

HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARE TARIFF/ACCEPTANCE OF CARD PAYMENTS IN TAXIS

Report of the: Head of Housing and Environmental Services

Contact: Rachel Jackson

Urgent Decision?(yes/no) No

If yes, reason urgent decision required: N/A

Annexes/Appendices (attached): Annexe 1: Press release from Transport for London regarding card payments.
Annexe 2: Consultation letter sent to all licensed Hackney Carriage Drivers.
Annexe 3: Responses from consultees

Other available papers (not attached): None

REPORT SUMMARY

The Committee is asked to consider if it should be mandatory for licensed Hackney Carriage Vehicles to have the facility for credit/debit card payments.

RECOMMENDATION (S)

That the Committee decide whether or not to require all Epsom & Ewell licensed Hackney Carriages to be fitted with a credit/debit card payment or other cashless payment facility in line with Transport for London (TfL) requirements.

Notes

1 Implications for the Council's Key Priorities, Service Plans and Sustainable Community Strategy

1.1 None applicable for the purpose of this report.

2 Background

2.1 This Council has a longstanding and unique dual licensing arrangement with Transport for London (TfL). This allows for a Hackney Carriage licensed by the TfL to be licensed with the Borough. This arrangement was initially intended to allow an effective transition from the old Greater London Authorities. Under this arrangement, this Council adopts the TfL

fare tariff which is reviewed annually. Following on from this consultation, it is recommended that the Council continues to adopt the tariff to avoid any confusion.

- 2.2 This Council ceased issuing new dual licences with effect from 1 January 2014 with the exception of licences issued to existing Hackney Carriage Drivers licensed with the Authority since no later than 01 January 2013, if it can be proven that the London knowledge test is in progress.
- 2.3 In February 2016 TfL announced that from October this year every licensed London Hackney Carriage will be required to accept card payments for their fares, and to compensate the cost, a 20p increase would be added to all fares from April 2016.
- 2.4 There are a number of taxis both Dual and Borough only who currently offer card payment facilities, with the tariff allowing for a 10% or £1 surcharge imposed on the fare for card payments. This surcharge will be removed from April 2016 in line with the new tariffs.
- 2.5 All Hackney Carriage proprietors were written to and asked for their view. From 46 consultees, a total of seven responses were received, Details of the responses are attached as Annexe 3.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 The Committee is asked to consider whether it wishes to make it mandatory for all Epsom & Ewell licensed Hackney Carriage to have a card payment or other cashless payment facility from October 2016, or if this is considered unnecessary at the current time.

4 Financial and Manpower Implications

- 4.1 Should the Committee consider to introduce a mandatory card system, staff would be required to verify compliance with the requirement and this task would need to be absorbed within existing staffing resources.
- 4.2 **Chief Finance Officer's comments:** *None for the purposes of this report.*

5 Legal Implications (including implications for matters relating to equality)

- 5.1 Section 47(1) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 empowers a Borough Council to attach to the grant of a licence of a Hackney Carriage under the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 such conditions as the Borough Council may consider reasonably necessary.
- 5.2 The powers conferred by section 47(1) would enable the Council to impose a requirement on all Epsom & Ewell licensed Hackney Carriages be fitted with a credit/debit card or other cashless payment facility. There are no implications for matters relating to equality.
- 5.3 **Monitoring Officer's comments:** *Section 47(3) of the Act provides that*

any person aggrieved by any conditions attached to a Hackney Carriage licence issued under this legislation may appeal to a magistrates' court.

6 Sustainability Policy and Community Safety Implications; Partnerships

6.1 None for the purposes of this report

7 Risk Assessment

7.1 None applicable

8 Conclusion and Recommendations

8.1 The Committee is asked to decide whether or not it wishes to impose the requirement that all Epsom & Ewell licensed Hackney Carriages be fitted with a credit/debit card payment facility in line with TfL requirements, or if they are satisfied with the current arrangement.

8.2 After taking into account the responses received from the consultation and local factors, namely: that the majority of taxi journeys are under £10; that each taxi rank is located within very easy reach of an ATM cash machine and that there has never been a complaint received from taxi users regarding a lack of facility, Officers do not consider that it is necessary to implement a mandatory cashless payment facility at this time.

WARD(S) AFFECTED: All