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**TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE NEWSLETTER**

**JULY 2022**

**Hackney Tariff**

Further to our June newsletter, Strategy and Resources Committee during its meeting of the 4 July has considered the recommendation of the Licensing and Community Safety Committee in respect of the proposed amendment to the hackney carriage tariff. As such the Council has approved the implementation of the tariff un-amended and the **attached tariff will come into effect on the 11 July 2022.**

Drivers and proprietors can utilise the attached paper tariff as a temporary measure to keep in their vehicles, and shortly all vehicle proprietors will be issued laminated tariff cards, customer information sheets and ‘How to Complain/Comment’ stickers.

Please be advised that North Devon Council’s Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy stipulates that:

* The new tariff card when issued **‘must be displayed in each vehicle so that it is easily visible to all hirers’.**
* Customer information sheets ‘**must be kept in the vehicle and produced upon request’.** We suggest storing this in the glove box for safe keeping.
* The ‘How to complain/ comment’ sticker’ **must be displayed prominently within the vehicle**. We suggest a passenger rear window.

Additionally the policy cites that:

* The Licensing Authority will seal the meter. Any tampering with the seal or the meter constitutes an offence. Where any seal becomes broken or damaged for whatever reason, the owner or operator must immediately inform the Licensing Office, which will arrange for the meter to be re-tested and sealed.
* Meters must be switched on when passengers are seated at the commencement of each journey. When the meter is operating there shall be recorded on the face of the meter in clearly legible figures a fare not exceeding the maximum fare that may be charged for a journey.
* All taxi meters must contain either the current district council’s authorised fares for licensed hackney carriages (tariff) or the immediately preceding tariff, (thus a choice of two North Devon Council tariffs available to proprietors. Taxi operators must obtain from their taxi meter manufacturer or agent confirmation, in writing, of all tariffs programmed into their meters, other than the North Devon Council tariffs. This confirmation must be supplied to the Licensing Authority on demand so that the Licensing Authority can verify that the tariffs do not exceed the tariffs set by the Authority.
* Taxi operators are recommended to only program North Devon Council tariffs into their taxi meters and are free to offer discounts, as they see fit, at the end of a journey*.*

We have emailed the main meter suppliers (Cygnus, Viking, Digitax) to advise of the changes to the tariff. Vehicle proprietors wishing to update their meters should now contact their meter agent in order to make the necessary changes to their meters.

As cited, proprietors will have the choice to update their meters, but regardless of whether they do so the latest tariff sheet must be displayed as above.

Meter Test Requirements

Those wishing to update their meters **must advise North Devon Council’s Licensing Team via email ONLY** and PRIOR TO ANY METER CHANGE. We kindly seek correspondence with requests to be sent to the following email address with the subject title ‘TAXI METER TEST’:

licensing@northdevon.gov.uk

The Licensing Team will then make arrangements to contact you to offer a meter test appointment at an agreed time and date. Please be mindful that appointments will be offered over the coming weeks and months as a part of a phase in programme.

Drivers will be able to use the new tariff whilst awaiting an appointment for a meter test, however an exemption from sealing meters after insertion of the new tariff will only be provided until **1** **January 2023** in order that arrangements can be made to seal all vehicles by way of appointment or upon renewal in a staggered manner.

Additionally, we are mindful that due to Covid restrictions there are a number of meters that require sealing in any event.

The fee for meter test fee remains unchanged at £29.00

Drivers will note the extra charge of 10p added to the fare price when the South West Average price of fuel oil exceeds £1.75 per litre based on the latest available AA Fuel Price Report with a further 10p added for each subsequent increase of 10p per litre*.*

For information the link to AA fuel prices is available via this link, please be sure to check the South West Average rather than National Average:

www.northdevon.gov.uk/tariff