



Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PUBLIC PROTECTION

TO THE LICENSING AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

7TH APRIL 2005

**REQUEST BY THE WALSALL TAXI FEDERATION FOR AN
INCREASE IN FARES AND CHARGES.**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT.

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is for Members to consider a request by the Walsall Taxi Federation for an increase in fares and charges for the hire of Hackney Carriage Vehicles within the Borough.

2. RECOMMENDATION.

- 2.1 The Committee is requested to consider the two proposals and recommend either:-
- i) To approve one of the options put forward.
 - ii) Refuse to increase the current level of fares and charges for the hire of Hackney Carriage Vehicles within the Borough.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS.

- 3.1 Within Budget: Yes.
- 3.2 The cost of advertising any proposed increase in fares and charges can be met from within existing budgetary provision.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS.

- 4.1 Not applicable.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS.

- 5.1 Legal Services Consulted: No.

- 5.2 Section 65 (1) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 permits a District Council to 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 Hackney Carriages by means of a table made or varied in accordance with the provisions of this section.
- 5.3 When a District Council varies a table of fares they shall publish in at least one local newspaper circulating in the district a notice setting out the variation thereof and specifying the period, which shall not be less than fourteen days from the date of the first publication of the notice, within which and the manner in which objections to the variations can be made. The notice shall at all reasonable hours be open to public inspection without payment at the Council offices.
- 5.4 If no objections are received within the period the variation shall come into operation on the date of the expiration of the period specified in the notice. Where objections are duly made the District Council shall set a further date, not later than two months after the first specified date, on which the table of fares shall come into force with or without modifications as decided by them after consideration of the objections.

6. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS.

- 6.1 None.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS.

- 7.1 None.

8. WARD(S) AFFECTED.

- 8.1 All.

9. CONSULTEES.

- 9.1 Walsall Taxi Federation. Taxi/Private Hire Liaison Group.

10. CONTACT OFFICER.

- 10.1 Bruce Corlett – Principal Licensing / Enforcement Officer. Ext. 2682.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS.

- 11.1 Letter from Walsall Taxi Federation – 02 February 2005 (**copy attached**)



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1. BACKGROUND.

- 1.1 This report was put before the Taxi/Private Hire Liaison Group on the 22nd March 2005 and recommended for consideration to this Committee.
- 1.2 The present fares and charges for Hackney Carriages licensed within the Borough of Walsall were approved by the Licensing and Safety Committee on the 23rd July 2002 and came into effect on the 30th October 2002.
- 1.3 On the 2nd February 2005 the Taxi Licensing Department received a request for an increase in Hackney Carriage fare charges from Walsall Taxi Federation, (Copy of proposal is appended), due to the increased costs of diesel, repairs, insurance, Council fees and unsociable hours. The proposal outlines two options as follows:-

1.4 Option One

£ 2.50	Flag
£ 3.60	First Mile
£ 1.50	Each Subsequent Mile
£15.00	Waiting Time – Per Hour
£25.00	Soiling Charge

- a) Meter to Drop at 10 pence intervals
- b) No Second Tariff on meter
- c) No Additional Charges for
- Bank Holidays
 - Sunday Hours
 - After Hours
 - Extra Persons

➤ Extra Luggage

- d) Double Fare Charge on Christmas Day
- e) Double Fare Charge on New Years Eve
- f) Double Fare Charge Christmas Eve
18.00 Hours to Midnight
- g) Double Fare Charge New Years eve
18.00 Hours to Midnight

1.5 **Option Two**

Option Two would be implemented over two stages, all as option one other than Each subsequent mile £1.40 up until the 30th September 2005 then raise 10p to make each subsequent mile as option one.

- 1.6 **Increase in Fares and Charges.** See below a comparison chart of existing charges with those requested by the Walsall Taxi Federation:-

Mileage	Existing Fare	Option One £1.50 Each Subsequent Mile	Option Two £1.40 Each Subsequent Mile
Flag	£ 1.10	£ 2.50	£ 2.50
1	£ 3.10	£ 3.60	£ 3.60
2	£ 4.40	£ 5.10	£ 5.00
3	£ 5.70	£ 6.60	£ 6.40
5	£ 8.30	£ 9.60	£ 9.20
8	£ 12.20	£ 14.10	£13.40
10	£ 14.80	£ 17.10	£16.20
15	£ 21.30	£ 24.90	£ 23.20

- 1.7 **Hackney Carriage Fare / Charges League Table.** A Benchmarking exercise with Neighbouring Authorities shows the current fares and charges standing at:-

Local Authority	Flag	1st Mile	2nd Mile
Birmingham	£ 1.50	£ 3.60	£ 4.80
Cannock	£ 1.85	£ 2.75	£ 3.85
Coventry	£ 2.20	£ 2.80	£ 4.20
Dudley	£ 1.30	£ 3.50	£ 4.80
Lichfield	£ 2.60	£ 2.60	£ 3.80
Sandwell	£ 1.60	£ 2.72	£ 3.80
Solihull	£ 1.50	£ 3.60	£ 4.80
South Staffordshire	£ 1.90	£ 2.70	£ 3.80
Tamworth	£ 1.80	£ 2.90	£ 4.20
Telford	£ 1.50	£ 2.30	£ 3.30
Walsall	£ 1.10	£ 3.10	£ 4.40
Wolverhampton	£ 3.00	£ 2.50	£ 3.90

The shaded areas indicate a fare higher than Walsall M.B.C.'s existing fare charges.

1.8 **Fare Drop Intervals.** At present the metre goes up in 20 pence's, the proposal is for 10 pence drops – this does not affect the overall cost of the journey.

1.9 **No Second Tariff Charges.** There is at present a second tariff for:-

- Bank Holidays – 6.00 am to 12.00 Midnight
Additional Cost 30 pence per journey
- Sunday Hours – 6.00 am to 12.00 Midnight
Additional Cost 30 pence per journey
- After Hours – 12.00 Midnight to 6.00 am
Additional Cost 30 pence per journey
- Extra Person over one
Additional Cost of 20 pence per person
- Extra Luggage Outside Cab
Additional Cost of 20 pence per item of luggage

The Taxi Federation would like to abolish the 2nd tariff. It has been the root cause of many confrontations and causes confusion between customers and Taxi Drivers.

1.20 **Other Proposed Changes to Fares.**

	Existing		Proposed	
Waiting Time:	£ 9.40	Per Hour	£ 15.00	Per Hour
Waiting Time:	£ 0.16	Per Minute	£ 0.25	Per Minute
Soiling Charge:	£ 15.00		£ 25.00	

1.21 **Christmas and New Year.** As existing, double the fare shown on the meter.

1.22 **Christmas Eve and New Years Eve.** At present there is no additional charge made for Christmas and New Years Eve. These proposals would give double fare from 18.00 Hours until Midnight.