



Title: Proposed Amendment to Hackney Carriage Vehicle Standard – Equality Impact Assessment

Introduction

The Licensing Committee report outlines a request made to the Licensing Authority from the Hackney Carriage Trade Representatives of the Exeter St Davids Taxi Association and the Exeter Taxi Association via the Taxi Forum, to consider changes to the current taxi tariff table.

The Hackney Carriage Representatives have requested that the current tariff table be replaced with the tariff table that they have proposed.

Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 permits Licensing Authorities to set the fares tariff for Hackney carriages (taxis) licensed in the district. The tariff sets the maximum fares that taxis can charge the public when using their vehicles. Exeter City Council, in common with most other Councils, have used this power for many years and the last tariff increase was agreed by this Committee in June 2013.

All changes to the hackney carriage tariff table in use in Exeter must be approved by the Licensing Committee. The legislation requires that before any alteration to the tariff table can take effect a public notice explaining the changes must be placed in a local newspaper. The public then must be provided with a period of at least 14 days to make comment on the proposals. If no adverse comment/objection is received the approved changes must take effect. Alternatively if adverse comment/objection is received then the matter must be returned to allow the Committee to consider the representation(s).

Since the 2013 increase the subject of fare increases has been regularly discussed at the quarterly Taxi Forum meetings. In January 2019 they conducted a survey of the Hackney carriage proprietors/ drivers. Of the 77 Hackney carriage trade members surveyed, some 9 drivers were against an increase to the Tariff 1 fare, while 68 were in favour of an increase.

Research conducted by the Licensing Authority confirms that Exeter currently has the second most expensive 2 mile fare level in Devon and is the 59th most expensive fare in the UK over that distance. If the proposed increases are implemented then Exeter would have the most expensive 2 mile fare level in Devon, and would move to approx. 12th position in the national list.

Lead officer: Simon Lane, Environmental Health and Licensing Manager

Stakeholders: Residents, Elected Members, Visitors to the City

For each of the areas below, an assessment has been made on whether the policy has a **positive, negative or neutral impact**, and brief

details of why this decision was made and notes of any mitigation are included. Where the impact is negative, a **high, medium or low assessment** is given. The assessment rates the impact of the policy based on the current situation (i.e. disregarding any actions planned to be carried out in future).

High impact – a significant potential impact, risk of exposure, history of complaints, no mitigating measures in place etc.

Medium impact –some potential impact exists, some mitigating measures are in place, poor evidence

Low impact – almost no relevancy to the process, e.g. an area that is very much legislation led and where the Council has very little discretion

	Neutral	Positive	Negative
Target group / area Race and ethnicity (including Gypsies and Travellers; migrant workers asylum seekers etc.)	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposed policy amendment would have a potential impact on this characteristic.		
Disability (as defined by the Equality Act - a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities)		A properly resourced taxi trade with an appropriate tariff table would mean that the taxi trade remains economically stable, thereby attracting new drivers into the trade to continue and improve this vital public transport.	MEDIUM IMPACT: Wheelchair users and disabled persons are statistically more likely to use taxis than persons who do not identify themselves as disabled. As such a rise in the tariff table would impact this group more economically. Significant price rises may lead to taxis becoming less affordable and as such increase the risk of social exclusion amongst those who rely on taxis for their transport needs. Some potential mitigation may be provided by including

			relevant local disability groups in the consultation process. Should adverse consultation responses be received then the matter would be referred back to the Licensing Committee for further consideration.
Gender	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposed policy amendment would have a potential impact on this characteristic.		
Gender reassignment	There is no evidence to suggest that the action plan would have a potential impact on this characteristic.		
Religion and belief	There is no evidence to suggest that the action plan would have a potential impact on this characteristic.		
Sexual orientation (including heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual)	There is no evidence to suggest that the action plan would have a potential impact on this characteristic.		
Age (children and young people aged 0 – 24, adults aged 25 – 50, younger older people aged 51 – 75/80; older people 81+. The age categories are for illustration only as overriding		A properly resourced taxi trade with an appropriate tariff table would mean that the taxi trade remains economically stable, thereby attracting new drivers into the trade to continue and	MEDIUM IMPACT: Surveys by the DFT have identified that young adults and elderly persons are more likely than other age groups to use taxis on a regular basis. As such a

<p>consideration should be given to needs).</p>		<p>improve this vital public transport.</p>	<p>rise in the tariff table would impact these age groups more economically, particularly the elderly who are likely to have a fixed income. Significant price rises may lead to taxis becoming less affordable and as such increase the risk of social exclusion amongst those who rely on taxis for their transport needs.</p> <p>Some potential mitigation may be provided by including relevant local age awareness groups in the consultation process. Should adverse consultation responses be received then the matter would be referred back to the Licensing Committee for further consideration.</p>
<p>Areas of deprivation</p>	<p>There is no evidence to suggest that the action plan would have a potential impact on this characteristic.</p>		
<p>Human Rights</p>	<p>There is no evidence to suggest that the action plan would have a potential impact on this characteristic.</p>		
<p>Health and Wellbeing (consider both the wider determinants of health such</p>			<p>MEDIUM IMPACT: A rise in the cost of taxis in Exeter may lead to an increased risk</p>

<p>as education, housing, employment, environment, crime and transport, as well as the possible impacts on lifestyles and the effect there may be on health and care services)</p>			<p>of social exclusion should those who rely on taxis for transport no longer be able to afford them.</p> <p>Mitigation is provided by the proposed rise in the tariff table being relatively modest (9- 14% depending on the tariff used at the time of travelling), and is the first formally proposed rise in taxi fees since 2013.</p>
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