

Regulation and Review Committee

Thursday, 9 January 2020

Present: Councillor J Stirling (Chair)
Councillors J Allan, D Cox, E Darke, John Hunter,
N Huscroft, G Madden, M Madden, J Mole, J O'Shea and
A Percy

In attendance:
Councillors

Apologies: Councillors L Bartoli, T Mulvenna and M Reynolds

RQ54/20 Appointment of Substitute Members

There were no substitute members reported.

RQ55/20 To receive any Declarations of Interest and Notification of any Dispensations Granted

There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.

RQ56/20 Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting of Regulation and Review Committee held on 24 October 2019 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair and the minutes of the Regulation and Review Panel meetings held on 10 October 2019, 28 November 2019 and 2 December 2019 be noted.

RQ57/20 Review of Hackney Carriage Fares

The Committee received a report which consulted with Members in relation to the review of the fares for Hackney Carriages. The Committee was recommended to express its views to the Head of Environment, Housing and Leisure in relation to the request for a revision to the Hackney Carriage fare table.

The Authority conducted an annual review of Hackney Carriage fares in accordance with the North Tyneside Council Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy. In addition, the fares could be reviewed when requested by the Trade. Under the Authority's Officer Delegation Scheme the Head of Environment, Housing and Leisure had the delegated authority to set fares for hackney carriages following appropriate consultation with the Cabinet Member and Regulation and Review Committee.

Members were informed that each year, a formula would be used to calculate a 'cost per mile' figure for the operation of a Hackney Carriage. The 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.

Officers had attempted to continue to use this formula but it had not been possible as the AA no longer produced a report detailing average running costs of a vehicle. In addition to this, the formula required average insurance costs to be considered, however insurance brokers no longer provided details due to data protection.

It was explained that the North Tyneside Hackney Carriage Association had submitted a request that the Authority reviewed its current table of fares for hackney carriages. The request received was as follows:

Tariff one

Reduce the yardage from 213 yards or part there of or 51 seconds to 202.9 yards or part there of or 51 seconds (25p)
Flag fall increased from £1.80 to £2.00

Tariff two

Reduce the yardage from 182 yards or part there of or 51 seconds to 173.3 yards or part there of or 49 seconds.
Flag fall increased from £2.60 to £2.70 (25p)

Officers had calculated the cost of the request over a three mile period for tariffs 1 and 2 to produce an average cost per mile of £3.11. The current cost per mile was £2.94. The current fare tables were appended to the report. In order to provide a comparison, the fare rates for neighbouring authorities were included in the report. Fuel prices, insurance, servicing and repair costs were the reasons given by the North Tyneside Hackney Carriage Association for requesting the review of fares.

Following presentation of the report, Members had the opportunity to ask questions and make comments in relation the request. A Member asked when the last time changes had been made to Hackney Carriage fares. It was explained the rate had been changed the previous year, with an increase of 5%. It was noted that, with the current proposal, this would equate to an increase of 10% over two years.

Members asked for some further clarification as to what the charges in the fare table (appendix 1) meant. It was explained that when a customer got into the vehicle there was a 'flag fall' of £1.80 before the vehicle moved; the proposal was seeking to change this to £2.00 (tariff 1). A member of the committee questioned the significance of the times within the current and proposed tariffs for measuring the first part of the journey and why these were not rounded up. It was explained that it was historical that taxi journeys were measured in this way.

Members of the Committee commented that fares used were complicated and difficult for people to fully understand. Comments were also made in relation to the potential impact of the congestion charges on the taxi trade.

It was **agreed** to note the report and forward the comments made by the Committee to the Head of Environment, Housing and Leisure.

