

Hinckley Area Taxi Association

Dear Mr Brymer

I write to you concerning consultations I have undertaken with the taxi trade with regards to a fare tariff increase. Drivers licensed by Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council, have not had a tariff rise since 2011 and we now feel that the time is right to apply for an increase.

The reason for the length of time in applying for an increase is that following the previous rise the price of fuel actually fell from 140 pence per litre in 2011 down to 102 pence per litre in 2015 and although the cost of insurance, plate and driver licenses and the cost of living went up, it was deemed that because of the drop in fuel costs, the trade were pretty much holding their own.

The taxi trade were on the brink of putting an application in prior to Brexit, but because we were unsure of the implications this would have on the trade, for example oil prices, car production and obtaining parts for vehicles, we decided to hold off and monitor what impact, if any this would have. However none of us could have contemplated what a long drawn out process this would be as we didn't leave the EU until 31st January 2020 and shortly following this, we were hit by the COVID 19 pandemic which is still impacting us.

The trade have been discussing a fare tariff rise for some time and have not taken this decision lightly. Even when train fares and bus fares were rising, we still held off putting an application forward so as to still provide a fairly priced transport option to those, for whom bus and train travel is difficult for various reasons.

The reasons that have made this inevitable are as follows:

- Based on the league tables for the UK, comparing 362 councils, Hinckley and Bosworth are Borough is positioned at 259. Although I do have to add that positions 1 and 2 are airport listings of Heathrow and Luton that are not actually councils. However in recent occasions, we have found it difficult to use just the league table as a comparison due to the fact some of these prices are city based, like London for example. The trade tries to look at the surrounding areas and try to work from this. Looking at current listings, based on a 2 mile journey Charnwood are charging £6.05 and Nuneaton are charging £6.75, with Hinckley and Bosworth currently at £5.60.

- The pandemic has also affected the trade badly. Whilst some of the trade was able to claim furlough payments and government schemes, a lot however, fell through the net. Some hadn't been in the trade long enough to produce accounts and some who are of pensionable age, did not qualify but were still expected to use their pensions to cover business costs. The taxi trade invites drivers of any age but currently it has a high level of drivers averaging between 55 and 75 years of age working within the industry. We are aware that this system didn't just affect our trade but we were among a long list of industries that this has affected. Due to the lack of financial help during the pandemic, sadly a lot of drivers have left the industry to go into other career options, such as retail or delivery drivers. Consequently because the trade lost drivers, some vehicles have been taken off, this inevitably has an impact on company revenue. However I would like to acknowledge that the Hinckley and Bosworth licensing team have been super supportive, by giving drivers who were struggling financially a longer period to pay for their licence.
- Further full lockdowns also impacted the trade, the entertainment industry brings approximately 40% of income to the taxi industry, along with retail day economy bringing another 40%, with both those factors being affected during lockdown, and this had a major impact on revenue.
- We have also noticed a sharp rise in public liability insurance, fuel costs and costings for parts and tyres, which after the pandemic have been harder to source due to delays in production.

The trade are eager to move on and improve by trying to attract younger people into the workforce to provide the professional service we have always strived to give the people of Hinckley and Bosworth. To enable us to do this, we need to get revenue flowing back into the industry so that we have incentives to offer new drivers wishing to work within the profession, like up to date vehicles and booking systems that make operations more reliable and customer friendly, we would also like to rise up from depths of the pandemic by allowing firms that have traded in this area for years to continue. This will be impossible if it's not financially viable.

To aid the Council with its decision I have included two tables on the following pages showing the existing tariff rates and the proposed tariff rates.

Table 1 existing rates

Tariff 1 (normal time) For Journeys between 06:00 and 22:30

For first 880 yards or part thereof £2.60

For every 176 yards or part thereof 20p

Calculation in mileage

1 mile £3.60

2 miles £5.60

3 miles £7.60

4 miles £9.60

5 miles £11.60

Tariff 2 - For Journeys between 22:30 and 06:00 (time and a half)

For the first 880 yards or part thereof £3.90

For every 176 yards or part thereof 30p

Calculation in miles

1 mile £5.40

2 miles £8.40

3 miles £11.40

4 miles £14.40

5 miles £17.40

Tariff 3 (double time) Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year's Day

For the first 880 yards or part thereof £5.20

For every 176 yards or part thereof 40p

Calculation in miles

1 mile £7.20

2 miles £11.20

3 miles £15.20

4 miles £19.20

5 miles £23.20

Waiting Time

For each 1 minute of waiting time or uncompleted part thereof: 20p

Extra Charges

For each adult person in excess of one. 20p

For each suitcase or pushchair over one. 20p

Where a hirer arranges by telephone, email or otherwise with driver prior to the commencement of the hiring to commence from a place other than a hackney carriage stand. 20p

Table 2 Proposed rates

Tariff 1 (normal time) For Journeys between 06:00 and 22:30

For the first 880 yards or part thereof £2.80

For every 176 yards or part thereof 24p

Calculation in miles

1 mile £4.00

2 mile £6.40

3 mile £8.80

4 mile £11.20

5 mile £13.60

Tariff 2 - For Journeys between 22:30 and 06:00 (time and a half)

For the first 880 yards or part thereof £4.20

For every 176 yards or part thereof 36p

Calculation in miles

1 mile £6.00

2 mile £9.60

3 mile £13.20

4 mile £16.80

5 mile £20.40

Tariff 3 (double time) Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year's Day

For the first 880 yards or part thereof £5.60

For every 176 yards or part thereof 48p

Calculation in miles

1 mile £8.00

2 miles £12.80

3 miles £17.60

4 miles £22.40

5 miles £27.20

Waiting Time

For each 1 minute of waiting time or uncompleted part thereof: 24p

Extra Charges

For each adult person in excess of one. 25p

For each suitcase or pushchair over one. 25p

Where a hirer arranges by telephone, email or otherwise with driver prior to the commencement of the hiring to commence from a place other than a hackney carriage stand. 25p

If the council decide to accept the proposal, the trade respectfully asks that the extra charges and waiting time are adjusted as above, with the soiling charge to remain the same at £50.

We look forward to hearing your decision in due course

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Tina Duane