached at Appendix 3 to this report. Details of the Hackney Carriage Fares applicable in other neighbouring authorities can be found at Appendix 4 attached to this report.
- 3.4 The proposed increase was advertised in the Wirral Globe on 6 December 2023 providing an opportunity for objections to be made no later than 20 December 2023. Notification that the proposed fares were subject to consultation was sent to every Hackney Carriage Driver informing them of the proposed increase and providing details of the opportunity to object to the proposal.
- 3.5 In response to the consultation 9 individuals responded with their objections to the proposed increase to the current Hackney Carriage Fares. A table providing details of the objections is shown at Appendix 5 attached to this report.
- 3.6 The objections received include seven objections stating that there should be no increase to the Hackney Carriage Fares at this time as it is considered any increase would have a detrimental effect on the Hackney Carriage Trade. There are four objections in respect of the proposal to charge an additional £5.00 for journeys to Liverpool. Two objections include reference to making no changes in respect of Tariff 1 (Day Rate).
- 3.7 Should Members of this Committee determine that there should be a revised table of Hackney Carriage Fares this must take effect no later than 21 February 2024.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no financial implications resulting directly from this report.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Section 65(1) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 provides the Local Authority with the power to set Hackney Carriage Fares as follows:

- 1 A District Council may fix the rates or fares within the district as well for time as distance, and all other charges in connection with the hire of a vehicle or with the arrangements for the hire of a vehicle; to be paid in respect of the hire of a hackney carriage by means of a table (hereafter in this section referred to as a 'table of fares') made or varied in accordance with the provisions of this section.
- 2 When a District Council make or vary a table of fares they shall publish in at least one local newspaper circulating in the district a notice setting out the table of fares or the variation thereof and specifying the period, which shall not be less than fourteen days from

the date of first publication of the notice, within which and the manner in which objections to the table of fares or variation can be made.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

6.1 There will be an impact on the Licensing Team should there be a revision to the Hackney Carriage Fares. Following any revision it is necessary to verify that the meters in Hackney Carriage Vehicles are calibrated to take into account any changes. New fare tariff cards will also be required to be produced and issued to all Hackney Carriage Drivers. This work will be undertaken within existing resources.

7.0 RISKS

7.1 The rate of Hackney Carriage Fares can be a factor that determines whether members of the public choose to use Hackney Carriage Vehicles or Private Hire Vehicles. Should members of the public consider the fares are too high this could result in a reduction in the number of people choosing to use Hackney Carriages. The rate at which the Hackney Carriage Fares are set may determine whether drivers have sufficient incentive to provide a service when it is needed. A rate that is too low may deter drivers from working at particular times.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 The proposal was advertised in the Wirral Globe on 6 December 2023 inviting objections to be received no later than 20 December 2023. Notification of the proposed increase was sent to all Hackney Carriage Drivers providing them with an opportunity to object until 20 December 2023.

8.2 In response to the consultation 9 objections have been received to the proposed increase in the Hackney Carriage Fares.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision or activity. The Equality Impact Assessment relevant to a proposed increase in Hackney Carriage Fares is available via <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments>.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Hackney Carriage Vehicles contribute to harmful emissions including particulate matter, hydrocarbons and carbon monoxide which can be harmful to health.

10.2 Hybrid and electric cars emit less greenhouse gases and air pollutants than petrol and diesel cars. (Source: *European Environment Agency report 2018*)

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are none arising directly from the content of this report.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Current Hackney Carriage Fares

Appendix 2 Proposed Hackney Carriage Fares

Appendix 3 Table showing the effect of the proposal

Appendix 4 Neighbouring Local Authorities' Hackney Carriage Fares

Appendix 5 Objections received to the proposed fare increase

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Written proposal from Unite the Union

Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Regulatory and General Purposes Committee	27 July 2022
Regulatory and General Purposes Committee	23 November 2023



HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARES

The below table of fares is the **MAXIMUM** that can be charged within the Borough and up to 4 miles beyond the district boundary. Unless a separate fare has been **AGREED IN ADVANCE** for a hiring to a destination beyond 4 miles of the district boundary, the fare payable is that shown on the taximeter.

TARIFF 1		TARIFF 2	
DAY RATE		NIGHT RATE	
6.00am – 9.59pm		10.00pm – 5.59am	
		PUBLIC & BANK HOLIDAYS	
		6.00am – 9.59pm	
First 300 yards (0.17 miles)	£3.60	First 1392 yards (0.79 miles)	£5.00
Each subsequent 207 yards (0.12 miles)	20p	Each subsequent 172 yards (0.10 miles)	20p
TARIFF 3			
PUBLIC and BANK HOLIDAYS		10.00pm – 5.59am	
First 1160 yards (0.66 miles)		£5.00	
Each subsequent 120 yards (0.07 miles)		20p	
TARIFF 4			
CHRISTMAS RATE		24 Dec 6.00pm – 27 Dec 5.59am	
NEW YEAR RATE		31 Dec 6.00pm – 2 Jan 5.59am	
First 880 yards (0.5 miles)		£5.00	
Each subsequent 107.5 yards (0.06 miles)		20p	

Extra Charges

Waiting time – for each minute or part thereof	30p	Carriage of bulky items	£5
Each animal (other than an assistance dogs)	£1.00	Fouling charge	£35
Each passenger in excess of two per journey (excluding children under 5 years of age)	10p	Tolls including return journey (e.g. Mersey Tunnel to/from Liverpool)	

HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARES

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TARIFF 1 DAY RATE 6.00am – 9.59pm	TARIFF 2 NIGHT RATE 10.00pm – 5.59am
First 300 yards (0.17 miles) £3.60	First 300 yards (0.17 miles) £3.80
Each subsequent 175 yards (0.099 miles) 20p	Each subsequent 165 yards (0.094 miles) 25p
TARIFF 3 PUBLIC and BANK HOLIDAY RATE	
First 300 yards (0.17 miles) £4.50	
Each subsequent 165 yards (0.094 miles) 25p	
TARIFF 4 CHRISTMAS RATE 24 Dec 6.00pm – 27 Dec 5.59am	
NEW YEAR RATE 31 Dec 6.00pm – 2 Jan 5.59am	
First 300 yards (0.17 miles) £5.70	
Each subsequent 165 yards (0.094 miles) 40p	

Extra Charges

Waiting time – for each minute or part thereof	30p	Carriage of bulky items	£5.00
Each animal (other than an assistance dogs)	£1.00	Fouling charge	£35.00
Each passenger in excess of two per journey (excluding children under 5 years of age)	10p	Journeys terminating in Liverpool	£5.00 (plus return tunnel fees)

Table Showing Effect of Proposal

	Distance	Current Tariff	Proposed Tariff	Percentage Change
Tariff 1	1 mile	£5.00	£5.40	7%
	2 miles	£6.80	£7.40	8%
	3 miles	£8.40	£9.40	11%
	4 miles	£10.00	£11.40	12%
	5 miles	£11.60	£13.40	13%
	10 miles	£19.80	£23.40	15%
Tariff 2	1 mile	£5.60	£6.05	7%
	2 miles	£7.60	£8.80	14%
	3 miles	£9.60	£11.55	17%
	4 miles	£11.60	£14.05	17%
	5 miles	£13.80	£16.80	18%
	10 miles	£24.00	£30.05	20%
Tariff 3	1 mile	£6.00	£6.75	11%
	2 miles	£9.00	£9.50	5%
	3 miles	£12.00	£12.25	2%
	4 miles	£14.80	£14.75	0%
	5 miles	£17.80	£17.50	-2%
	10 miles	£32.40	£30.75	-5%
Tariff 4	1 mile	£6.80	£9.30	27%
	2 miles	£10.00	£13.70	27%
	3 miles	£13.20	£18.10	27%
	4 miles	£16.50	£22.10	25%
	5 miles	£19.80	£26.50	25%
	10 miles	£36.20	£47.70	24%

Neighbouring Local Authorities' Hackney Carriage Fares

Hackney Carriage Fares which apply to other Local Authorities in the Liverpool City Region, and also Ellesmere Port & Neston (Cheshire West and Chester Council) have been provided for comparison purposes.

The following table shows the comparative cost of using Hackney Carriage Vehicles in accordance with the proposal from Unite the Union and each of these areas.

In addition to the fare charged, each Local Authority sets their own *tariffs* which determine the days and times that each fare is charged. For the purpose of clarity details of each Local Authority's tariffs are included after the table.

Wirral Council (Proposed)

	1 Mile	2 Miles	3 Miles	4 Miles	5 Miles	10 Miles
Tariff 1	£5.40	£7.40	£9.40	£11.40	£13.40	£23.40
Tariff 2	£6.05	£8.80	£11.55	£14.05	£16.80	£30.05
Tariff 3	£6.75	£9.50	£12.25	£14.75	£17.50	£30.75
Tariff 4	£9.30	£13.70	£18.10	£22.10	£26.50	£47.70

Liverpool Council

	1 Mile	2 Miles	3 Miles	4 Miles	5 Miles	10 Miles
Day Rate	£5.00	£6.80	£8.80	£10.60	£12.40	£21.60
Night Rate	£6.25	£8.50	£11.00	£13.25	£15.50	£27.00
Peak Rate	£6.95	£9.45	£11.95	£14.45	£16.95	£29.45
Extra Rate	£7.50	£10.20	£13.20	£15.90	£18.60	£32.40

Sefton Council

	1 Mile	2 Miles	3 Miles	4 Miles	5 Miles	10 Miles
Tariff 1	£4.70	£6.70	£8.70	£10.50	£12.50	£22.30
Tariff 2	£5.85	£8.35	£10.85	£13.10	£15.60	£27.85
Tariff 3	£6.80	£9.80	£12.80	£15.50	£18.50	£33.20

St Helens Council

	1 Mile	2 Miles	3 Miles	4 Miles	5 Miles	10 Miles
Rate 1	£4.30	£6.30	£8.30	£10.30	£12.30	£22.30
Rate 2	£5.40	£8.20	£11.00	£13.80	£16.60	£30.60
Rate 3	£7.00	£10.60	£14.20	£17.80	£21.40	£39.20

Knowsley Council

	1 Mile	2 Miles	3 Miles	4 Miles	5 Miles	10 Miles
Tariff 1	£4.80	£6.60	£8.60	£10.40	£12.20	£21.40
Tariff 2	£5.35	£7.15	£9.15	£10.95	£12.75	£21.95
Tariff 3	£7.20	£9.90	£12.90	£15.60	£18.30	£32.10

Ellesmere Port & Neston (Cheshire West and Chester Council)

	1 Mile	2 Miles	3 Miles	4 Miles	5 Miles	10 Miles
Tariff 1	£4.60	£6.40	£8.00	£9.80	£11.60	£20.40
Tariff 2	£5.75	£8.00	£10.00	£12.25	£14.50	£25.50
Tariff 3	£9.20	£12.80	£16.00	£19.60	£23.20	£40.80

Wirral Council (Proposed)

Tariff 1	All journeys between 6:00am – 9:59pm
Tariff 2	All journeys between 10:00pm – 05:59am
Tariff 3	Public and Bank Holidays 00:00am – 11:59pm (all day)
Tariff 4	24 Dec 6:00pm – 27 Dec 05:59am and 31 Dec 6:00pm – 2 Jan 05:59am

Liverpool Council

Day Rate	All journeys between 6:00am – 8:59pm
Night Rate	All journeys between 9:00pm – 05:59am and at any times on Easter Sunday and all Bank Holidays (other than Christmas and New Year period)
Peak Rate	Saturday 11:00pm – Sunday 06:59am
Extra Rate	24 Dec 6:00pm – 27 Dec 05:59am and 31 Dec 6:00pm – 2 Jan 05:59am

Sefton Council

Tariff 1	All journeys between 6:00am – 10:59pm
Tariff 2	All journeys between 11:00pm – 5:59am and Fri/Sat 9:00pm – 5:59am Public Bank Holidays (other than Christmas and New Year), Easter Sunday and the Grand National Festival Rank (from 4:00pm)
Tariff 3	24 Dec 6:00pm – 27 Dec 05:59am and 31 Dec 6:00pm – 2 Jan 05:59am

St Helens Council

Rate 1	08:01am – 10:59pm
Rate 2	All journeys between 11:00pm – 08:00am and Bank Holidays except as described in Rate 3, and Easter Sunday
Rate 3	24 Dec 10:00am – 27 Dec 07:59am and 31 Dec 10:00am – 2 Jan 07:59am

Knowsley Council

Tariff 1	All journeys between 6:00am – 8:59pm
Tariff 2	All journeys between 9:00pm – 05:59am and all Public Holidays except Christmas and New Year
Tariff 3	24 Dec 6:00pm – 27 Dec 05:59am and 31 Dec 6:00pm – 2 Jan 05:59am

Ellesmere Port & Neston (Cheshire West and Chester Council)

Tariff 1	All journeys between 06:00am – 9:59pm
Tariff 2	Mon - Sun 10:00pm – 05:59am and anytime on Bank Holidays (other than Christmas and New Year)
Tariff 3	24 Dec 6:00pm – 27 Dec 05:59am and 31 Dec 6:00pm – 2 Jan 05:59am

Objections received in response to proposed increase in Hackney Carriage Fares

No.	Details of Objection
1	I personally would like to object to a fare increase as we are currently losing customers to private hire companies. Uber alpha and more are cheaper. The 5 pounds charge discriminates people who work or live in Liverpool not to mention those who go there for the nightlife I don't want to be the dearest taxi in the Liverpool region 🚗
2	I formally disagree with the proposal to increase the Hackney cab fares.
3	I am a Hackney driver on the Wirral for over 40 years and would like to see an amendment to the fare increase, the suggested £5.00 surcharge to Liverpool should be scrapped. Liverpool city centre is nearer to Birkenhead or Wallasey town centres than Ellesmere port Chester even Eastham, Heswall, West Kirby, Bromborough, and you don't get jobs back to town from those destinations. On this basis, I object to the proposed fare increase.
4	Day rate does not need changing and therefore should stay as it is and to put £5 on a Liverpool is a joke they get the tunnel on fare anyway or put a fixed price on the job like £20 to city centre
5	To whomever it may concern, I would like to oppose the proposed fare increase as outlined in your email. Firstly, I don't agree with the fare increase at all during the current economic climate. Customers are finding it hard to make ends meet and to add a further burden by increasing taxi fares I feel is unacceptable, the current fair table is more than adequate. Secondly as a licensed taxi owner/driver I find it unacceptable to charge an extra £5.00 just for going to Liverpool. There is no recommendation as to when this excess is to be applied so, during a very quiet time of day would it be acceptable to apply this charge if a customer wants to go through the tunnel on a Sunday morning to be dropped off on the cobbles at William Brown Street outside the museum? Some drivers would be more than happy to charge anytime however I for one wouldn't be happy to be charged the £5.00 excess and would never let it happen twice and I'm sure no customer would be happy with it. Maybe a small surcharge could be applied during weekend nights only between certain hours however £5.00 is too excessive. I just can't see how and when this charge could really be added, so I object.
6	My name is XXXX XXXXXXXX, Hackney plate number XXX badge number XXX. I am writing to you to register my opposition to the proposed fare increase. I feel given the current cost of living climate it will have a detrimental effect on my business and as we have not long had a fare increase I do not feel we need another so soon. I feel the increase will penalise wheelchair users and young families. Why would people use the service we provide when private hire prices are so much lower? I fear the proposed increase will dramatically affect my earning potential in the future, so again I would like to register my complete opposition to the proposed increase.
7	I wish to object to the fare increase its too much the people who use Hackney's now are struggling as it is. any increase would put people off and would kill the Hackney trade. we rank up for long periods now..
8	I would like to object to the current DAY fare rise what's been proposed , I think if they are going to go up on the day fare then 40p a mile is way to much of an increase .I think leave the day fare as it is , BUT the night rate definitely needs to go up also the tariff 4 needs to go up aswell and I have no problem with the five pound extra charge rate going over to drop in

	Liverpool aswell , just leave the day rate as it is now , but change everything else thanks
9	<p>Hello,</p> <p>RE - Hackney carriage fare increase</p> <p>Objection.</p> <p>At the moment in time with the current climate I don't think it's the right time to increase hackney carriage fares.</p> <p>The reasons are basically, there is less foot fall in the the town centres Birkenhead/Liscard for Hackney carriages as more shops shut. Recently Wilko being a big name.</p> <p>Secondly buss fares currently capped at £2 which doesn't help the Hackney carriage trade. Now is not the time to put the prices up when bus fares are being lowered. Especially after a big increase last year.</p> <p>Maybe come back to this in a years time and look at this again then. I do agree Hackney drivers are struggling to earn money however an increase at this time won't help it will drive customers away.</p>