



Chelmsford City Council Regulatory Committee

DATE: 20th October 2022

APPLICATION FOR AN INCREASE IN FARES (TARIFF) CHARGED BY HACKNEY CARRIAGES

Report by: Licensing Lead Officer – Daniel Winter

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Purpose

To consider a petition on behalf of the Chelmsford Taxi Drivers Association to increase the fares charged in respect of Hackney Carriages (Tariff charges).

Recommendations

Members are requested to consider the petition and determine whether or not to approve for consultation an increase in Hackney Carriage fares (the tariff).

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Section 16 of 'The District of Chelmsford Bye-laws' approved on 22nd January 1975 - adopted the imposition of tariff charges in respect of fares levied by Hackney Carriages. Tariffs may be periodically reviewed, which is generally following an application by a licence holder on behalf of others and where previously this has been in the form of a petition

- 1.2 The last review of the Taxi Tariff was in July 2022 in response to a petition from Mr Terry Michel due to Covid 19 pandemic and inflation to fuel prices. This petition was granted by members on 14th July 2022 and took effect from 18th August 2022 when the Hackney Carriage meters were recalibrated.
- 1.3 In addition to the petition received earlier this year, a separate petition submitted by Ian Vernon, on behalf of the Chelmsford Taxi Drivers Association, was received that proposed additional issues that 'level up' fares charged locally. The 'levelling up' refers to the numbers of passengers that use vehicles (where customers using a 4-seater vehicle might individually pay less than a fully occupied 5 or 6 multi seater vehicle) that are more costly to purchase and to operate. This Petition was refused by the committee, but petitioners were invited to resubmit it so that all comments could be made during the consultation period and considered in full by the committee.
- 1.4 On 23rd August 2022 Ian Vernon, on behalf of the Chelmsford Taxi Drivers Association, submitted a new petition for a tariff increase which adds a surcharge to the current tariff when a vehicle is used by 5 or more passengers. The current tariff is attached at Appendix A. The same approach is taken in two other local authority areas in Essex.
- 1.5 Included in at Appendix B is a comparison of the change between the current tariff where a licensed vehicle is hired by not more than 4 persons, and the proposed tariff which provides additional tariff charges when hired by 5 or more persons (not including wheelchair users and carers).
- 1.6 Private Hire Vehicles can establish their own fees, whereas Hackney Carriages are legally committed to charge not more than the tariff when operating within the district of this local authority.
- 1.7 A national tariff comparison is provided at Appendix C as an abstract from the Private Hire and Trade Magazine (PHTM). As of 1st October, Chelmsford City Council are currently in position 30.
- 1.8 A further statement provided by Mr Vernon was received to support the current petition. The statement includes a pathway to comments made on Essex Live Facebook page that did not appear to be working. It was asked of Mr Vernon to provide this information in a different format, but no further information was provided by the time this report was written. This is attached as Appendix D.

2. Implications

- 2.1 If the tariff change is agreed, the proposed table of fares will need to be advertised in the local paper for 14 days (from 27/10/2022 until 09/11/2022) and displayed in the Council offices and on the Council's website. It would also be the intention of officers to inform individual licence holders as part of this process.

2.2 Where there are no objections it is proposed that the changes take effect on 10/11/2022 subject to availability for the meters to be recalibrated.

2.3 Where there are objections, the committee will need to consider the proposal further in the light of those representations. If, following due consideration, the tariff increase is approved it must come into effect not later than 10th January 2023.

3. Options

3.1 Members may consider amending any part of this proposal and have the following options:

a) Support the proposal as submitted and approve the tariff increase for consultation and implemented in accordance with the proposed timescale where no objections are received.

b) Modify the proposal and approve the modified tariff increase for consultation and implemented in accordance with the proposed timescale where no objections are received.

c) Not to approve any form of increase to the current tariff

3.2 In the event that an objection or representation is submitted the matter must be referred back to the Regulatory Committee for further consideration and where necessary, establish a further implementation date.

Appendices:

A – The petition for a tariff increase for multi seater vehicles

B – Proposed new tariff comparison

C – PHTM national Tariff league table

D – Further statement from Ian Vernon to support the petition

Background reading:

None

Corporate Implications

Legal/Constitutional: None

Financial: None

Potential impact on climate change and the environment: None

Contribution toward achieving a net zero carbon position by 2030: None

Personnel: None

Risk Management: None

Equality and Diversity: None

Health and Safety: None

Digital: None

Other: None

Consultees: The petitioners

Relevant Policies and Strategies: None

APPENDIX A

Dear Dan

On behalf of the Chelmsford Taxi Drivers Association (CTDA) I raised a petition for a Tariff increase for multi seater vehicles now known as Tariff B. This was heard by the Regulatory Committee on 9th June 2022, who in turn unanimously agreed to the proposal and a period of public consultation followed.

On the 14th July following the public consultation period the Regulatory Committee sat to consider such response. In light of some of the misleading and inaccurate comments made by 2 members of the trade the CTDA felt these needed to be challenged/disputed.

As it transpired, we were advised at the meeting our comments although valid and welcomed could not be considered outside the consultation period. Therefore, as a result we were advised by the Chair that if we wished to continue with the petition we would have to re submit our application.

Therefore in light of this please accept this email as an application to raise before the Regulatory committee at the earliest opportunity.

It is worth pointing out that at no time within this consultation period, and the short period of time that followed, did the CTDA have opportunity to discuss any concerns that may exist with the Council in order to have the proposal granted.

May I now take this opportunity to invite Licensing to communicate with us to establish what concerns, if any, may now exist so that the CTDA can respond and allay any fears.

Myself and representatives of the trade are more than happy to make an appointment with yourself, if you feel this will be beneficial.

Kind regards

Ian Vernon
Chair
CTDA

Chelmsford Hackney Carriage Fares-Current Tariff

Hackney Carriage Fares (YARDS)

Tariff 1a:

06:00 to 23:00 Monday to Saturday (excluding public holiday)

First 625 yards or 2 minutes and 34 seconds (pull off)	£3.60
Each subsequent 71.0 yards. (Equates to £2.479 per mile after 625 yards)	£0.10
Waiting time per 17.5 seconds	£0.10

Tariff 2a:

*23:00 to 06:00 daily and anytime on public holidays (all day) 18:00 to 22:00
Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve*

First 700 yards or 3 minutes and 15 seconds (pull off)	£4.80
Each subsequent 50.7 yards (Equates to £3.471 per mile after 700 yards)	£0.10
Waiting time per 14.10 seconds	£0.10

Tariff 3a:

06:00 to 23:00 Sundays

First 410 yards or 1 minute and 17 seconds. (pull off)	£4.70
Each subsequent 71.6 yards (Equates to £2.458 per mile after 410 yards)	£0.10
Waiting time per 11.60seconds	£0.10

Tariff 4a:

*For hiring's begun between 22:00 24th December and 06:00 27th December and
between 22:00 on 31st December and midnight on 1st January (no extras)*

First 495 yards or 1 minutes and 56 seconds. (pull off)	£5.60
Each subsequent 84.7 yards (Equates to £4.156per mile after 495 yards)	£0.20
Waiting time per 19.8 seconds	£0.20

Miscellaneous extras:

For each additional passenger above one per journey	£0.30
For items carried outside the passenger compartment	£0.20
Each bicycle, push chair or perambulator	£0.20
Each other parcel or item of luggage	£0.20
Spoilage charge-a reasonable charge may be levied to a maximum of:	£65.00

Chelmsford Hackney Carriage Fares-Proposed Tariff

Hackney Carriage Fares (YARDS) – 5/6 PASSENGERS (NOT APPLICABLE TO WHEELCHAIR USERS AND CARERS)

Tariff 1b:

6:00 to 23:00 Monday to Saturday (excluding public holiday)

Time and yardage as above (pull off)	£5.40
Each subsequent 71.0 yards ((Equates to £3.718 per mile after 625 yards)	£0.15
Waiting time per 17.5 seconds	£0.15

Tariff 2b:

*23:00 to 06:00 daily and anytime on public holidays (all day) 18:00 to 22:00
Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve*

Time and yardage as above (pull off)	£7.20
Each subsequent 50.70 yards (Equates to £5.207 per mile after 700 yards)	£0.15
Waiting time per 14.10 seconds	£0.15

Tariff 3b:

06:00 to 23:00 Sundays

Time and yardage as above (pull off)	£7.05
Each subsequent 71.6 yards (Equates to £3.687 per mile after 410 yards)	£0.15
Waiting time per 11.60 seconds	£0.15

Tariff 4b:

*For hiring's begun between 22:00 24th December and 06:00 27th December and
between 22:00 on 31st December and midnight on 1st January (no extras)*

Time and yardage as above (pull off)	£8.40
Each subsequent 84.7 yards (Equates to £6.234 per mile after 495 yards)	£0.30
Waiting time per 19.8 seconds	£0.30

Miscellaneous extras:

For each additional passenger above one per journey	£0.30
For items carried outside the passenger compartment	£0.20
Each bicycle, push chair or perambulator	£0.20
Each other parcel or item of luggage	£0.20
Spoilage charge-a reasonable charge may be levied to a maximum of:	£65.00

THE NATIONAL HACKNEY FARES TABLE SEPTEMBER 2022

NATIONAL AVERAGE
TWO MILE HACKNEY FARE
TARIFF ONE

IS NOW £6.55

TABLE COLOUR CODE

RISE IN 2022	RISE IN 2014
RISE IN 2021	RISE IN 2013
RISE IN 2020	RISE IN 2012
RISE IN 2019	RISE IN 2011
RISE IN 2018	RISE IN 2010
RISE IN 2017	RISE IN 2009
RISE IN 2016	RISE IN 2008
RISE IN 2015	NO SET FARE

**UPDATED DAILY
CLICK HERE**

POSITION	TARIFF ONE COUNCIL	TWO MILE FARE
1	LONDON (HEATHROW)	£13.40
2	GUILDFORD	£10.00
3	EPSOM & EWELL	£9.80
4	LONDON	£9.80
5	LUTON AIRPORT	£9.70
6	STEVENAGE	£8.70
7	MID SUSSEX	£8.40
8	WATFORD (x)	£8.40
9	HUNTINGDONSHIRE	£8.30
10	UTTLESFORD	£8.30
11	CARRICK	£8.20
12	HART	£8.20
13	WOKINGHAM	£8.20
14	WORTHING	£8.20
15	BRENTWOOD	£8.10
16	BRECKLAND	£8.00
17	COVENTRY	£8.00
18	MAIDSTONE	£8.00
19	READING	£8.00
20	RUSHCLIFFE	£8.00
21	STROUD	£8.00
22	TORRIDGE	£8.00
23	TUNBRIDGE WELLS	£8.00
24	ISLE OF MAN	£7.90
25	RESTORMEL	£7.90
26	BRACKNELL FOREST	£7.80
27	BRIGHTON & HOVE	£7.80
28	SURREY HEATH	£7.80
29	WAVERLEY	£7.80
30	CHELMSFORD	£7.70

POSITION	TARIFF ONE COUNCIL	TWO MILE FARE
31	GUERNSEY	£7.70
32	WEALDON	£7.70
33	BCP	£7.65
34	EAST AYRSHIRE	£7.60
35	BASINGSTOKE & DEANE	£7.60
36	SOUTH SOMERSET	£7.60
37	CHELTENHAM	£7.40
38	KERRIER	£7.60
39	MONMOUTHSHIRE	£7.60
40	OXFORD CITY	£7.60
41	RUSHMOOR	£7.60
42	SOUTHAMPTON	£7.60
43	TORBAY	£7.51
44	JERSEY	£7.43
45	CANTERBURY	£7.40
46	EAST HAMPSHIRE	£7.40
47	HARROGATE	£7.40
48	LEWES	£7.40
49	SOUTH AYRSHIRE	£7.40
50	TEWKESBURY	£7.40
51	WEST BERKSHIRE	£7.40
52	ASHFORD	£7.30
53	CAMBRIDGE CITY	£7.30
54	DARTFORD	£7.30
55	NORTH DEVON	£7.30
56	SOUTH CAMBRIDGE	£7.30
57	WEYMOUTH & PORTLAND	£7.30
58	TEIGNBRIDGE	£7.26
59	ARUN	£7.20
60	BATH & NORTH EAST	£7.20
61	DORSET	£7.20
62	EAST HERTS	£7.20
63	EAST NORTHANTS	£7.20
64	NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE	£7.20
65	PORTSMOUTH UA	£7.20
66	REIGATE & BANSTEAD	£7.20
67	SOUTH GLOUCESTER	£7.20
68	ROTHER	£7.20
69	WEST SUFFOLK	£7.20
70	YORK	£7.20
71	EAST DEVON	£7.15
72	ARGYLL & BUTE	£7.13
73	CRAWLEY	£7.10
74	DOVER	£7.10
75	ISLE OF WIGHT	£7.10
76	MENDIP	£7.10
77	MOLE VALLEY	£7.10
78	PENWITH	£7.10
79	RUGBY	£7.10
80	WINDSOR & MAIDENHEAD	£7.10
81	RUNNYMEDE	£7.10
82	HARBOROUGH	£7.09
83	SEVENOAKS	£7.06
84	BRISTOL	£7.00
85	BROMSGROVE	£7.00
86	EAST LOTHIAN	£7.00
87	EDINBURGH	£7.00
88	HERTSMERE	£7.00
89	MACCLESFIELD	£7.00
90	SLOUGH	£7.00
91	SWANSEA	£7.00
92	TONBRIDGE & MALLING	£7.00
93	WELWYN HATFIELD	£7.00
94	WILTSHIRE	£7.00
95	CRAVEN	£6.99

POSITION	TARIFF ONE COUNCIL	TWO MILE FARE
96	SANDWELL	£6.92
97	COLCHESTER	£6.90
98	EASTBOURNE	£6.90
99	VALE OF WHITE HORSE	£6.90
100	WORCESTER CITY	£6.90
101	RHONDDA CYN ON TAFF	£6.88
102	ADUR	£6.80
103	BEDFORD	£6.80
104	BOSTON	£6.80
105	BROXTOWE	£6.80
106	CARMARTHENSHIRE	£6.80
107	CARADON	£6.80
108	CEREDIGION	£6.80
109	EAST LINDSEY	£6.80
110	FIFE	£6.80
111	GLASGOW (x)	£6.80
112	GLOUCESTER	£6.80
113	GRAVESHAM	£6.80
114	KINGSTON-UPON-HULL	£6.80
115	MID DEVON	£6.80
116	NORTH CORNWALL	£6.80
117	NORTH WARWICK	£6.80
118	NOTTINGHAM	£6.80
119	SEDGEMOOR	£6.80
120	SOMERSET WEST & TAUNTON	£6.80
121	SWALE	£6.80
122	TENDRING	£6.80
123	VALE OF GLAMORGAN	£6.80
124	WOLVERHAMPTON	£6.80
125	CHARNWOOD	£6.75
126	NUNEATON & BEDWORTH	£6.75
127	MALVERN HILLS	£6.72
128	ANGUS	£6.70
129	BRAINTREE	£6.70
130	CHESTER	£6.70
131	CONGLETON	£6.70
132	EASTLEIGH	£6.70
133	FYLDE	£6.70
134	MANCHESTER	£6.70
135	NORTH SOMERSET	£6.70
136	NORTH TYNESIDE	£6.70
137	SHEFFIELD	£6.70
138	SOUTH LAKELAND	£6.70
139	SWINDON	£6.70
140	THREE RIVERS	£6.70
141	SOUTH HAMS	£6.66
142	CARLISLE	£6.60
143	CONWY	£6.60
144	DUDLEY	£6.60
145	EAST SUFFOLK (NORTH)	£6.60
146	EDEN	£6.60
147	EXETER	£6.60
148	HARLOW	£6.60
149	HAVANT	£6.60
150	HIGH PEAK	£6.60
151	MEDWAY	£6.60
152	MORAY (x)	£6.60
153	NORTH HERTS	£6.60
154	NORWICH	£6.60
155	PLYMOUTH	£6.60
156	ROCHFORD	£6.60
157	SCARBOROUGH	£6.60
158	SHETLAND ISLES	£6.60
159	SOUTH TYNESIDE	£6.60
160	IPSWICH	£6.55

Appendix C

POSITION	TARIFF ONE COUNCIL	TWO MILE FARE
161	BASSETLAW	£6.50
162	CALDERDALE	£6.50
163	DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL	£6.50
164	EREWASH	£6.50
165	LIVERPOOL	£6.50
166	LUTON	£6.50
167	ORKNEY	£6.50
168	CHESTERFIELD	£6.45
169	HYNDBURN	£6.42
170	BASILDON	£6.40
171	BLAENAU GWENT	£6.40
172	CASTLE POINT	£6.40
173	COUNTY OF HEREFORD	£6.40
174	CREWE & NANTWICH	£6.40
175	DERBYSHIRE DALES	£6.40
176	EAST RENFREW	£6.40
177	HASTINGS	£6.40
178	HINCKLEY & BOSWORTH	£6.40
179	LEEDS	£6.40
180	LINCOLN	£6.40
181	MELTON	£6.40
182	MID SUFFOLK	£6.40
183	NORTH KESTEVEN	£6.40
184	SHROPSHIRE	£6.40
185	SOUTHEND ON SEA	£6.40
186	TAMESIDE	£6.40
187	WEST LINDSEY	£6.40
188	WOKING	£6.40
189	PERTH & KINROSS	£6.33
190	NEWARK & SHERWOOD	£6.32
191	BLACKBURN	£6.30
192	BURY	£6.30
193	COTSWOLD	(y) £6.30
194	DACORUM	£6.30
195	DARLINGTON	£6.30
196	PEMBROKESHIRE	£6.30
197	SOUTH HOLLAND	£6.30
198	SOUTH RIBBLE	£6.30
199	DUNDEE CITY	£6.28
200	FOREST OF DEAN	£6.27
201	BABERGH	£6.26
202	REDDITCH	£6.25
203	MIDLOTHIAN	£6.22
204	THANET	£6.21
205	BIRMINGHAM	£6.20
206	CHICHESTER	£6.20
207	CHORLEY	£6.20
208	COPELAND	£6.20
209	DAVENTRY	£6.20
210	DERBY	£6.20
211	EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE	£6.20
212	EAST SUFFOLK (SOUTH)	£6.20
213	FALKIRK	£6.20
214	FENLAND	£6.20
215	FOLKESTONE & HYTHE	£6.20
216	HORSHAM	£6.20
217	NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE	£6.20
218	NORTHAMPTON	£6.20
219	NORTHUMBERLAND	£6.20
220	SOLIHULL	£6.20
221	SPELTHORNE	£6.20
222	ST ALBANS	£6.20
223	STRATFORD ON AVON	£6.20
224	SUNDERLAND	£6.20
225	WEST OXFORD	£6.20

POSITION	TARIFF ONE COUNCIL	TWO MILE FARE
226	WINCHESTER	£6.20
227	WYCHAVON	£6.20
228	RENFREWSHIRE	£6.15
229	WYRE FOREST	£6.14
230	CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE	£6.13
231	ABERDEENSHIRE	£6.10
232	CANNOCK CHASE	£6.10
233	CARDIFF	£6.10
234	CLACKMANNAN	£6.10
235	ELMBRIDGE	£6.10
236	NEW FOREST	£6.10
237	TAMWORTH	£6.10
238	SELBY	£6.06
239	SCOTTISH BORDERS	£6.05
240	ABERDEEN CITY	£6.00
241	ALLERDALE	£6.00
242	BLACKPOOL	£6.00
243	BUCKINGHAMSHIRE	£6.00
244	DENBIGHSHIRE	£6.00
245	SOUTH LANARKSHIRE (East Kilbride)	£6.00
246	EAST STAFFORDSHIRE	£6.00
247	GATESHEAD	£6.00
248	GREAT YARMOUTH	£6.00
249	GWYNEDD	£6.00
250	KETTERING	£6.00
251	KINGS LYNN & WEST NORFOLK	£6.00
252	KNOWSLEY	£6.00
253	LANCASTER	£6.00
254	MILTON KEYNES	£6.00
255	NORTH WEST LEICESTER	£6.00
256	PETERBOROUGH	£6.00
257	POWYS	£6.00
258	RICHMONDSHIRE	£6.00
259	PRESTON	£6.00
260	ROTHERHAM	£6.00
261	RYEDALE	£6.00
262	SALFORD	£6.00
263	STOCKPORT	£6.00
264	TEST VALLEY	(x) £6.00
265	THURROCK	£6.00
266	WARWICK	£6.00
267	WIRRAL	£6.00
268	BROXBORNE	£5.90
269	STAFFORD	£5.90
270	STOKE-ON-TRENT UA	£5.90
271	TANDRIDGE	£5.90
272	VALE ROYAL	£5.90
273	WALSALL	£5.90
274	BARNSELY	£5.80
275	BARROW IN FURNESS	£5.80
276	BRIDGEND	£5.80
277	FAREHAM	£5.80
278	FLINTSHIRE	£5.80
279	HALTON	£5.80
280	HIGHLAND	(x) £5.80
281	LEICESTER	£5.80
282	LICHFIELD	£5.80
283	MERTHYR TYDFIL	£5.80
284	NEATH PORT TALBOT	£5.80
285	NORTHERN IRELAND	£5.80
286	NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE	£5.80
287	NORTH NORFOLK	£5.80
288	RUTHERGLEN	(x) £5.80
289	SEFTON	£5.80
290	SOUTH LANARKSHIRE (City of Edinburgh)	£5.80

POSITION	TARIFF ONE COUNCIL	TWO MILE FARE
291	TRAFFORD	£5.80
292	WIGAN	£5.80
293	WYRE	£5.80
294	YNS MON	£5.80
295	DONCASTER	£5.75
296	NORTH EAST DERBYSHIRE	£5.75
297	CAERPHILLY	£5.70
298	GEDLING	£5.70
299	ST HELENS	£5.70
300	STIRLING	(x) £5.70
301	WARRINGTON	£5.70
302	BRADFORD	£5.60
303	GOSPORT	£5.60
304	NEWPORT	£5.60
305	NORTH LANARKSHIRE	£5.60
306	WEST LOTHIAN	(x) £5.60
307	WREXHAM	£5.60
308	CHERWELL	£5.56
309	NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME	£5.55
310	INVERCLYDE	£5.54
311	DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY	£5.50
312	EAST DUNBARTONSHIRE	£5.50
313	EPPING FOREST	£5.50
314	HAMBLETON	£5.50
315	OLDHAM	£5.50
316	ROCHDALE	£5.50
317	TORFAEN	£5.50
318	CLYDEBANK	£5.40
319	DUNBARTON & VALE OF LEVEN	(x) £5.40
320	ELLESMERE PORT	£5.40
321	HARTLEPOOL	£5.40
322	MANSFIELD	£5.35
323	NORTH AYRSHIRE	£5.30
324	RIBBLE VALLEY	£5.30
325	SOUTH KESTEVEN	£5.30
326	BLABY	£5.24
327	AMBER VALLEY	£5.20
328	BOLTON	£5.20
329	HAMILTON	(x) £5.20
330	STAFFS MOORLANDS	£5.20
331	WAKEFIELD	£5.20
332	WEST LANCASHIRE	£5.20
333	EAST RIDING	£5.15
334	SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE	£5.10
335	STOCKTON ON TEES	£5.10
336	BURNLEY	£5.00
337	KIRKLEES	£5.00
338	ROSENDALE	£5.00
339	SOUTH NORTHANTS	£5.00
340	CORBRY	£4.90
341	MIDDLESBROUGH	£4.90
342	TELFORD & WREKIN	£4.90
343	WELLINGBOROUGH	£4.90
344	WESTERN ISLES	(x) £4.85
345	ASHFIELD	£4.80
346	BOLSOVER	£4.60
347	REDCAR & CLEVELAND	£4.50
348	OADBY & WIGSTON	£4.40
349	PENDLE	£4.40
350	MALDON	£
351	RUTLAND	£
352	SOUTH DERBYSHIRE	£
353	SOUTH NORFOLK	£
354	SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE	£
355	WEST DEVON	£

APPENDIX D

Proposed Multi Seater Vehicle (MSV) Hackney Carriage Taxi Tariff

The owners of MSV Hackney Carriage Taxis in Chelmsford would like to propose an additional tariff schedule for when their vehicles are being used in a 5 or 6 seat capacity in order to level up the purchase and running costs of a Saloon Vehicle (SV) and that of an MSV.

This proposal will be supported by a driver petition with in excess of 60 signatures from the trade, including some saloon car drivers.

Current Situation

Currently there are 76 saloon car vehicles used as Hackney Carriage taxis in Chelmsford, the rest (89) and any new taxis are MSV, in order to accommodate the disability act and be wheelchair accessible.

At present, there is a huge disparity in the costs of purchasing and running a saloon car versus an MSV.

The purchase price for a MSV is double that of a saloon, an MSV costs between £35,000-£45,000 + finance, and up to £65,000 for electric vehicles. Saloon cars start at £15,000. Buying second hand vehicle is a similar situation where an MSV would be around £20,000 and a saloon around £7,000

MSV's are not designed for passenger transport like saloon cars, in the main they are commercial vans that have been converted to take passengers. Due to their larger size and weight, fuel costs are much higher for MSV and maintenance costs are higher too, with more features such as wheelchair ramps and restraints, auto locking doors, flip seats, etc requiring maintenance, as well as higher general costs of parts for commercial vehicles.

The financial burden of owning a MSV will only get worse with the trade moving to more emission friendly vehicles and finally to the utopia of fully electric vehicles.

Although the costs of purchasing and running an MSV are almost double, there is very little chance of earning any more from the vehicle on the current tariff (30p-60p in extras when the vehicle is used at full capacity).

To ensure Local Authorities have the appropriate number of taxis on the circuit and enough provision of Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles we need to find a solution to funding.

It is quite clear that license holders are feeling the pinch when licensing an MSV. In the past couple of years a great number of vehicles in Chelmsford have been lost with vehicle licences (plates) being handed back. It's no coincidence that all the plates that were handed back were MSV, diminishing Chelmsford's wheelchair accessible fleet of taxis.

Not one single saloon car was handed back. During hard times, MSV are simply not financially viable to many owners, either to run or to replace.

New Tariff Proposal

Currently the way all tariffs work throughout the UK is that the more passengers that travel, the cheaper each individual passenger would effectively pay.

We would like to propose that an additional tariff be introduced, whereby if five or six passengers travel in a MSV that the fare be increased by 50% levelling up the price paid per passenger. If the vehicle was used for one to four passengers the fare tariff would remain the same.

For example:

Should an MSV undertake a five mile journey at Rate 1, it would increase the price by from £15.11 to £22.57 (An increase of £7.56), at Rate 2 it would increase the fare from £20.78 to £30.88 (An increase of £10.10)

4 people travelling at Rate 1 would pay £3.78 per person

6 people travelling at Rate 1 would pay £3.76 per person

4 people travelling at Rate 2 would pay £5.20 per person

6 people travelling at Rate 2 would pay £5.15 per person

Individually no one pays more

Three extra 5/6 seater journeys on Fri/Sat evenings at Rate 2 and six on the remaining days of the week at Rate 1 would increase the drivers weekly earnings by £75.66.

Based on a 48 week year and sensible working hours this would increase annual income by £3631.68,(less tax). This amount, over a number of years, would go a long way to meeting extra running costs and saving for a new vehicle

It is worthy to note that most journeys for taxi drivers are 1-4 passengers, five to six passengers are much less common.

Please also note that this new tariff could never be used for wheelchair passengers, as the space taken up by the wheelchair in the MSV means that a situation could not occur where 5 or 6 passengers travelled together.

Potential Concerns from the public/trade

Currently the taxi saloon car owner enjoy a high “black market” second hand value of their plates amongst Chelmsford taxi drivers, fetching a second hand premium of up to £25k, plus the value of the car, primarily due to their lower replacement costs and lower running costs.

This may diminish should the earnings potential of the MSV vehicle be increased and the costs versus returns between vehicle types become more equal. This may cause objections from current saloon car drivers.

To clarify, the tariff would be set manually at the beginning of the journey depending on how many passengers get in, as the number of passengers dictates which vehicle is needed.

This is standard practice in Chelmsford. Switching between tariffs when passenger numbers vary during a journey is not something we have ever seen in Chelmsford and should not be introduced now. For example, currently, the tariff doesn't increase for a passenger getting into a vehicle at 10.50pm and travelling over into the higher Rate 2 tariff at 11pm – it remains at Rate 1 for the duration of the journey.

Several councils across the UK including neighbouring Basildon select the tariff manually at the outset without undue concern. The fact that it is an offence to run the meter on an inappropriate tariff, or to over charge, could result in a licence being suspended and ultimately revoked is enough for drivers to abide to their conditions.

Astute passengers with mobile phone cameras and “How to Complain” notices and QR codes displayed in taxi's that provide links to complain will also insure that integrity is maintained.

Tariff increments would be in 15p denominations, most fares are now paid by credit card, however all taxi drivers carry change holders that accommodate 5p, so this would not be an issue.

Public feedback from the previous request for this tariff change on Facebook, showed the vast majority of the public supported tariff increases/changes, as the cost of living and fuel costs are understandably much higher now. Comments can be viewed on Essex Live Facebook post here

https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=pfbid0358WQRJyntU8ZrMNkC4hBoqNhEKaYrPionuTpFTDFXCr2pHuYza3PpAT3ryDU6L1sl&id=125574517485663

Summary

1. There is currently a clear, unfair, cost differentiation between a licensed holder of a Saloon car taxi and an MSV vehicle, both on the purchase price and running costs.
2. We are requesting to look at parity on the price per person of 4 to 6 passengers
3. Appreciate and accept the future funding of MSV will greatly reduce the fleet of taxis in Chelmsford and that of wheelchair accessible vehicles.
4. There has been a huge loss in revenue throughout the COVID pandemic, which has greatly affected savings to purchase replacement MSV's and access to credit (lease purchase) leading to negative credit reference reports. Failure to act now will see many more leaving the trade
5. Whilst I appreciate that everyone is feeling the pinch at the moment, if we want to maintain a functioning wheelchair accessible fleet of Hackney Carriage vehicles in Chelmsford for the foreseeable future , something has to be done to help with the cost of purchasing and running them.