

Committee Report Checklist

Please submit the completed checklists with your report. If final draft report does not include all the information/sign offs required, your item will be delayed until the next meeting cycle.

Stage 1

Report checklist – responsibility of report owner

ITEM	Yes / No	Date
Councillor engagement / input from Chair prior to briefing	Yes	22.08.2025
Commissioner engagement (if report focused on issues of concern to Commissioners such as Finance, Assets etc)	N/A income not for council	N/A
Relevant Group Head review	Yes	20.08.2025
MAT+ review (to have been circulated at least 5 working days before Stage 2)		09.08.2025
This item is on the Forward Plan for the relevant committee	Yes	09.05.2024
	Reviewed by	
Risk comments	yes	No comments
Legal comments	CU	26.08.2025
HR comments (if applicable)	n/a	n/a

For reports with material financial or legal implications the author should engage with the respective teams at the outset and receive input to their reports prior to asking for MO or s151 comments.

Do not forward to stage 2 unless all the above have been completed.

Stage 2

Report checklist – responsibility of report owner

ITEM	Completed by	Date
Monitoring Officer commentary – at least 5 working days before MAT	L Heron	05/09/25
S151 Officer commentary – at least 5 working days before MAT	Ola Owolabi	03/09/2025
Confirm final report cleared by MAT		

Licensing Committee

2 October 2025

Title	Hackney Carriage Table of Fare Review 2025
Purpose of the report	To make a decision
Report Author	Lucy Catlyn, Principal Licensing Officer
Ward(s) Affected	All Wards
Exempt	No
Exemption Reason	N/A
Corporate Priority	Resilience and Service Delivery Services
Recommendations	Committee is asked to: - <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Approve the proposed table of fares set out at Appendix A for consultation purposes and statutory advertising requirements.2. Committee is asked to approve the methodology to calculate the table of fares.
Reason for Recommendation	In accordance with the Constitution, Committee is asked to approve the table of fares for Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licensing.

1. Executive summary of the report

What is the situation	Why we want to do something
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The table of fares and methodology to calculate this for hackney carriage vehicle licensing need to be approved for public consultation by the Licensing Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Need to have the table of fares approved before public consultation.
This is what we want to do about it	These are the next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Licensing Authority asks the Committee to approve and/or make amendments to the table of fares.• The Licensing Authority also asks the Committee to approve the methodology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Following Licensing Committee recommendation consultation will commence.

2. Key issues

- 2.1 This report seeks to inform the Licensing Committee of the methodology that has been used to review the Hackney Carriage Fares set by the Council for journeys undertaken in licensed taxis in the Borough and the proposed increase to the table of fares.
- 2.2 The Licensing Committee is asked to adopt the methodology. Having a methodology allows drivers to fairly cover the costs of running a taxi and providing a service to the public when it is needed, whilst ensuring that fares are reasonable for the public to pay.
- 2.3 Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 states that “a district council may fix the rates or fares within the district for time as well for 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 (hereafter in this section referred to as a “table of fares”) made or varied in accordance with the provisions of this section.”
- 2.4 By fixing the fares, the Council is effectively setting the maximum fare that hackney carriage drivers can charge. Legally, taxi drivers may charge less than this rate but may not charge more.
- 2.5 The fares set by the Council include provisions for taxi drivers to earn a wage, cover the costs of running a taxi and providing a service to the public when it is needed whilst ensuring that fares are reasonable for the public to pay.
- 2.6 Due to the fluctuating costs of running a vehicle, it is good practice for the Council to review fare regularly to ensure that there is not an imbalance between the costs of running a vehicle for the trade against the fares charged to the public.
- 2.7 The Department for Transport Best Practice Guidance indicates that it is good practice for the Council to use a simple formula to calculate taxi fares.
- 2.8 In Spelthorne, the Hackney Carriage table of fares has not been updated since 2015 (**Appendix B**). The Council sent the questionnaire at **Appendix C** to the trade to seek the taxi trade’s inputs into the data to be used for the fare review, however no one responded with the required information.
- 2.9 Due to the amount of time that has lapsed since the last review and the absence of information from the trade the Council have instructed a Barrister, Matt Lewin who has undertaken a review. The Licensing Authority propose to adopt the methodology (**Appendix D**) and the table of fares (**Appendix A**).
- 2.10 The proposed formula takes costs, such as vehicle purchasing, depreciation and running costs, fuel, insurance, licensing costs, together with driver’s earnings and provides a unit price for these costs per metered mile travelled, over the number of metered miles a vehicle travels with a fare paying passenger on-board.
- 2.11 It is intended that the calculator should be reviewed regularly if there are significant changes to the costs such as fuel. This will be at least every three years.

- 2.12 On the existing table of fares the initial flag drop (amount shown on the meter when you get in the vehicle) will remain the same as £3.70 for tariff one, however the overall fee will be a significant increase in the fare for distance travelled. Below explains the difference between 2015 and 2025 proposal and the overall percentage increase:

	2015	2025	Percentage Increase
Tariff 1 – Daytime Rate between 6am and 10pm			
First Mile	£3.70	£6.43	73.78%
Subsequent Mile	£2.50	£2.93	17.20%
Total Two Miles	£6.20	£9.36	50.97%
Tariff Two – Night and Holiday Rate between 10pm and 6am and national public holidays (except tariff 3 applies)			
First Mile	£5.40	£9.10	68.52%
Subsequent Mile	£3.00	£4.40	46.67%
Total Two Mile	£8.40	£13.50	60.71%
Tariff Three – Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Eve Only			
First Mile	£7.20	£12.86	78.61%
Subsequent Mile	£4.00	£5.86	46.50%
Total Two Mile	£11.20	£18.72	67.14%

- 2.13 According to the National Table of Hackney Carriage Fares produced monthly by Private Hire and Taxi Monthly (PHTM) Magazine¹, Spelthorne is currently in 294 position nationally out 337 authorities. The proposed table of fares would bring Spelthorne to 10th place if adopted. The proposed increase is significant as there has not been a fare review in 10 years. The trade have also asked for this increase.

- 2.14 In terms of comparing with other neighbouring authorities below is a chart for reference:

Licensing authority	2 mile fare	Position
Guildford Borough Council	£10.00	5
Elmbridge Borough Council	£9.50	9
Spelthorne Borough Council	£9.40	10
Woking Borough Council	£8.70	27
Runnymede Borough Council	£8.30	46
Surrey Heath Borough Council	£7.80	98
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead	£7.10	184

¹ [Hackney Taxi Fare Tables](#)

- 2.15 A public consultation must be undertaken, and the deadlines are outlined at section 13.
- 3. Options appraisal and proposal**
- 3.1 **Option 1** – to agree to consult with the taxi trade on the proposed table of fares. To also agree the methodology. **(This is the preferred option).**
- 3.2 **Option 2** – to agree the proposed table of fares with other amendments provided that such amendments are permitted by legislation. To also agree the methodology.
- 3.3 **Option 3** - not to agree the proposed table of fares – while this is an option it is not realistic taking into account the need for an increase in the fares to ensure the taxi trade are able to cover their costs and earn a wage over the number of miles they complete with a fare paying customer.
- 4. Risk implications**
- 4.1 It is important to ensure that Hackney Carriage fares are reviewed in line with the costs of providing the service, as this allows drivers to cover the costs of running a taxi and provide a service to the public when it is needed whilst ensuring that fares are reasonable for the public to pay. Failing to review fares may affect the ability of drivers to cover their costs and earn a living or may result in the public not being able to access the service. In addition, this may result in drivers leaving Spelthorne and getting licensed elsewhere.
- 4.2 There is a risk of challenge, however the methodology proposed is based on Guildford Borough Council's calculator. This formula has been scrutinised by way of Judicial Review and found to be robust.
- 4.3 Implementing the methodology might result in complaints from passengers unhappy at the increase in the cost of service. However, the fares set are a maximum and therefore can be subject of downward negotiation.
- 5. Financial implications**
- 5.1 The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 allows the Council to recover the costs associated with the setting of Hackney Carriage Fares through the fees for vehicle licences.
- 6. Legal comments**
- 6.1 Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 ('the Act' states that "a district council may fix the rates or fares within the district for a time as well for 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 (hereafter in this section referred to as a "table of fares") made or varied in accordance with the provisions of this section."
- 6.2 Also in accordance with the Act, when the fares are varied, the Council is required to publish a notice in a local newspaper setting out the variation. Objections can be made to the variation and any such objections must be considered before the table of fares is brought into force with or without modifications.
- 6.3 The setting of licence fees/fares is a function of the Licensing Committee.

- 6.4 The Department for Transport Best Practice Guidance (2023) indicates that it is good practice for a local authority to use a simple formula to calculate taxi fares. The Council has such a formula which has been scrutinised by way of Judicial Review and found to be robust.

Corporate implications

7. S151 Officer comments

- 7.1 The costs associated with reviewing and setting Hackney Carriage fares, including legal advice and public consultation, can be recovered through vehicle licence fees in accordance with the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. While the fare increase may generate public concern due to higher travel costs, it is necessary to reflect the substantial rise in operating expenses since the last review in 2015. The updated methodology ensures that fares are calculated in a transparent, evidence-based manner, balancing the financial sustainability of the taxi trade with reasonable costs for passengers. There are no additional budgetary implications for the Council beyond those recoverable through licensing income.

8. Monitoring Officer comments

- 8.1 The Monitoring Officer confirms that the relevant legal implications have been taken into account.

9. Procurement comments

- 9.1 There are no procurement implications arising directly from this report.

10. Equality and Diversity

- 10.1 Under the general equality duty as set out in the Equality Act 2010, public authorities are required to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation as well as advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 10.2 The protected grounds covered by the equality duty are: age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, and sexual orientation. The equality duty also covers marriage and civil partnership, but only in respect of eliminating unlawful discrimination.
- 10.3 The law requires that this duty to have due regard be demonstrated in decision making processes. Assessing the potential impact on equality of proposed changes to policies, procedures and practices is one of the key ways in which public authorities can demonstrate that they have had due regard to the aims of the equality duty.
- 10.4 The review of taxi fares will ensure that all customers are charged a fair price for the taxi service. Furthermore the Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (Disabled Persons) Act 2022 ensures that disabled people can access transport services, free from the fear of discriminatory treatment or being faced with additional charges.

11. Sustainability/Climate Change Implications

- 11.1 The Council's current Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policy sets out a vehicle age and emissions criteria in order to help improve air quality in the Borough. There are no changes to this position.

12. Other considerations

- 12.1 There are none.

13. Timetable for implementation

Licensing Committee to agree proposed table of fare	2 October 2025
Public Consultation Website Notice board Council Offices Newspaper Email to all licensed hackney carriage drivers and hackney carriage vehicle proprietors	10 October 2025
End of Consultation	29 October 2025
If no objections table of fares take effect	30 October 2025
If objections received Licensing Committee to be convened	November/December 2025

14. Contact

Lucy Catlyn, Principal Licensing Officer

01784 444295 l.catlyn@spelthorne.gov.uk or licensing@spelthorne.gov.uk

***Please submit any material questions to the Committee Chair and Officer
Contact by two days in advance of the meeting.***

Background papers: There are none.

Appendices:

Appendix A Proposed Table of Fares

Appendix B Existing 2015 Table of Fares

Appendix C Hackney Carriage Fare Review Questionnaire 2024

Appendix D Table of Fares Methodology