
TAXI TARIFF - CONSIDERATION OF OBJECTIONS

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 Members to consider the objections received to the changes in the Hackney Carriage Tariff published in the Southend Recorder on 11 October 2002.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 At the meeting of the Environmental Services on 5 September 2002 (Minute 401) Members set the following maximum Hackney Carriage tariff.

DISTANCE OR TIME

For the first 213.5 yards (195.25 metres) or the first 57 seconds (or a combination of parts of such distance or time) - **180p**

For each additional 300 yards (274.25 metres) or 1 minute 24 seconds (or a combination of parts of such distance or time) until a fare of £6.40 is shown on the taximeter. **20p**

For each additional 220 yards (201.25 metres) or 1 minute 3 seconds (or a combination of parts of such distance or time) when a fare of £6.40 is shown on the taxi meter **20p**

For hirings begun between 9.00pm on 24 December and 6.00am on 27 December and between 9.00pm on 31 December and 6.00am on 2 January. **Double fare and extras**

EXTRA CHARGES

For hirings begun between 10.30pm and 6.00am also on Sundays and Bank Holidays between 6.00am and midnight (except during Christmas and New Year period). **110p**

For all items carried in the luggage compartment. **30p**

For animals carried (except assistance dogs). **110p**

For each passenger carried in excess of one. **30p**

Despoilment charge. **(up to maximum)
£75**

2.2 This tariff was duly advertised with an effective date of 4 November 2002 and a number of objections to the changes have been received which have not been withdrawn.

2.3 The Council is required to consider the objections, and either:

- Set a further date, not later than two months after the first date (4 November 2002), on which the tariff shall come into force, if there is to be no modification, or
- Modify the tariff and set an effective date being not later than two months after the first date.

2.4 Members should note that companies supplying the computer chips required to operate the taximeters, require at least 14 days notice prior to the fitting of these chips to the meters.

3 OBJECTIONS

3.1 A total of 51 letters were received prior to advertising the tariff. These letters requested that the Council do not change the existing tariff structure, and suggested a further review of the tariff next year, after discussion with the Taxi trade.

3.2 29 of these people also submitted further objections after publication of the tariff change.

3.3 A total of 121 objectors responded to the published changes. Many of the letters stated multiple reasons for objection, and a summary of the objections is shown below:

Objection/Comment	No.
The tariff was determined without proper consultation	35
The tariff will have the effect of a net fare reduction and loss of earnings by drivers	28
The removal of the 20p booking charge and the charging of an extra 110p from 22:30 (was 100p from 21:00) does not equate to a fare increase	62
Removal of 20p booking charge, as it was used to cover 'dead mileage' from rank to pick-up point	2
The evening/night journey extra is in respect of unsociable working hours and should not be changed to 22:30.	62
Elderly people not in receipt of taxi vouchers will suffer from the	1

increase in the tariff	
Applying a fixed percentage increase to the tariff does not relate to the actual increases in Taxi running costs	26
License fees increasing more than tariff	1
Following changes to the Hackney Carriage conditions, changes to the tariff will affect customers faith in the Taxi trade of the Rochford District	62
Propose that no fare change is encountered this year, and that a revision is put forward for Christmas and New Year, and a new tariff is negotiated for next year.	61
Fares should be left unchanged at least for a further 12 months	2

- 3.4 Copies of all objections received have been placed in the Members' lounge, Rayleigh.

4 OBSERVATIONS

- 4.1 There are 90 objections relating to loss of earnings, particularly in respect of the removal of the 20p booking charge and the change to the time applicable to the extra charge for evening/night journeys. The tables at Appendix 1 show a comparison of fares between the existing tariff and the proposed tariff over distances of 1 to 5 miles.
- 4.2 The removal of the booking charge would appear to reduce the overall level of fare increase. However, no information is available in respect of the relationship between the level of unbooked and booked hirings. Booking charges appear to be operated by only one other Essex Authority.
- 4.3 The change of effective time from 21:00 to 22:30 for the evening/night journey extra shows a decrease of at least 80p. No information is available in respect of the number of journeys undertaken by the trade during that one and a half-hours.
- 4.4 62 objectors made reference to the evening/night journey extra as being in respect of unsociable working hours. The following Essex Authorities also operate this extra.

Basildon District Council	-	10pm to 6am
Thurrock Borough Council	-	11pm to 7am
Tendring District Council	-	Midnight to 6am
Southend on Sea Borough Council	-	9pm to 6am
Colchester District Council	-	11pm to 6am
Braintree District Council	-	Midnight to 6am
Uttlesford District Council	-	Midnight to 6am
Castle Point District Council	-	10pm to 6am

4.5 The National Private Hire Association has commented that most Councils are increasing their tariffs to encourage night drivers to work. The Association has also provided a financial model for tariff calculation, which was received on the 29 October 2002. The model is sophisticated and if Members wish, a further report will be prepared on possible use.

4.6 61 objectors suggested making no change to the existing tariff, and reviewing it in the future. This would provide members with an opportunity to consult with local drivers and circuit owners by meeting representatives from the local drivers and circuit owners associations. If members are minded to pursue this option, an effective date for the existing tariff to remain in force should be set as in 2.3 above.

5 REQUESTS FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

5.1 Since the completion of the Taxi Review the four Companies operating in the District have formed the Association of Circuit Company Owners in the Rochford District, A-C-C-O-R-D. A group of drivers have also formed the Central Rochford Taxi Association. Both of these groups have requested the opportunity to speak directly with Members in order to assist in any further deliberations on the service.

6 PARISH IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Taxi services operate throughout the whole of the District.

7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Officer and Member time in dealing with Taxi issues.

8 RECOMMENDATION

It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

- (1) To determine the Hackney Carriage Tariff
- (2) To determine the effective date of the Hackney Carriage Tariff.
- (3) To determine a view in respect of the request of the two organisations to meet with Members.
- (4) To determine whether further consideration be given to future usage of the National Private Hire Association tariff model provided.

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Background Papers:

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