

Licensing and Appeals Committee

10 June 2025

Part 1 - Public

Delegated



Cabinet Member	Cllr Des Keers, Community Services
Responsible Officer	Adrian Stanfield, Director of Central Services and Deputy Chief Executive
Report Author	Anthony Garnett, Head of Service for Licensing, Community Services and Customer Services

REVIEW OF HACKNEY CARRAGE FARES

1 Summary and Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report sets out the options for the Licensing and Appeals Committee and invites Members to review the current maximum fares that may be charged, following a petition received from the licensed drivers.
- 1.2 The Council is empowered to set maximum hackney carriage fares
- 1.3 The Private Hire Monthly fare chart tables that are published currently show Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council (TMBC) at £8.40 miles for a two-mile journey (two-mile journey being the national benchmark, which results in TMBC being forty forth in the national league

2 Corporate Strategy Priority Area

- 2.1 Efficient services for all our residents, maintaining an effective council.
- 2.2 Licensing Services ensure that all licensable activities taking place within the borough are granted the appropriate permissions under the relevant legislation.

3 Recommendations

It is RECOMMENDED that:

- (1) Members consider the feedback from licensed hackney carriage drivers and set the hackney carriage fare level.
- (2) In the event that Members are minded increasing the maximum fares, it is recommended that any change take effect from 1 August 2025 to allow for the statutory public consultation period. If any relevant objections are

received during the period, these objections will be reported to the Committee so that Members may consider whether to proceed with the proposed increase.

4 Introduction and Background

- 4.1 The Council is empowered to set maximum hackney carriage fares. It is important to note that these are the maximum fares that may be charged, and indeed it is an offence to charge more than the fare shown on the meter. No driver is required to charge the maximum fares and indeed many accept a lower rate. These fares do not apply to private hire work (journeys which are pre-booked) or to journeys which extend outside the Borough, although in the latter case an agreement to pay more than the metered fare must be made in advance of the hiring commencing.

5 Consultation with the Trade

- 5.1 Licensing Services received a formal request for a review of the current Fare Chart from sixty-six Tonbridge and Malling licensed drivers on the 28 April 2025.
- 5.2 Licensing Services has written out to all Hackney Carriage Drivers, Dual Drivers and Hackney Carriage Proprietors and asked them to give their views using an on-line feedback survey via Microsoft Teams
- 5.3 A copy of the petition received is shown at **Annex 1**

Result of consultation

- 5.4 The Licensing Team received one hundred and eight replies.

Hackney Carriage Drivers, Dual Drivers, and Hackney Carriage Proprietors Licence holders	replies	%
468	108	23.07%

- 5.5 In answer to the question of whether drivers wanted a fare increase

Reply	replies	%
Yes	78	72.2%
No	4	3.7%
VOID Clicked yes as a private hire licence holder	26	24.1

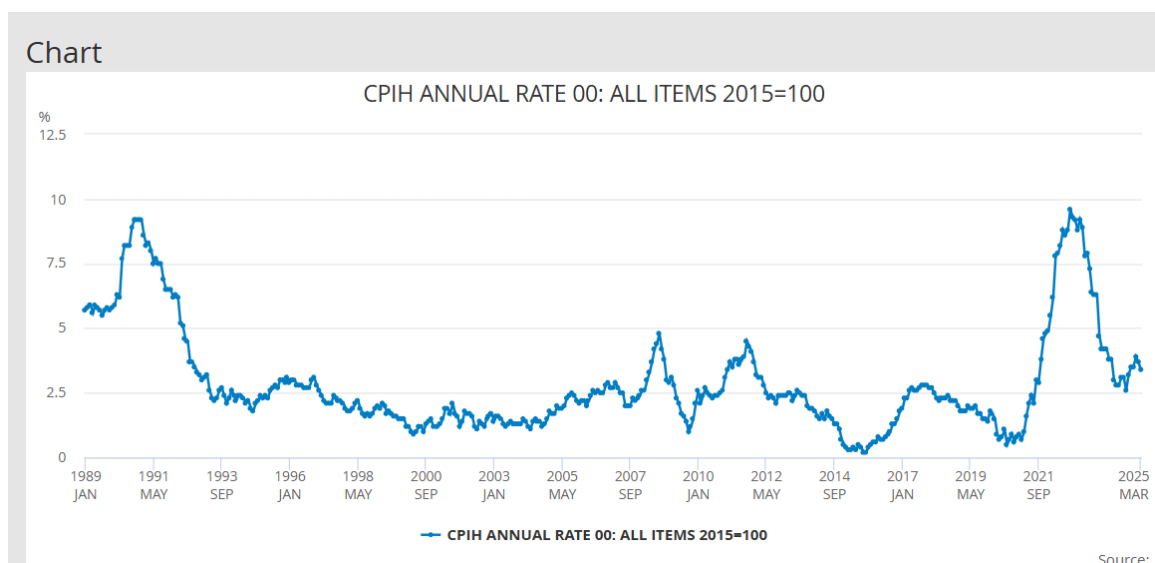
5.6 The consultation feedback is shown at **Annex 2**.

6 Market Indicators



<https://tradingeconomics.com/commodity/gasoline>

Consumer Price Indices



6.1 Current comparison with Kent Authorities

National ranking	Region	2 Miles
114 (2025)	Ashford	£7.60
142 (2022)	Canterbury	£7.40
46 (2025)	Dartford	£8.30
183 (2022)	Dover	£7.10
248 (2022)	Folkstone & Hythe	£6.60
56 (2024)	Gravesham	£8.20
72 (2022)	Maidstone	£8.00
73 (2024)	Medway	£8.00
27 (2022)	Sevenoaks	£8.70 ①
50 (2024)	Swale	£8.30
287 (2022)	Thanet	£6.21
44 (2022)	Tonbridge and Malling	£8.40 ③
32 (2024)	Tunbridge Wells	£8.60 ②

6.2 National league table – top 5 (May 2025)

National ranking	Region	2 Miles
1	London (Heathrow)	£13.60
2	Luton Airport	£12.60
3	TFL	£12.00
4	Epsom & Ewell	£11.00
5	Guildford	£10.00

7 Proposal

- 7.1 That Members consider the feedback from licensed hackney carriage drivers and set the hackney carriage fare level.

	Current	Proposal one
FLAG	£4.00 (up to .50 of a mile / FLAG (880 yards))	£5.00 (up to .66667 of a mile / FLAG (3,520 Feet))
each subsequent 155 yards	£.0.20 (each subsequent 125 yards)	£.0.20 (each subsequent 352 feet)
1 Mile	£5.40	£6.00
2 Mile	£8.40	£9.00
Waiting Time (For each period of 20 seconds or part thereof)	£0.20 for every 30 seconds	£0.20 for every 24 seconds
Extra Charges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> at any time on a bank or public holiday except Christmas Day between 18:00 and 24:00 hours on Christmas Eve between 18:00 and 24:00 hours on New Year's Eve Easter Sunday 	50% of the above rate of fare <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For hiring beginning between 00:00 hours and 06:00 on any day 	50% of the above rate of fare <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For hiring beginning between 00:00 hours and 06:00 on any day
For hiring beginning at any time on Christmas Day	100% of the above rate of fare	100% of the above rate of fare
For hiring's on Saturdays & Sundays per fare beginning between 06:00 hours and 24:00 hours.	£0.50 surcharge on each fare	
For the carriage of more than four passengers up to the maximum capacity of the carriage	50% of the above rate of fare	50% of the above rate of fare
Vehicle spoilage charge	£100.00	£100.00
Congestion charges, tolls, and car parking	Congestion charges, tolls and car parking incurred during hiring Any charges(s) detailed above,	Congestion charges, tolls and car parking incurred during hiring Any charges(s) detailed above,

	Current	Proposal one
	incurred as a result of a passenger's instruction may be added to the fare.	incurred as a result of a passenger's instruction may be added to the fare.

7.2 Where proposal would fit in on national league table

National ranking	Region	2 Miles
15	Cheltenham	£9.00
16	Edinburgh	£9.00
17	Mid Sussex	£9.00
18	Reading	£9.00
19	Tonbridge and Malling	£9.00

8 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

8.1 The Licensing Income budget for 2025 – 2026 is £374,850

9 Risk Assessment

9.1 Approval of a new maximum fare, below the expectation of the hackney carriage trade, may result in dissatisfaction from the trade. Increasing the maximum fare may result in complaints from members of the public.

10 Legal Implications

10.1 Any proposal to vary the table of fares is subject to consultation. Under the Local Government Act 1976 – Section 65, any fares approved by the Council must be advertised via a public notice in a local newspaper. Any relevant objections received would need to be reported back to Members for consideration.

11 Consultation and Communications

11.1 Following the petition received Tonbridge and Malling Licensing Services invited all licensed drivers to participate in a Teams survey to validate current thinking for a Fare Increase.

12 Implementation

12.1 Subject to no objection after fourteen days the new fares will take effect 1 July 2025

13 Cross Cutting Issues

- 13.1 Following corporate guidelines for all of the charges included in this report has ensured a standard approach across different services

14 Climate Change and Biodiversity

- 14.1 None identified.

15 Equalities and Diversity

- 15.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

16 Other If Relevant

- 16.1 None

Background Papers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Petition received from licensed drivers • Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy 2023 – 2028.
Annexes	<p>Annex 1 – Drivers Petition</p> <p>Annex 2 – Feedback from Teams consultation</p>