

# Regulation and Review Committee

**Thursday, 1 August 2024**

Present: Councillor D Drummond (Chair)  
Councillors T Mulvenna, L Bartoli, E Darke,  
N Huscroft, F Lott, W Lott, J O'Shea, W Samuel,  
J Shaw and L Bones

Apologies: Councillors S Burtenshaw and D Lilly

## **RQ1/24 Appointment of Substitute Members**

Councillor Bones was in attendance as a substitute for Councillor Lilly.

## **RQ2/24 To receive any Declarations of Interest and Notification of any Dispensations Granted**

There were no declarations or dispensations reported.

## **RQ3/24 Hackney Carriage Fare Review 2024**

The Committee received a report which invited the members to comment on the request from the North Tyneside Hackney Carriage Association (NTHCA) for a variation to North Tyneside's table of fares for the use of a Hackney Carriage.

Members were informed that they could either express their views to the Director of Public Health as a response agreed by the whole Committee or as a range of comments / suggestions.

Previously, a former Licensing Committee had previously agreed a formal procedure following consultation with NTHCA for reviewing the table of fares for Hackney Carriages. It was agreed that each year, a formula would be used to calculate a 'cost per mile' figure for the operation of a Hackney Carriage. That formula took into account vehicle running costs including insurance, and driver earnings based on average earnings for the region. The figure produced would

then be used as the basis for calculating the table of fares.

In recent years officers have been unable to use this formula due to the AA no longer producing a report detailing average running costs of a vehicle and Insurance Brokers no longer providing the necessary details due to data protection. However, a cost per mile has been calculated on the increase requested by the NTHCA for consideration.

A table of figures drawn from neighbouring local Authorities (Newcastle, Gateshead, Sunderland, Northumberland, South Tyneside) showed that North Tyneside has the highest fare by at least 64p.

The proposal was for a 6.3% rise in hackney carriage fares, equating to an average cost per mile of £3.86 according to council figures – a rise from the current average cost of £3.63. The previous fare review came into force in February 2023, and the Director of Public Health in consultation with the Committee had approved a fare increase of 9% due to increased costs.

The report stated the main factors for the proposed increase were insurance, the costs of their vehicles, fuel, licences and the increased cost of living.

A discussion took place regarding when the other Authorities' fares had been set, and when they were due for review. Officers were unclear of these dates or if any Authority's other fare reviews were due to happen soon but confirmed that next year officers would include this information in their report regarding fares. Officers accepted that other Authorities could review their fares at any time with no advance warning.

Officers stated that there still a small shortage of drivers and at the time of the meeting there were Wheelchair Accessible licences available in North Tyneside.

The committee were conscious that comparison to other authorities had its issues, as other areas may have a lower fare cost but access to more fares. There was a consensus that the Committee appreciated rising costs but were concerned that too high a figure may price Hackney Carriages out of an already competitive market. The Committee did not feel confident in recommending an exact figure as part of this consultation.

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Members also discussed that NT taxi drivers were also likely to be subject to Newcastle's clean air zone charge, which could add an additional cost to their work.

Officers agreed to share the Committee's discussion and separate thoughts with the Director of Public Health as part of the consultation.