

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	06.11.2025
Commissioner engagement (if report focused on issues of concern to Commissioners such as Finance, Assets etc)	N/A	N/A
Relevant Group Head review	Yes (SM)	04.11.2025
MAT+ review (to have been circulated at least 5 working days before Stage 2)		04.11.2025
This item is on the Forward Plan for the relevant committee	Yes	
	Reviewed by	
Risk comments	LC/TWF	
Legal comments	WB	12.11.2025
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	13/11/26
S151 Officer commentary – at least 5 working days before MAT	Ola Owolabi	12.11.2025
Confirm final report cleared by MAT		

Licensing Committee

24 November 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: - 1. Approve the proposed table of fares set out at Appendix A following public consultation.
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 need to be approved by the Licensing Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Need to have the table of fares approved for implementation following objections at 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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Following Licensing Committee the table of fares will come into effect.

2. Key issues

- 2.1 This report seeks to inform the Licensing Committee of the consultation comments that have been received following public consultation to increase the Hackney Carriage Fares set by the Council for journeys undertaken in licensed taxis in the Borough.
- 2.2 The Licensing Committee adopted the methodology on 2 October 2025. 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 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.
- 2.4 The Licensing Authority consulted on the fare chart (**Appendix A**) from 16 October 2025 to 5 November 2025. A public consultation in the newspaper was also submitted. There was also a copy of the fare chart at the Council Offices, and it was emailed to all current Hackney Carriage Drivers.
- 2.5 The Licensing Authority has received two email objections to the proposed table of fares that went out for consultation (**Appendix D and E**).
- 2.6 **Objection One - (from a Meter Company) – Appendix D**
- a) Raised that Tariff 3 is specified for Christmas Day, Boxing Day, and New Years Eve. The objection state this should read New Years Day as New Years Day as not mentioned; this is because New Years Day is normally treated the same as Christmas Day and Boxing Day.
 - b) The objector has suggested that we should insert the word "where" between "except" and "Tariff" under Tariff 2.
 - c) The objector has suggested changing the "BANK HOLIDAY RATE" to "CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR RATE" (or similar) under Tariff 3 because "BANK HOLIDAY RATE" contradicts Tariff 2. (Normal Bank Holidays *not* being 2 x Tariff 1).
- 2.7 The Licensing Authority response to objection One: -
- The Licensing Authority proposes that the fare chart should be amended in line with the above suggestions as it will help clarify the fare chart. Also, because New Years Eve is not a bank holiday until after 23:59 hours.
- 2.8 **Objection Two - 10 Spelthorne Hackney Carriage Drivers – Appendix E**
- An objection has been received from 10 hackney carriage drivers contained and undersigned within one email (represents 25% of the hackney carriage drivers, which is a statistically significant representation of the trade).
- The objectors state they work at night and raise the points summarised below in respect of **tariff two**:
- (a) They are concerned that a very high tariff may suppress demand.
- The objectors have suggested that the charge for the first mile should be £6.50 - £7.00, and a subsequent milage rate of £3.50 - £4.00¹. The objectors feel customers would understand this rate for a late-night service.
- Table 1 below provides details of the current, the proposed, and the newly proposed rates following consultation.
- 2.9 The Licensing Authority response to objection Two: -
- The Licensing Authority has asked the drivers how much 'dead mileage' they have at night, and they have said this is a major factor after 10pm. They estimate that between 50% and 80% of their mileage after 10pm is "dead" or unproductive, that is without passengers.

¹ The new nighttime rate has been set at £9.10 for the 1st mile and £4.40 for each mile thereafter).

- There is no provision within the methodology to apply a different dead mileage for day and night. For consultation the table of fares methodology for day and night dead mileage was 55%.
- If the Licensing Authority was to increase the dead mileage on the methodology calculator to 80% this would increase the overall fare on all tariffs significantly.

For example, the first mile at night would be £18.06 and the rate for subsequent mile would be £13.36.

Consequently, this is not considered a satisfactory solution because the drivers who have objects are concerned that the rate being set for Tariff Two is too high; as such the replacement rate being higher still would therefore be unacceptable to both drivers and the public.

- The Licensing Authority amended the calculator to dead mileage of 50% and this dropped the Tariff Two to £8.38 for the first mile and to £3.68 for each subsequent mile thereafter. Overall, this is a total of £12.06 for a two-mile journey, which is £1.06 higher than the amount that 25% of the trade has request.

2.10 To address the concerns of the trade, it is proposed that the maximum end of what the trade have proposed for Tariff Two should be adopted (leaving tariff one and tariff three as proposed in the original consultation).

2.11 Table 1 below details the current 2015 table of fares alongside the proposed hackney carriage fare tariffs, and those now being proposed after consideration of the objections raised by the drivers.

The final column in Table 1 (in red) shows the newly proposed rates being put forward for Committee's consideration.

Table 1	2015	2025 - consultation with 55% dead mileage	Lowering the dead mileage to 50%	Proposal from Trade	Proposed rates after considering objections
Tariff One					
First Mile	£3.70	£6.43	£5.95	None	£6.43
Subsequent Mile	£2.50	£2.93	£2.45	None	£2.93
Total Two Miles	£6.20	£9.36	£8.40	None	£9.36
Tariff Two					
First Mile	£5.40	£9.10	£8.38	£6.50 - £7.00	£7.00
Subsequent Mile	£3.00	£4.40	£3.68	£3.50 - £4.00	£4.00
Total Two Mile	£8.40	£13.50	£12.06	£10.00 - £11.00	£11.00
Tariff Three					
First Mile	£7.20	£12.86	£11.90	None	£12.86
Subsequent Mile	£4.00	£5.86	£4.90	None	£5.86
Total Two Mile	£11.20	£18.72	£16.80	None	£18.72

3. Options appraisal and proposal

- 3.1 **Option 1** – to adopt the fare chart that went out for consultation with amendments to tariff two (as outlined in table 1 above) and incorporating the meter company's suggested amendments as demonstrated in **Appendix F. (This is the preferred option).**
- 3.2 **Option 2** – to adopt the fare chart with a lower 50% dead mileage overall, rather than the 55% dead mileage fare that was consulted on. This would consider some of the concerns of the trade but still be higher than they would like for Tariff Two. It would also make the rates of Tariffs One and Three drop, which the trade has not asked for (**Appendix G**). This would not be a preferred option given the objections.
- 3.3 **Option 3** – to adopt the fare chart that went out for consultation (**Appendix A**). This would not be a preferred option given the objections.

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 whilst also ensuring that fares are reasonable for the public to pay.
- 4.2 Failing to review fares may affect the ability of drivers to cover their costs and their ability to earn a living. This may result in the public not being able to access these services. It may also cause drivers to leave Spelthorne and seek a hackney carriage license elsewhere.
- 4.3 There is a risk of challenge, however the methodology proposed for adoption is based on another Council's hackney carriage fare rate calculator (after it has been adapted for the Spelthorne area) which has been scrutinised by way of Judicial Review and found to be robust.
- 4.4 Implementing the methodology might bring dissatisfaction and complaints from passengers unhappy at the increase in the cost of service. However, as mentioned in paragraph 2.3 above, the fares set are at maximum permissible rate. Each hackney carriage driver can set their own fare rates below this with their passenger.

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 A notice of the proposed fare increase went into the newspaper on [date] with a date by which representations were to be received. This report flows from those representations being made and means they must be considered by the Licensing

Committee 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 considered.

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 keyways 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 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	24 November 2025
If agreed the proposed table of fares will take effect	24 November 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 that went for Consultation with 55% dead mileage

Appendix B - Existing 2015 Table of Fares

Appendix C - Table of Fares Methodology

Appendix D - Objection from Meter Company

Appendix E - Objection from Trade

Appendix F - Recommended Table of Fares

Appendix G - Proposed Table of Fare with 50% dead mileage