

Your contact is: **Simon Hill - Committee Services (simon.hill@reading.gov.uk)**

NOTICE OF MEETING - POLICY COMMITTEE 18 MAY 2020

An online meeting of the Policy Committee will be held on Monday, 18 May 2020 at 6.30 pm via Microsoft Teams. The Agenda for the meeting is set out below.

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|----|--|---------------------|----------------|
| 1. | CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS | | |
| 2. | DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST | | |
| 3. | MINUTES | | 5 - 10 |
| 4. | PETITIONS AND QUESTIONS | | |
| | To receive any petitions from the public and any questions from the public and Councillors. | | |
| 5. | DECISION BOOKS | | 11 - 12 |
| | To note the Decision Books published since the previous meeting of the Committee. | | |
| 6. | COVID-19 RESPONSE UPDATE | BOROUGH WIDE | 13 - 20 |
| | This report provides an update on the Council's response to the Covid-19 emergency. | | |
| 7. | REVISION OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARES | BOROUGH WIDE | 21 - 44 |
| | This report sets out an objection received to an advertised proposal to increase hackney carriage fares, and recommends that the fare increase be implemented as advertised. | | |

CIVIC OFFICES EMERGENCY EVACUATION: If an alarm sounds, leave by the nearest fire exit quickly and calmly and assemble on the corner of Bridge Street and Fobney Street. You will be advised when it is safe to re-enter the building.

8.	RE-PROFILING OF £9M CAPITAL INVESTMENT IN HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE	BOROUGH WIDE	45 - 50
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This report provides an update on the £9m capital investment in the Highways Maintenance programme and seeks approval for a reprofiling of the project given the current Covid-19 emergency situation.

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Present: Councillor Brock (Chair);
Councillors Duveen, Hoskin, Jones, Page, Skeats, Stevens, Terry and White;

Apologies: Councillor James.

RESOLVED ITEMS

86. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor Brock, Leader of the Council and Chair of the Policy Committee, welcomed everyone to the first online meeting of the Policy Committee, which was being held 'in public'. He expressed his gratitude and appreciation to all those involved in the Coronavirus response, including every worker at the Council, every worker in our NHS, every care worker, every public servant, police officer, firefighter, every retail worker, and every single key worker who had played their role.

87. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2020 were agreed as a correct record and would be signed by the Chair.

88. QUESTIONS

Questions on the following matters were submitted by Councillors:

	Questioner	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Reply</u>
1.	Cllr White	Personal Protective Equipment	Cllr Hoskin
2.	Cllr White	Coronavirus related deaths in care homes	Cllr Jones
3.	Cllr White	Looking after our vulnerable children	Cllr Terry

(The full text of the questions and responses was made available on the Reading Borough Council website).

89. DECISION BOOK REPORTS

The Assistant Director of Legal & Democratic Services submitted a report listing the Decision Books that had been published since the previous meeting of the Committee held on 9 March 2020.

In relation to Decision Book 589 it was noted that:

- (a) the consultation on the draft Reading Transport Strategy 2036 would be extended to at least the end of August 2020;
- (b) the Green Group had requested a review of the decision in relation to the Palmer Park Development Framework and would meet the Lead Councillor for Strategic

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Environment, Planning & Transport and officers to discuss the concerns they had raised.

Resolved -

That Decision Book Nos 586-591 be noted.

90. DECISION-MAKING & MEETING PROTOCOLS

The Assistant Director of Legal & Democratic Services submitted a report setting out the arrangements made in accordance with Section 78 of the Coronavirus Act 2020 and 'The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020' to enable Council meetings to take place online during the current Covid-19 pandemic. The Coronavirus Act and subsequent Regulations allowed local authority meetings to occur without the participants being in the same place. Local authority meetings could now take place under the Regulations with members in more than one place, including at electronic, digital or virtual locations such as internet locations, web addresses or conference call telephone numbers. The Protocols for holding meetings of the Policy Committee, Planning Applications Committee and Licensing Applications Sub-Committees 1 & 2 were set out in Appendix A for approval. The Committee requested that the provision set out in the recommendations that where a Group had only one member of the Policy Committee or Planning Applications Committee, the Group Leader would be entitled to nominate a substitute member, should be added to those protocols in the interests of completeness.

In addition, the report sought approval to suspend some standing orders and rules of procedure to enable the Council, as an interim measure, to gain experience of the new technology and holding online meetings within a slightly simplified meeting procedure. The report also sought delegated authority in consultation with the Leader of the Council to reinstate the standing orders once more familiarity with the capabilities of the technology had been gained. The interim arrangements also included reduced membership on the Policy and Planning Applications Committees to make the online meetings more manageable. These meetings would consist of ten members and would include members from all political groups represented on the Council. The Licensing Applications Committee had to consist of between 10 and 15 members with three Councillors from its membership being appointed to Sub-Committees 1 & 2 to determine applications and reviews under the Licensing Act 2003. There would be no change proposed to this arrangement.

Additionally, the report recommended, in view of the disruption to the normal Committee cycle, to grant a general dispensation to all Councillors in relation to the requirement for them to attend at least one meeting of the authority in each six-month period. The report stated that the current Covid-19 pandemic should be agreed as an appropriate reason for the authority to grant an exemption to this rule.

Finally, in order to reduce the amount of business required to be decided by the Planning Applications Committee at this time, the report was further seeking to increase officer

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delegations to determine some minor planning applications and Tree Preservation Orders. The details of the extension to officer delegations were set out in Appendix B to the report.

During the debate, Councillor Page referred to an enquiry he had received from Councillor Skeats in relation to Licensing Applications Sub-Committee 3, which dealt with non-Licensing Act 2003 business. He said that the membership agreed by the Licensing Applications Committee on 22 May 2019 was still in force and if the Sub-Committee needed to meet online it would do so using this previously agreed membership.

Resolved -

- (1) That the protocols for meetings of the Policy Committee, Planning Applications Committee and Licensing Applications Sub-Committees 1 and 2, drafted in accordance with the provisions of The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020' [The Regulations], and attached at Appendix A to the report be approved;**
- (2) That the provisions agreed in 2.1 above be applied only to those Committee and Sub-Committee meetings required to be held, or held, before 7 May 2021 and the Assistant Director of Legal & Democratic Services, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, be authorised to end or make amendments to the arrangements prior to 7 May 2021, as set out in Appendix A, as and when necessary;**
- (3) That, in accordance with Regulation 5(5), the following Council Standing Orders and Rules of Procedure be suspended for meetings to be held, or held, before 7 May 2021, subject to the Assistant Director of Legal & Democratic Services, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, being authorised to reinstate them prior to that date, if appropriate:**

Standing Order (SO) 8 (Petitions); SO9 (Questions from Members of the Public); SO10 (Questions from Councillors); SO36 (Participation by members of the public), SO36A (Public speaking at Planning Committee) & SO36B (Public participation in Standing Committees) and the Petitions Scheme (Part 4 of the Constitution);

- (4) That, during these arrangements, the attendance of members at the Policy Committee, Planning Applications Committee and Licensing Applications Committee be as follows:**

(a) Policy Committee (10)

Councillors (Labour 6; Conservative 2; Greens 1; and Lib Dems 1)

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Councillors Brock (Chair); Page (Vice-Chair); Duveen; Hoskin; James; Jones; Skeats; Stevens; Terry; and White;

(b) Planning Applications Committee (10)

Councillors (Labour 6; Conservative 2; Greens 1; and Lib Dems 1)

Councillors McKenna (Chair); Sokale (Vice-Chair); Duveen; Ennis; Lovelock; Page; Robinson; Rowland; Stanford-Beale; and J Williams;

(c) Licensing Applications Committee

That the membership be unchanged and the members of Licensing Applications Sub-Committees 1 and 2 continue to be drawn from the membership of the main Committee in accordance with the provisions of the Licensing Act 2003.

- (5)** That current members of the Policy Committee and Planning Applications Committee not included in the reduced memberships be entitled to act as substitutes on the Committee in place of a member of their Group; and where a Group had only one member of the Policy Committee or Planning Application Committee appointed in the current year (2019/20), the Group Leader be entitled to nominate a substitute member, in the event that their Group member was unable to attend the Committee and the Assistant Director of Legal & Democratic Services be authorised to appoint that Councillor as a substitute member of the relevant Committee (and this substitute provision be included in the meeting protocols for Policy Committee and Planning Applications Committee);
- (6)** That the quorum for the various meetings be as follows:
- (a)** Policy Committee - Three members, including the Leader or Deputy Leader (and relevant Lead Councillor);
 - (b)** Planning Applications Committee - Five members, including the Chair or Vice-Chair;
 - (c)** Licensing Applications Committee - Two members (to allow for exceptional circumstances when a member may not be “present online” and it was therefore necessary to adjourn a hearing. The expectation would be that hearings should take place with three members);
- (7)** That, in view of the disruption to the normal Committee cycle, a general dispensation be granted to all Councillors in relation to the requirement set out in Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972, which states if a member throughout a period of six consecutive months from the date of his last attendance fails to attend any meeting of the authority, he shall, unless the failure was due to some reason approved by the authority before the expiry of that period, cease to be a member of the authority;

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- (8) That the Deputy Director of Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services delegated authority to determine planning applications and Tree Preservation Orders be extended to include the proposed changes, as described in Appendix B to the report, and a schedule of those applications where delegations had been changed be presented to each Planning Applications Committee for information;
- (9) That, in the event an online meeting of the Licensing Applications Sub-Committee 3 was called, the membership be consistent with the appointments agreed by the Licensing Applications Committee on 22 May 2019 (Minute 1(3) & (4) refer) and a separate protocol would be produced to govern how these meetings would operate.

(The meeting started at 6.30pm and closed at 7.23pm).

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REPORT BY ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

TO:	POLICY COMMITTEE		
DATE:	18 MAY 2020		
TITLE:	DECISION BOOKS		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR BROCK	PORTFOLIO:	LEADER OF THE COUNCIL
SERVICE:	LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
LEAD OFFICER:	MICHAEL GRAHAM	TEL:	0118 937 3470
JOB TITLE:	ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES	E-MAIL:	michael.graham@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Decision Book process was amended on 25 March 2020 to disapply the previous councillors’ call-in arrangements within the 10-day period after its publication and replace it with the ability to seek a review of the decision retrospectively, and to keep the changes in force temporarily during the ongoing Covid-19 situation.
- 1.2 To complement the amended process the list of Decision Books published will be reported to Policy Committee as a standing item on the agenda.
- 1.3 The following Decision Books have been published since the previous report to Policy Committee on 27 April 2020:

No.	Title	Date
592	Compassionate and Parental Bereavement Leave Policy	21/04/2020
593	One Reading Community Hub - Operating Days Options	07/05/2020

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Decision Book Reports be noted.

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READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	POLICY COMMITTEE		
DATE:	18 MAY 2020		
TITLE:	COVID-19 RESPONSE UPDATE		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR BROCK	PORTFOLIO:	LEADERSHIP
SERVICE:	ALL	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
LEAD OFFICER:	JAMES CROSBIE	TEL:	0118 937 2424
JOB TITLE:	ACTING HEAD OF PLANNING & REGULATORY SERVICES	E-MAIL:	James.Crosbie@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To provide Policy Committee with an update on the Council's response to the Covid-19 emergency response.
- 1.2 Following the declaration of a major incident on 20 March 2020 by the Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Council set up its emergency response. This paper sets out some of the key issues which the Council has had to address, they include:
 - Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
 - Setting up and operating the One Reading Community Hub
 - Rough Sleeping
 - Workforce
 - Testing
 - Building capacity into bereavement services and leading on the LRF's Temporary Place of Rest.
 - Rebilling Business Ratepayers to take account of reliefs announced, the payment of grants to businesses; and
 - Rebilling of Council Tax payers in receipt of the Council's local Council Tax Reduction Scheme to reflect the £150 Hardship Relief announced.
- 1.3 The paper also provides an overview of the current legal and financial issues arising from the emergency.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That Policy Committee notes the information set out in this report.

3. BACKGROUND AND POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 In response to the current national and international public health emergency situation, the Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum (LRF) declared a major Incident on Friday 20 March 2020. This activated the multi-agency response arrangements set out in the Pandemic Flu Plan. The Prime Minister's announcement at 8.30pm on Monday 23rd March set out expectations to all residents, businesses and public services around social distancing and self-isolation measures. The Council had already begun its response in the week commencing 16 March, leading to the closure of most council buildings.
- 3.2 In response to the immediate crisis, the council set up a GOLD and SILVER response structure, allowing it to provide an enhanced managed response to the emergency, whilst feeding into the regional processes. The Council also identified a strategic framework for the duration of the emergency and recovery period during which its priority objectives are to:
- Support and protect vulnerable children and adults by ensuring the social care system continues to function effectively
 - Support the people who are most vulnerable and isolated in our communities
 - Support businesses and the local economy, and secure Reading's economic recovery
- 3.3 Informed by these objectives each Council directorate and Brighter Futures for Children (BFfC) reviewed its services and documented a revised service offer taking account UK government guidance and the need to ensure capacity and resilience across essential services.
- 3.4 Except for a number of new services put in place to help manage and support communities through the crisis the Council has, as a result stopped or reduced the scope of many of its services in line with Government guidance. Democratic processes were scaled back and management tasks, including corporate and service planning were deferred.
- 3.5 In Reading (as of 28 April 2020), there have been 454 residents who have tested positive in hospital for Covid 19 and there have been around two and a half times more deaths within the Borough that would usually be expected at this time of year.

4. KEY ISSUES AND ACTION

- 4.1 There have been a number of key issues which have dominated response activity to date:
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
 - Setting up and operating the One Reading Community Hub
 - Rough Sleeping
 - Workforce
 - Testing
 - Building capacity into bereavement services and leading the on the LRF's Temporary Place of Rest
 - Rebilling Business Ratepayers to take account of reliefs announced, the payment of grants to businesses; and
 - Rebilling of Council Tax payers in receipt of the Council's local Council Tax Reduction Scheme to reflect the £150 Hardship Relief announced.
- 4.2 **PPE** - As has been well documented there are huge challenges in sourcing PPE. The Government's mechanisms for accessing and distributing PPE stocks have been delayed on a number of occasions leading to concerns over shortages for front line staff. Whilst the situation has stabilised and we have ensured the protection of staff and customers and the delivery of services to the most vulnerable, this has been as a

result of officers working tirelessly to procure stock through new providers, seeking donations and managing stock in line with Public Health England’s guidance.

4.2.1 PPE is distributed through the Emergency Operations Centre and in addition to provision to inhouse teams, it can also be accessed by out of hospital care providers e.g. care and nursing homes and domiciliary care providers or key services providers such as Funeral Directors. To date, requests from external partners has been limited.

4.3 **One Reading Community Hub** - The purpose of the Hub is to a) support those who have been identified by the NHS as shielded with specific dietary needs and other support requirements b) pass on requests to voluntary sector partners from those who were not shielded but require support regarding access to food, benefits advice, befriending and assistance with collection of prescriptions etc. and c) provide a means for those wishing to volunteer to link into the voluntary and community sector.

4.3.1 The Hub went live two days after the announcement of full lockdown and involved the procurement of a separate call centre operation due to the volume of calls being received through the Council’s own contact centre at that time; the setting up of numerous processes and work with partners to ensure referral pathways work, so that people receive the help and support they need.

4.3.2 The voluntary partnership approach has been very successful in reaching the most vulnerable and in need of support. The table below shows some of the outcomes of the Hub.

Support the people who are most vulnerable and isolated in our communities	Current
Total number of referrals received by the One Reading Community Hub (from 25 March)	2257
Total number of referrals that are part of the shielded group	761
Total number of food parcels delivered	1200+
Number of volunteers	1000
Number of calls received (daily average) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note at the peak, this was 130 per day 	82

4.4 **Rough sleeping** - As part of the social distancing measures introduced by the Government, there was a requirement for all rough sleepers to be accommodated. Just a few days were given to identify the rough sleeping population, which included those that may have had temporary accommodation (e.g. sofa surfers) and get them into local accommodation. This was a significant logistical task and one requiring ongoing support. The number of rough sleepers accommodated is 124.

4.5 **Workforce** - Following the Prime Minister’s announcement on Monday 23 March, all staff except those in essential services are working from home and will not return to their workplaces until further notice. Guidance has been issued to staff about how to work effectively remotely and ICT support has been provided as a priority to ensure employees can work from home effectively.

4.5.1 Services have taken account of guidance received from the government and set out their service offers. The service offer sets out which services can be maintained, which need to change, and which services cannot be delivered at this time. The service offer prioritises those that if not conducted could include breach of statutory duties, laws and regulations, risk to health, safety and wellbeing and key support services that are essential to the delivery of front line critical services to residents,

- businesses and the community. An ongoing assessment is used to inform whether those services can be carried out safely and only where necessary from the workplace. One of the key parts of the assessment is ensuring that staff and customers are protected, by ensuring a proper risk assessment of the activity is applied.
- 4.5.2 The workforce has remained resilient, and COVID-19 related absences have broadly reduced over time. Initial impacts were felt in waste services, which resulted in the suspension of services such as Green Waste and Bulky Waste collections. Green Waste collections have now been re-instated following training of redeployed staff.
- 4.5.3 A number of staff (4%) who are unable to do their usual role have volunteered for redeployment on a temporary basis. In the main this is supporting the services such as the Hub or the Emergency Operations Centre.
- 4.5.4 Regular communications have been going out to staff and managers and this will continue on a daily basis. These communications share the latest Government and Public Health England advice as well support and good news stories. These have been supplemented by messages from the Chief Executive and GOLD.
- 4.6 **Testing** - This has been another area which has been under significant scrutiny and subject to daily changes in criteria and scope. Workforce testing is now co-ordinated through the Emergency Operations Hub, which engages with Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust to book staff identified against specific criteria. There are three Test Centres across Berkshire for these staff to attend and from 15 April, 194 tests have been carried out. The Government subsequently introduced regional Test Centres, which all staff can access if they are symptomatic.
- 4.7 **Bereavement Services and the Temporary Place of Rest** - Given the experience in other countries and predictions from the Government on the rates of mortality that might be expected, the Council has had to make arrangements for some of worst-case scenarios.
- 4.7.1 The Registration of deaths is an important legal stage in ensuring that families are able to lay their loved ones to rest. Prior to the pandemic, registration of deaths could only occur face to face and the Council continued to carry out this essential service. The General Register Office (GRO), lifted these restrictions to protect the safety of staff and customers and this can now be carried out digitally. This has been a significant and important change which has had to be implemented at short notice.
- 4.7.2 The Council has acted as the Lead authority for building, staffing and running a Temporary Place of Rest. This enables additional capacity to mortuaries and Funeral Directors in the event that the number of deaths exceeds established capacity. A significant facility has now opened which services the Thames Valley.
- 4.7.3 The Council has also invested in ensuring that services can continue to be provided in the event of a system failure at the Crematorium on Henley Road, by purchasing an additional mobile cremator.
- 4.8 **Support for the Business Community**
- 4.8.1 **Rebilling Business Ratepayers to take account of reliefs announced, the payment of grants to businesses.** The Government announced widespread reliefs and grants for business rate payers. All reliefs - £52.5m have subsequently been processed and Business Rate payers rebilled. Staff are currently processing the business grants and are writing to eligible rate payers where we do not hold the requisite information in order to process the payments as soon as possible. The cost of the Business Rate Reliefs and grants will be reimbursed by a S31 grant.

- 4.8 An Economy sub group was set up to engage with the business community and provide support. The objectives of the group are to:
- Provide accurate and timely signposting to Government sources of advice and support designed to keep businesses operational/afloat.
 - Facilitate access to these and other sources of support for business.
 - Ensure a responsive and supportive approach by the Council to business requests for advice/assistance.
 - Ensure effective collaboration between, and consistent communications from, the Council and Reading UK CIC.
 - Consider and respond to initiatives proposed from the business community.
 - Maintain a running dialogue with business representative groups and networks to offer support indirectly to the business community.
 - Ensure the Council support for business is prioritised in relation to other key priorities e.g. putting vulnerable staff/customers first.
 - Support business in planning for recovery phase and return to optimum form of BAU as circumstances allow.

A couple of key indicators are set out in the table below:

Support businesses and the local economy and secure Reading's economic recovery	Current
% of 2,025 eligible businesses in receipt of business support grant	69.65%
Reach of business-related social media (Note, in the week commencing 23 March, this was nearly 15,000)	6,000

- 4.9 **Hardship Fund.** The £500m Hardship Fund is to support economically vulnerable households and primarily focused on Council Tax relief for residents in receipt of local Council Tax Reduction (£150 per recipient). It should be noted that this assistance is in addition to existing discounts, the ability to spread payment over 12 rather than 10 months and the Council's local Council Tax reduction Scheme.

- 4.10 The response to Covid 19 has been complex and intense and will undoubtedly lead to longer term challenges which are being assessed and planned for. The table below highlights some of the ongoing challenges and responses to meeting the priority objectives.

Support and protect vulnerable children and adults by ensuring the social care system continues to function effectively	Number
Daily referrals to ASC ['normal daily average Jan/Feb = 17]	14
Adult Social Care - % of workforce available (total - less sick or self-isolating)	71%
Children's Social Care - % of workforce available	68.6%
Additional beds to assist the hospital with the anticipated surge of COVID19 residents who cannot go home immediately or where care at home is difficult due to sickness	30
Number of hospital discharges facilitated over the last month	80
Percentage of contacts that enter the Children's Single Point of Access	60% decrease

5. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers).
- 5.2 It is acknowledged that there are certain activities which would not in normal times reflect the approach we would take in accordance with the declaration, such as the provision and supply of Personal Protective Equipment, which is often single use, not recyclable and therefore will have a carbon impact.
- 5.3 However, the Council is where possible designing its responses process to have the minimum environmental impact, for example, the use of route optimisation software in its food parcel delivery service to the vulnerable.
- 5.4 Officers have also been continuing to carry out impact analysis arising from the reduction of traffic. Analysis shows between a 32-39% reduction in Nitrogen Dioxide from the two continuous roadside monitoring locations on Caversham Road and Oxford Road.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 6.1 Section 138 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 places a duty on local authorities to involve local representatives when carrying out "any of its functions" by providing information, consulting or "involving in another way". The council has already started to consult with the voluntary sector and businesses community on how we should respond to the emergency. The Council will be working over the coming weeks to make sure that residents' voices help shape work going forward.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 7.2 It is imperative, that in responding to this emergency the Council protects the most vulnerable and marginalised in society. The revised priorities facilitate this. Progress is being continually reviewed to ensure that no section of the community is disadvantaged.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The Chief Executive has authority to take decisions on behalf of the Council as necessary to respond to emergencies where it is not practicable to obtain the necessary urgency approvals from the Council or its committees. The Chief Executive also has delegated authority in times of emergency to take such action as he considers necessary to protect the interests of the Council, having consulted with the Leader of the Council and Lead Councillors where appropriate. These provisions are set out in the Council's Delegations Register.
- 8.2 The Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, took a decision to amend temporarily the Decision Book process to enable decisions to be taken more

flexibly during the current Covid-19 pandemic, which will enable Executive Directors and Statutory Officers, in consultation with the relevant Lead Councillor(s) to take decisions without waiting for a councillors call-in period. Councillors are able to seek a retrospective review of matters from the Decision Book through Policy Committee.

8.3 The Coronavirus Act 2020 received Royal Assent on 25 March 2020 and contained provision for the Secretary of State to make Regulations in relation to the arrangements for holding local authority meetings (Section 78), during the current pandemic.

8.4 The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020, came into effect on 4 April 2020. The Council has reviewed its decision-making processes, to allow for new online meetings.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are significant financial implications in responding to this emergency both in terms of additional costs as well as reduced income levels and Officers have put in place procedures to record and track both. Additionally, the refocusing of staff to deal with this emergency will inevitably mean some savings are delayed or not delivered as planned. The Council's monthly budget monitoring arrangements will be used to formally report on the financial position. However, early projections suggest the cost to the Council over a six-month period could be up to £13m.

9.2 The Government has to date announced two rounds of £1.6bn of funding for local government (£3.8m in the first tranche and £4.5m in the second for Reading) to meet additional costs including: Adult and Children's Social Care, support for rough sleepers, support for those at higher risk and lost income. The Government have assured councils that they should respond to the emergency and record costs so that they can be reimbursed later and in that spirit the Council has 'committed' £100k to support the Voluntary and Community sector. It remains to be seen however, whether all costs are recoverable.

Regular reporting is required to the Ministry of Housing and Local Government on the financial impact.

9.4 It is also worth noting that the Government has announced that Universal Credit and Tax Credits will increase by £20 per week for 12 months from 6th April and the 7 day wait period for ESA has been removed.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 None

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Agenda Item 7

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	POLICY COMMITTEE		
DATE:	18 MAY 2020		
TITLE:	REVISION OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARES		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR PAGE	PORTFOLIO:	STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING & TRANSPORT BOROUGH WIDE
SERVICE:	PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT & REGULATORY SERVICES	WARDS:	
LEAD OFFICER:	CLYDE MASSON	TEL:	(0118) 937 2453
JOB TITLE:	PRINCIPAL LICENSING & ENFORCEMENT OFFICER	E-MAIL:	clyde.masson@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 From time to time the hackney carriage trade requests that the Council increases the amount they can charge their customers for transportation to their desired destinations, the last of which was in August 2017.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the objection to the fare increase, attached as Appendix V to the report, and summarised in paragraph 5.1.4 be deemed not strictly relevant to the consultation on the Hackney Carriage Fares increase on the grounds set out in paragraph 5.2.2;
- 2.2 That the Hackney Carriage fare increase be allowed to proceed as previously advertised, however the taxi trade be advised that implementation can only take place when it is safe to do so in the present circumstances because it would expose staff to unnecessary risks of engaging with a wide range of people and vehicles.

Appendices:

- Appendix I - Current and proposed table of fares

- Appendix II - Letter from the Vice chair Reading Taxi Association
- Appendix III - National fares table
- Appendix IV - Response from RCDA in respect of the proposed fare increase
- Appendix V - Email objection to fare increase
- Appendix VI - Hackney Carriage Vehicle Driver Conditions

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The taxi trade requested a fare rise in September 2019 and a report went before the Licensing Committee on 6th February 2020 where it was granted subject to an advert being placed in a local newspaper advertising the fare rise and providing the public the opportunity to make objections.
- 3.2 On the 18th February 2020 the Licensing Section received an objection to the fare increase from a member of the public (Appendix V). Correspondence has taken place with the objector and a question was submitted by the objector for a recent SEPT meeting (although that meeting did not take place). The objection has not been withdrawn.
- 3.3 As a result of the objection being received and not withdrawn a new hearing was set for 8th April for the Licensing Applications Committee to hear the objection against the taxi fare rise and determine the application. Due to the Coronavirus outbreak the 8th April 2020 committee hearing was postponed.
- 3.4 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 65.(4) states: If an objection is duly made as aforesaid and is not withdrawn, the district council shall set a further date, not later than 2 months after the first specified date, on which the table of fares shall come into force with or without modifications as decided by them after consideration of the objections.

4.0 POLICY CONTEXT

- 4.1 The Deputy Director Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services (formerly the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services) has delegated authority to approve and implement hackney carriage fare rises, having taken into account any recommendations expressed by the Licensing Applications Committee or Licensing Applications Sub-Committee 3.
- 4.2 The Deputy Director Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services also has delegated authority to advertise hackney carriage fare rises in a local newspaper, in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.
- 4.3 Currently in Reading hackney carriage fares are set by the Licensing Committee and all journeys taking place within Reading are paid in accordance with the fares set on the vehicle meter at the end of a journey.

5. THE PROPOSAL

5.1 Current Position

- 5.1.0 A copy of the current table of fares is included as Appendix I.

- 5.1.1 The chair of the Reading Taxi Association (RTA) wrote to the licensing section requesting a fare rise as set out in 2 proposals detailed at Appendix II.
- 5.1.2 Attached as Appendix III is a copy of the National Fare table which is collated by the magazine Private Hire Taxi Monthly (PHTM), the table indicates fares charged in other local authorities and their position in terms of fares charged.
- 5.1.3 Reading Cab Drivers Association (RCDA) was consulted on the proposal from the RTA and the response is in Appendix IV.
- 5.1.4 An objection to the fare increase was received which is attached as Appendix V to the report. The objection is in relation to poor service by drivers not getting out of taxis to assist passengers with the loading and unloading of luggage.
- 5.1.5 A copy of the Hackney Carriage Vehicle Driver conditions are attached as Appendix VI to the report and show conditions in respect of assistance with the loading and alighting of passengers and reasonable amounts of luggage.

5.2 Options Proposed

- 5.2.1 The RTA has proposed a fare increase which rather than increasing the flag drop as in previous years, proposes a decrease in the yardage for day time fares only. There is no proposal to decrease the yardage for night time fares. After the flag drop, yardage is proposed to be reduced from 145yds (0-2miles) and 140yds (over 2miles) to 133yds (proposal 1) and 134yds (proposal 2) for all day time distances which equates to an average increase of 3.50% (proposal 1) and 3.99% (proposal 2) over day time fares. As there is no proposal to reduce the yardage for night time fares, the overall average percentage over day and night fares equate reduce to 1.75% (proposal 1) and 1.99% (proposal 2).
- 5.2.2 Officers are minded to support the proposed fare increase. The objection received is not strictly relevant to the issue out for consultation. Nevertheless, the Council is bound to consider it. Whilst the objector may have well founded views on the taxi trade in Reading, the behaviour of individual drivers is not relevant to the general question of what fares should be set by the Council. Had the objection not been received, the proposal for a fare increase would have taken effect. The objector will be advised that specific instances of perceived driver unhelpfulness should be reported to the Licensing Team for advice.
- 5.2.3 In the intervening time, the Coronavirus pandemic has arrived in Reading and this poses a serious practical difficulty. If the Council dismisses the objection and allows the fare increase to proceed, then it needs to action the fare increase in a very practical way. Officers will have to oversee the replacement of programmable chips in the taxi meters in approx. 240 cars. This is not feasible in the present circumstances because it would expose staff to unnecessary risks of engaging with a wide range of people and vehicles.
- 5.2.4 Given the constraints of current circumstances, there are therefore two practical options:

- Disregard the formal objection and allow the fare increase to proceed, however the taxi trade will be advised that implementation can only take place when it is safe to do so.
- Disregard the objection and change tack to refuse the fare increase on the basis that it is not safe to implement. The trade could then apply for an increase again when business is back to normal. This seems to send the wrong signal to the trade when they will be under financial pressure because of the Pandemic.

5.2.5 Officers recommend the first option since this recognises that the Licensing Committee voted to approve the fare increase. The sub-committee was likely to have approved that increase in the face of the single objection received. The first option also recognises that there is a practical difficulty in implementation.

5.2.6 Officers do not recommend the second option since the fare increase is acceptable in all other regards. Bringing the matter back to Committee at another time will incur unnecessary time and cost. As mentioned above, it does not support the taxi trade at a time when the trading environment is challenging.

5.3 Other options to be considered

5.3.1 The Council needs to make a decision on this matter by the end of May, otherwise the applicants have a right of appeal to the Court. It is recommended that Policy Committee makes a decision.

5.3.2 Officers propose to work on a risk assessment with the RTA to ensure a safe system of work for the implementation of the fare increase.

6. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

6.1 The hackney carriage trade provides a valuable service to the public by being available to transport customers throughout the borough on a 24-hour basis.

6.2 Equal Opportunities

The regulation of hackney carriage fares is one control, which the Council exercises over the use of hackney carriages in Reading. Such controls benefit all sections of the community. The hackney carriage trade provides a valuable service to disabled members of the community, particularly wheelchair users.

6.3 Sustainable Implications

The provision of an adequate number of controlled hackney carriages will encourage the economy of the town and hackney carriages form part of the integrated transport system for the borough. With the availability of an improved public transport system, there will be a reduced need for private motor vehicles, thereby contributing to an improved environment.

6.4 Community Safety Implications

The provision of high quality, controlled hackney carriages, the drivers of which are vetted, allows the public to travel in safety. This reduces both the opportunity for crime and the fear of crime.

7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

7.1 Proposed changes to hackney carriage fares are legally required to be advertised in a local newspaper, allowing any person to object to the changes.

7.2 If objections are submitted these must be considered before any fare changes can be implemented.

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

8.1 An equality assessment is not required in respect of the increase of hackney carriage fares.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 empowers the Council to vary the table of fares in connection with the hire of a hackney carriage. The Council is legally obliged to publicise in a local newspaper, details of any variation to the table of fares, and to consider any objections received by way of a further hearing, if they are not withdrawn.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The cost of publishing the required notices is allowed for in existing budgets.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 None.

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Appendix I

LICENSED TAXI CABS - TABLE OF FARES

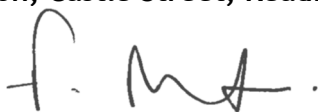
The driver must, unless he has reasonable excuse, accept any hiring if the destination is inside the Borough of Reading. If the hiring ends outside the Borough, you must be charged a fare based on this table unless a fare or rate of fare is agreed **before** the start of your journey.

FARE TABLE	
TARIFF 1 - (For hirings between 6.00am and 10.00pm each day)	
£2.60 (minimum charge shown on meter)	For the first 300 yards (274.32 meters) or 2 minutes 36 seconds
20p	For each additional 145 yards (132.59 meters) or 45 seconds, or part thereof, up to 2 miles.
	For each additional 140 yards (128.02 meters) or 45 seconds part thereof, for 2 miles and over
TARIFF 2 - (For hirings between 10.00pm and 6.00am each day)	
£3.60 (minimum charge shown on meter)	For the first 309 yards (282.55 meters) or 2 minutes 36 seconds
20p	For each additional 156 yards (142.65 metres) or 42 seconds, or part thereof for the next 2 miles
	For each additional 142 yards (129.85 metres) or 42 seconds or part thereof, for the next 2½ miles
	For each additional 135 yards (123.44 metres) or 42 seconds or part thereof, for the remaining distance

1. ADDITIONAL PASSENGERS - 20p per each <u>additional</u> person (ie excluding the hirer)	£1.00 max (manually added to final fare)
2. For any hiring beginning or ending within the following periods 6.00pm to midnight on CHRISTMAS EVE & NEW YEAR'S EVE. All of CHRISTMAS DAY, BOXING DAY, NEW YEAR'S DAY, and any other public holiday	Please note: A surcharge of 50% of the usual fare is <u>automatically</u> calculated and shown on the meter
3. Fouling of vehicle exterior £10.00 Fouling of vehicle interior £40.00	Both payable to driver immediately
4. Credit and debit cards - All major Debit and Credit Cards are accepted. No additional charge is made for this service.	

COMMENTS OR COMPLAINTS about your driver or cab should be sent to the **Licensing Section, Civic Centre, Reading RG1 2LU** with the number of the driver's badge, which the driver must be wearing and the licence plate number of the cab. You may also notify this office by telephone on **0118 937 3762** between **9.00am and 5.00pm Monday to Friday.**

ALL LOST PROPERTY enquiries should be made to Thames Valley Police, Reading Police Station, Castle Street, Reading on 0845 8505505



Frances Martin, Executive Director Economic Growth and Neighborhood Services - Sept 2019

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TARIFF PROPOSAL FOR 2019/2020

1 3 4

Sample Comparison of CURRENT FARES (C) , with the PROPOSED FARES (P) for 2019/2020	'CD = current DAY' and 'CN = current NIGHT' 'PD = proposed DAY' and 'PN = proposed NIGHT'
WAITING TIME	CD = 45 seconds / 20 pence, CN = 42 seconds / 20 pence (CURRENT) NO PD = 45 seconds / 20 pence, PN = 42 seconds / 20 pence (PROPOSED) CHANGE
FLAG-DROP	Current: DAY 300 yds (274.32 mtrs), NIGHT 309 yds (282.55m) or 2 mins 36 secs Proposed: AS CURRENT YARDAGES - NO CHANGE
flag-down charge:	Current: £2.60 day, £3.60 night.

The R.T.A. wish to propose **NO CHANGE** in **WAITING TIME CHARGES AND BOTH** the day-time and night-time flag-drops
AND to keep everything else **UNCHANGED** i.e. flag-drop yardages (300 in the day, 309 at night).

YARDAGE		DAY (C) 145 yds (0-2m), 140 yds (over 2 m)		DAY (P) 134 yds All Mileages		NIGHT (C) 156 yds (0 to 2m), 142 yds (2 to 4.5m), 135 yds (over 4.5 miles)		NIGHT (P) 156 yds (0 to 2m), 142 yds (2 to 4.5m), 135 yds (over 4.5 miles)		NO CHANGE !!	
Miles	YARDS	LESS 300	CD FARES	PD FARES	% inc.	CN AND PN Fares	% inc.			AVERAGE	
1/2	880	580	£3.40	£3.40	0.00	£4.40	0.00				
1	1760	1460	£4.60	£4.60	0.00	£5.60	0.00				
1 1/4	2200	1900	£5.20	£5.40	3.85	£6.20	0.00				
1 1/2	2640	2340	£5.80	£6.00	3.45	£6.60	0.00				
1 3/4	3080	2780	£6.40	£6.60	3.12	£7.20	0.00				
2	3520	3220	£7.00	£7.40	5.71	£7.80	0.00				
2 1/4	3960	3660	£7.80	£8.00	2.56	£8.40	0.00				
2 1/2	4400	4100	£8.40	£8.60	2.38	£9.00	0.00				
2 3/4	4840	4540	£9.00	£9.20	2.22	£9.60	0.00				
3	5280	4980	£9.60	£10.00	4.17	£10.20	0.00				
3 1/4	5720	5420	£10.20	£10.60	3.92	£11.00	0.00				
3 1/2	6160	5860	£10.80	£11.20	3.70	£11.60	0.00				
3 3/4	6600	6300	£11.60	£12.00	3.45	£12.20	0.00				
4	7040	6740	£12.20	£12.60	3.28	£12.80	0.00				
4 1/4	7480	7180	£12.80	£13.20	3.12	£13.40	0.00				
4 1/2	7920	7620	£13.40	£13.80	2.99	£14.00	0.00				
4 3/4	8360	8060	£14.00	£14.60	4.29	£14.60	0.00				
5	8800	8500	£14.60	£15.20	4.11	£15.40	0.00				
6	10560	10260	£17.20	£17.80	3.49	£18.00	0.00				
7	12320	12020	£19.60	£20.40	4.08	£20.60	0.00				
8	14080	13780	£22.20	£23.00	3.60	£23.20	0.00				
9	15840	15540	£24.80	£25.60	3.23	£25.80	0.00				
10	17600	17300	£27.20	£28.40	4.41	£28.40	0.00				
14	24640	24340	£37.20	£38.80	4.30	£38.80	0.00				
18	31680	31380	£47.40	£49.40	4.22	£49.20	0.00				
22	38720	38420	£57.40	£59.80	4.18	£59.60	0.00				
26	45760	45460	£67.40	£70.40	4.45	£70.00	0.00				
30	52800	52500	£77.60	£80.80	4.12		0.00				
% increases	(6 fares)	Average (0 - 2 miles)		2.69	DAY	0.00				1.34	
	(11 fares)	Average (2 - 4.5 miles)		3.41	average	0.00				1.70	
average of	(8 fares)	Average (4.5 - 10 mls)		3.78	3.54%	0.00				1.89	
	(6 fares)	Average (10 - 30 mls)		4.28	DAY	0.00				2.14	

TARIFF PROPOSAL FOR 2019/2020

1 3 3

Sample Comparison of CURRENT FARES (C),		'CD = current DAY' and 'CN = current NIGHT'	
with the PROPOSED FARES (P) for 2019/20		'PD = proposed DAY' and 'PN = proposed NIGHT'	
WAITING TIME	CD = 45 seconds / 20 pence, CN = 42 seconds / 20 pence	(CURRENT)	NO
	PD = 45 seconds / 20 pence, PN = 42 seconds / 20 pence	(PROPOSED)	CHANGE
FLAG-DROP	Current: DAY 300 yds (274.32 mtrs), NIGHT 309 yds (282.55m) or 2 mins 36 secs		
	Proposed: AS CURRENT YARDAGES	-	NO CHANGE
flag-down charge:	Current: £2.60 day, £3.60 night.	Proposed £2.60 day, £3.60 night.	NO CHANGE

The R.T.A. wish to propose **NO CHANGE** in WAITING TIME CHARGES AND BOTH the day-time and night-time flag-drops AND to keep everything else UNCHANGED i.e.flag-drop yardages (300 in the day, 309 at night).

YARDAGE		DAY (C) 145 yds (0-2m), 140 yds (over 2 m)		DAY (P) 133 yds ALL MILEAGES				
(per 20 pence)		NIGHT (C) 156 yds (0 to 2m), 142 yds (2 to 4.5m), 135 yds (over 4.5 miles)						
		NIGHT (P) 156 yds (0 to 2m), 142 yds (2 to 4.5m), 135 yds (over 4.5 miles)						NO CHANGE !!
Miles	Yards	Fare CD	Fare PD	% inc.	Fare CN	Fare PN	% inc.	AVERAGE
1/2	880	£3.40	£3.40	0.00	£4.40	£4.40	0.00	-1.39
1	1760	£4.60	£4.60	0.00	£5.60	£5.60	0.00	0.00
1 1/4	2200	£5.20	£5.40	3.85	£6.20	£6.20	0.00	0.92
1 1/2	2640	£5.80	£6.00	3.45	£6.60	£6.60	0.00	0.84
1 3/4	3080	£6.40	£6.60	3.12	£7.20	£7.20	0.00	1.52
2	3520	£7.00	£7.40	5.71	£7.80	£7.80	0.00	1.39
2 1/4	3960	£7.80	£8.00	2.56	£8.40	£8.40	0.00	1.92
2 1/2	4400	£8.40	£8.60	2.38	£9.00	£9.00	0.00	2.38
2 3/4	4840	£9.00	£9.40	4.44	£9.60	£9.60	0.00	2.22
3	5280	£9.60	£10.00	4.17	£10.20	£10.20	0.00	2.60
3 1/4	5720	£10.20	£10.60	3.92	£11.00	£11.00	0.00	2.94
3 1/2	6160	£10.80	£11.40	5.56	£11.60	£11.60	0.00	1.82
3 3/4	6600	£11.60	£12.00	3.45	£12.20	£12.20	0.00	2.16
4	7040	£12.20	£12.60	3.28	£12.80	£12.80	0.00	2.05
4 1/4	7480	£12.80	£13.20	3.12	£13.40	£13.40	0.00	2.34
4 1/2	7920	£13.40	£14.00	4.48	£14.00	£14.00	0.00	2.61
4 3/4	8360	£14.00	£14.60	4.29	£14.60	£14.60	0.00	2.14
5	8800	£14.60	£15.20	4.11	£15.40	£15.40	0.00	2.74
6	10560	£17.20	£18.00	4.65	£18.00	£18.00	0.00	2.32
7	12320	£19.60	£20.60	5.10	£20.60	£20.60	0.00	2.28
8	14080	£22.20	£23.20	4.50	£23.20	£23.20	0.00	2.48
9	15840	£24.80	£25.80	4.03	£25.80	£25.80	0.00	2.42
10	17600	£27.20	£28.60	5.15	£28.40	£28.40	0.00	2.58
14	24640	£37.20	£39.20	5.38	£38.80	£38.80	0.00	2.40
18	31680	£47.40	£49.60	4.64	£49.20	£49.20	0.00	2.53
22	38720	£57.40	£60.20	4.88	£59.60	£59.60	0.00	2.62
26	45760	£67.40	£70.80	5.04	£70.00	£70.00	0.00	2.67
30	52800	£77.60	£81.40	4.90	£80.60	£80.60	0.00	2.52
% increases average of	(6 fares) Average (0 - 2 miles)			2.69	DAY	NIGHT	0.00	1.34
	(11 fares) Average (2 - 4.5 miles)			4.07	average	average	0.00	2.04
	(8 fares) Average (4.5 - 10 mls)			4.54	4.08%	0.00%	0.00	2.27
	(6 fares) Average (10 - 30 mls)			5.00	DAY	NIGHT	0.00	2.50

TABLE
COLOUR CODE

- RISE IN 2019
- RISE IN 2018
- RISE IN 2017
- RISE IN 2016
- RISE IN 2015
- RISE IN 2014
- RISE IN 2013
- RISE IN 2012
- RISE IN 2011
- RISE IN 2010
- RISE IN 2008
- RISE IN 2007
- NO SET FARE

The Bryan Roland Memorial
NATIONAL HACKNEY FARES TABLE DECEMBER 2019

POSITION	TARIFF ONE COUNCIL/AIRPORT	TWO MILE FARE	POSITION	TARIFF ONE COUNCIL	TWO MILE FARE	POSITION	TARIFF ONE COUNCIL	TWO MILE FARE
1	LONDON (HEATHROW)	£10.60	66	MORAY	£6.60	131	SOUTHEND ON SEA	£6.20
2	LUTON AIRPORT	£9.20	67	NORTH MERES	£6.60	132	SPELTHORNE	£6.20
3	WATFORD	£8.40	68	NORWICH	£6.60	133	ST ALBANS	£6.20
4	EPSOM & E WELL	£7.80	69	SCARBOROUGH	£6.60	134	STRATFORD ON AVOON	£6.20
5	LONDON	£7.80	70	SHEPHERD ISLES	£6.60	135	TAUNTON DEANE	£6.20
6	KERRIER	£7.60	71	SOUTH GLOUCESTER	£6.50	136	TEIGNBRIDGE	£6.20
7	GUILDFORD	£7.60	72	EAST SUFFOLK (NORTH)	£6.60	137	WEST OXFORD	£6.20
8	BOURNEMOUTH	£7.40	73	NORTH DEVON	£6.55	138	WINCHESTER	£6.20
9	BRIGHTON & HOVE	£7.40	74	DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL	£6.50	139	WYCOMBE	£6.20
10	CHELTENHAM	£7.40	75	ASHFORD	£6.50	140	CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE	£6.13
11	MO. SUSSEX	£7.40	76	HUNTINGDOONSHIRE	£6.50	141	CARDIFF	£6.10
12	GARRICK	£7.30	77	BLADSTONE	£6.50	142	CLACKMANNAN	£6.10
13	READING	£7.20	78	SOUTH CAMBRIDGE	£6.50	143	EAST HERTS	£6.10
14	TUNBRIDGE WELLS	£7.20	79	SOUTH SOMERSET	£6.50	144	EMBRIDGE	£6.10
15	JERSEY	£7.15	80	WORTHING	£6.50	145	FYLDE	£6.10
16	DARTFORD	£7.10	81	BRISTOL	£6.40	146	HASTINGS	£6.10
17	MOLE VALLEY	£7.10	82	CANTERBURY	£6.40	147	NEW FOREST	£6.10
18	PERWITH	£7.10	83	HEREFORD (COUNTY OF)	£6.40	148	NORTH WARWICK	£6.10
19	SEVENOAKS	£7.06	84	COTSWOLD	£6.40	149	SOUTH AYRSHIRE	£6.10
20	EAST LOTHIAN	£7.00	85	GREVE & HARTWICK	£6.40	150	TANWORTH	£6.10
21	HERTSWERE	£7.00	86	EAST HAMPSHIRE	£6.40	151	SELBY	£6.06
22	POOLE	£7.00	87	HARLOW	£6.40	152	CHARLWOOD	£6.05
23	STROUD	£7.00	88	IPSWICH	£6.40	153	SCOTTISH BORDERS	£6.05
24	TORRIDGE & MALLING	£7.00	89	LEEDS	£6.40	154	ARE. HERESHIRE	£6.00
25	WILTSHIRE	£7.00	90	LINCOLN	£6.40	155	BASILDON	£6.00
26	RESTORREL	£6.55	91	TRAFALGAR HILLS	£6.40	156	BOSTON	£6.00
27	EASTBOURNE	£6.50	92	NORTH KESTEVEN	£6.40	157	BRACKNELL FOREST	£6.00
28	HARRISGATE	£6.50	93	OXFORD	£6.40	158	BROXTOWE	£6.00
29	VALE OF WHITE HORSE	£6.40	94	PURBECK	£6.40	159	CARMARTHENSHIRE	£6.00
30	WEALDON	£6.40	95	RUSHMORE	£6.40	160	CASTLEPORT	£6.00
31	WEYMOUTH & PORTLAND	£6.30	96	SHEFFIELD	£6.40	161	CONWY	£6.00
32	ADUR	£6.30	97	SOUTH LAKELAND	£6.40	162	DOVER	£6.00
33	BATH & NORTH EAST SOMERSET	£6.30	98	STEVENAGE	£6.40	163	EAST AYRSHIRE	£6.00
34	CARARON	£6.30	99	SURREY HEATH	£6.40	164	EAST LINDSEY	£6.00
35	CHRISTCHURCH	£6.30	100	TENDRING	£6.40	165	GLOUCESTER	£6.00
36	COLCHESTER	£6.30	101	WANDERLEY	£6.40	166	GREAT YARMOUTH	£6.00
37	FIFE	£6.30	102	WORKING	£6.40	167	GWYNEDD	£6.00
38	GUERNSEY	£6.30	103	WOLINGHAM	£6.40	168	ISLE OF WIGHT	£6.00
39	HART	£6.30 (*)	104	EDINBURGH	£6.35	169	KETTERING	£6.00
40	NORTH CORNWALL	£6.30	105	NEWARK & SHERWOOD	£6.32	170	KINGS LYNN & WEST NORFOLK	£6.00
41	NOTTINGHAM	£6.30	106	COVENTRY	£6.30	171	LIDON	£6.00
42	SEDDGEMOOR	£6.30	107	DACORUM	£6.30	172	MILTON KEYNES	£6.00
43	SWALE	£6.30	108	EAST DEVON	£6.30	173	NORTH DORSET	£6.00
44	WEST DEVONSHIRE	£6.30	109	ISLE OF MAN	£6.30	174	PLYMOUTH	£6.00
45	YOKE	£6.30	110	LEWES	£6.30	175	PRESTON	£6.00
46	BUCKINGHAM & BEDFORDSHIRE	£6.25	111	PEMBROKESHIRE	£6.30	176	SLOUGH	£6.00
47	TORBAY	£6.25	112	SOUTH HOLLAND	£6.30	177	SOUTH HAMS	£6.00
48	CHELMSFORD	£6.20	113	FOREST OF DEAN	£6.25	178	SOUTH TYNESIDE	£6.00
49	CHESTER	£6.20	114	WILTSHIRE	£6.20	179	STOCKPORT	£6.00
50	EASTLEIGH	£6.20	115	ARGYLL & BUTE	£6.20	180	TAMESIDE	£6.00
51	GRAVESHAM	£6.20	116	BIRMINGHAM	£6.20	181	TEST VALLEY	£6.00 (*)
52	ROTHAM	£6.20	117	BRANTREE	£6.20	182	THREE RIVERS	£6.00
53	SWINDON	£6.20	118	CHICHESTER	£6.20	183	THURROCK	£6.00
54	HARBOROUGH	£6.18	119	DAVENTRY	£6.20	184	VALE OF GLANORGAN	£6.00
55	TORRIDGE	£6.17	120	DERBY	£6.20	185	WARWICK	£6.00
56	ARUN	£6.10	121	EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE	£6.20	186	WEST DORSET	£6.00
57	BASINGSTOKE & DEANE	£6.10	122	HORSHAM	£6.20	187	WEST LINDSEY	£6.00
58	BRIGHTWOOD	£6.10	123	MENDIP	£6.20	188	WARRAL	£6.00
59	CRAWLEY	£6.10	124	NORTHAMPTON	£6.20	189	DARLINGTON	£5.95
60	CAMBRIDGE CITY	£6.10	125	PORTSMOUTH VA	£6.20	190	BABERGH	£5.90
61	EAST DORSET	£6.10	126	ROCHFORD	£6.20	191	BASSETLAW	£5.90
62	EXETER	£6.10	127	RUBINYMEDE	£6.20	192	BROXBORNE	£5.90
63	GLASGOW	£6.10	128	FOLKESTONE & HYTHE	£6.20	193	BUNDEY	£5.90
64	HIGH PEAK	£6.10	129	SOLIHULL	£6.20	194	MANCHESTER	£5.90
65	REDWAY	£6.10	130	SOUTHAMPTON	£6.20	195	NORTHUMBERLAND	£5.90

///.

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[REDACTED]
Sent: 17 January 2020 10:28

To: Masson, Clyde <clayde.masson@reading.gov.uk>

Subject: Re: TAXI FARE INCREASE

This is an EXTERNAL EMAIL. STOP. THINK before you CLICK links or OPEN attachments.

Hi Clyde .

The Reading Cab Drivers Association

Has no objections to the rta's fare increase proposal .

A representative from the RCDA will be attending the meeting where the decision will take place .

[REDACTED]
CHAIRMAN RCDA

From: Masson, Clyde <clayde.masson@reading.gov.uk>

Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2020 11:56 AM

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: TAXI FARE INCREASE

Hi Guys

If you recall the RTA provided us with a request for a taxi vehicle fare increase back in September 2019. Officers then went into discussion with the RTA in respect of the detail of the request and a revised request was produced.

You were asked if you would like to submit any increase for taxi fares, to date we have not received any request.

If you have provided information can you please re-send asap because the cut off point for submissions in respect of this report is the 14 January 2020.

Thank you

Clyde Masson

Principal Licensing & Enforcement Officer

Licensing | Directorate for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

Reading Borough Council

Civic Offices, Bridge Street, Reading, RG1 2LU

0118 937 2453

07710 664 077

PLEASE READ - IMPORTANT INFORMATION - NO MORE ENTITLEMENTS TO DRIVE

From 01 February 2019 we implemented changes to the way private hire, hackney carriage and school transport driver licence renewal applications were processed, as approved by the Licensing Committee on 11 April 2018. In addition, you are no longer required to contact the DBS for a disclosure. Please follow the link below for full information

<http://www.reading.gov.uk/taxilicences>

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Dear Clyde,

Thank you for your email of the 12 February 2020, which I found in my Spam folder.

I would like to oppose to the increase in taxi fares for the reasons stated below:

1. The drivers DO NOT help the customers at all with their bags when loading or unloading.
2. They are often very unfriendly and surly
3. They just sit behind the steering wheel and do not afford any services at all.
 1. Why should they get a fare increase for doing nothing?
 2. Why should the customers pay extra for such appalling service?

Both my husband and I take the black cabs from Reading stations quite frequently. Years ago, the taxi drivers would come out and assist us with our bags and baggages. Now, you would be lucky to get them to even open the door for you. They do not even assist you when you leave the cab. They are just a surly, unfriendly bunch. As a woman, I had to struggle to put my bags in the cab to load and unload countless times. I have even asked for help but they just pretend they have not heard you.

It already cost us a sum to take the taxi from Reading West to Reading Station and visa versa. But, to increase the fares when the service remains disgracefully atrocious, is an absolute insult.

Dan informed me that there is a note to say that the public can complain about the service they received below the photo id of the driver. I am sure the note that we have never seen (perhaps, the wording is too small) is there. However, it may be mistaken for reporting to the company NOT to Reading Council. If this was made clearer to the public, then I am certain that these dreadful cab drivers will think twice about behaving in such an outrageous manner. Moreover, there would be more complaints made about these horrendous drivers.

I urged you to please give this your utmost attention it deserves. Believe me, the service from the black taxi drivers especially are so bad, you need to do some investigation into this. No complaints have been made because the public is not aware that they can do so. I only found out that I can complain to Reading Borough Council from our taxi driver that drives us to and from Heathrow Airport. He was the one who told us that he was by Reading Station when he saw this woman struggling to get into a black cab and this black cab driver was just sitting behind the steering wheel, which is what they do all the time. He told the driver to help but according to him, the driver refused to do so.

I am so very grateful for the lovely email from Clyde Masson that I found in my Spam folder and the helpful telephone conversation I had with Dan. I pray that something can be done about these ghastly black cab drivers. Trust me. They are really bad!

With my grateful thanks and appreciation for listening to me and for giving me your time to voice my concern.

Warmest regards,

C____ F____

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HACKNEY CARRIAGE DRIVER'S LICENCE

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL hereby license the above-named to act as a driver of any Hackney Carriage plying for hire within the area of the said Borough from 11/01/2020 to 10/01/2023 subject to the consent of the Proprietor of such carriage and to the provisions of Public Acts of Parliament relating to Hackney Carriages and motor vehicles and to Byelaws and Regulations which may from time to time be made thereunder and be in force within the said Borough.

DATED this 16th December 2019

Signed on behalf of the issuing licensing authority
Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

Civic Offices
Reading
RG1 7AE



Frances Martin

Note: This licence must be delivered to and retained by the Proprietor of the Hackney Carriage while the driver remains in his employ.

PENALTY POINTS SYSTEM

Without prejudice to any other course of action or remedy available to the council in the event of any contravention of any relevant statute, bylaw, or regulation, the penalty points then applicable to that particular breach or contravention as indicated in the handbook will be issued to the licence holder. Provided no more than eleven penalty points have been issued to the licence holder within any twelve month period but upon accumulation of twelve or more points within any twelve month period the licence holder will be liable to any appropriate action being taken by the council, including suspension, revocation, or refusal to renew the licence.

In the event of a licence holder disputing that he is liable for points to be awarded against him, the matter will be referred to a meeting of the Licensing Sub-committee, where in the event that he is adjudged liable for and breach or requirement for which penalty points would have been imposed, no greater punishment will be imposed other than the awarding of the penalty points for that particular breach or requirement.

PART I

Laws relevant to the driving of hackney carriages in the Borough of Reading.

TOWN POLICE CLAUSES ACT 1847

The driver of a hackney carriage whilst on a taxi rank or in any street who refuses or neglects without reasonable excuse to drive to any place in the area for which he is licensed (the Borough of Reading) commits an offence. (6 points)(Section 53)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (MISC. PROVISIONS) ACT 1976

You must produce your hackney carriage driver's licence at the request of a council officer or police officer at the Civic Offices or Police Station within five days of the request. (6 points)(section 53)

Provide a medical certificate as and when required by the council. You must be examined by the Consultant occupational Health Physician to ascertain your fitness to hold a licence before the grant of your first licence, every fifth year until age 60, every other year to age 70 and annually thereafter, or at any other time considered reasonably necessary the Head of Planning and Environmental Health. (6 points)(Section 57) The Council may suspend or revoke or refuse to renew your licence if:

(a) you are convicted of an offence involving dishonesty, indecency or violence or have been convicted of an offence or failed to comply with the law and conditions controlling the hackney carriage trade;

(b) any other reasonable cause. (Section 61)

When undertaking a journey which ends outside the licensed area (the Borough of Reading) you must not charge more than the fare shown on the taximeter unless a fare was agreed before commencement of the journey. (3 points)(Section 66)

When used as a private hire vehicle, i.e. when not plying for hire or standing on a taxi rank, or accepting bookings through a third person you must only charge the fare shown on the taximeter from where the hirer commenced the journey.

(3 points)(Section 67)

You must not without reasonable cause unnecessarily prolong in distance or time, the journey for which the vehicle was hired.

(9 points)(Section 69)

You must not wilfully obstruct a council officer or police constable acting under the above Act, or without reasonable excuse fail to comply with any requirement made to you by such a person or without reasonable cause fail to give any such person any other assistance or information he may reasonably require in the performance of his duties under the above Act.

(12 points)(Section 73)

BYELAWS MADE BY THE COUNCIL UNDER SECTION 68 TOWN POLICE CLAUSES ACT 1847 AND SECTION 171 PUBLIC HEALTH ACT 1875 The driver of a hackney carriage provided with a taximeter shall: -

(a) when standing or plying for hire, keep the key, flag or other device fitted in pursuance of the bylaw in that behalf locked in the position in which no fare is recorded on the face of the taximeter; (3 points)

(b) before beginning a journey for which a fare is charged for distance and time, bring the machinery of the taximeter into action by moving the said key, flag or other device, so that the word "HIRED" is legible on the face of the taximeter to indicate that the hackney carriage is hired or that a fare is being charged and keep the machinery of the taximeter in action until termination of hiring; (5 points)

- (c) Cause the dial of the taximeter to be kept properly illuminated throughout any part of the hiring which is during the hours of darkness as defined for the purpose of the Road Traffic Act 1972 and also at any other time at the request of the hirer. (3 points)(Byelaw 5)

The driver of a hackney carriage shall not tamper with or permit any person to tamper with any taximeter with which the carriage is provided, with the fittings thereof, or with the seals affixed thereto. (12 points)(Byelaw 6)

The driver of a hackney carriage shall, when plying for hire, in any street and not actually hired:

- (a) proceed with reasonable speed to one of the stands appointed or deemed to have been appointed under section 63 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976; (3 points)
- (b) if a stand, at the time of his arrival, is occupied by the full number of carriages authorised to occupy it, proceed to another stand; (3 points)
- (c) on arriving at a stand not already occupied by the full number of carriages authorised to occupy it, station the carriage immediately behind the carriage or carriages on the stand and so as to face in the same direction; (3 points)
- (d) from time to time when any other carriage immediately in front is driven off or moved forward cause his carriage to be moved forward so as to fill the place previously occupied by the carriage driven off or moved forward. (3 points)(Byelaw 7)

The driver of a hackney carriage, when standing or plying for hire, shall not, by calling out or otherwise, importune any person to hire such carriage and shall not make use of the services of any other person for the purpose. (3 points) (Byelaw 8)

The driver of a hackney carriage shall behave in a civil and orderly manner and shall take all reasonable precautions to ensure the safety of persons conveyed in or entering or alighting from the vehicle. (6 points)(Byelaw 9)

The driver of a hackney carriage who has agreed or has been hired to be in attendance with the carriage at an appointed time and place shall unless delayed or prevented by some sufficient cause, punctually attend with such carriage at such appointed time and place. (6 points)(Byelaw 10)

The driver of a hackney carriage shall not convey or permit to be conveyed in such carriage any greater number of persons than the number of persons specified on the plate affixed to the outside of the carriage provided that for the purpose of this byelaw two children under the age of twelve years shall be regarded as one person and children under the age of three years shall not be reckoned subject to the limitation that no hackney carriage licensed to carry three, four or five persons shall carry more than five, six or seven adults and children respectively. (6 points)(Byelaw 11)

If a badge has been provided by the council and delivered to the driver of a hackney carriage he shall, when standing or plying for hire, and when hired, wear that badge in such position and manner as to be plainly visible. (6 points)(Byelaw 12)

The driver of a hackney carriage so constructed as to carry luggage shall, when requested by any person hiring or seeking to hire the carriage:

- (a) convey a reasonable quantity of luggage; (3 points)
- (b) afford reasonable assistance in loading and unloading; (3 points)
- (c) afford reasonable assistance in removing it to or from the entrance of any building, station, or place at which he may take up or set down such person. (3 points)(Byelaw 13)

Every hackney carriage driver shall present a clean and tidy appearance. (6 points)(Byelaw 14)

The driver of a hackney carriage shall be entitled to demand and take for the hire of the carriage the rate of fare prescribed by the Table of fares the of fare being calculated by distance unless the hirer expresses at the commencement of the hiring his desire to engage by time.

Provided always that where a hackney carriage furnished with a taximeter shall be hired by distance the driver thereof shall not be entitled to demand and take a fare greater than that recorded on the face of the taximeter,

save for any extra charges authorised by the Table of Fares which it may not be possible to record on the face of the taximeter. (9 points)(Byelaw 15)

A Statement of fares fixed by the Table of Fares shall be exhibited inside the carriage in clearly distinguishable letters and figures. The driver of a hackney carriage bearing a statement of fares in accordance with this bylaw shall not wilfully or negligently cause or suffer the letters or figures in the statement to be concealed or rendered illegible at any time while the carriage is plying or being used for hire. (3 points)(Byelaw 16)

The driver of a hackney carriage shall immediately after the termination of any hiring or as soon as practicable thereafter carefully search the carriage for any property which may have been accidentally left therein. (3 points)(Byelaw 17)

The driver of a hackney carriage shall if any property is accidentally left therein by any person who may have been conveyed in the carriage be found or handed to him:

- (a) carry it as soon as possible and in any event within 48 hours, if not sooner claimed by or on behalf of its owner, to the Civic Offices, Reading, or other office for the time being of the Borough Council, and leave it in the custody of the officer in charge on his giving a receipt for it; (12 points)
- (b) be entitled to receive from any person to whom the property shall be re-delivered an amount equal to five pence on the pound of its estimated value (or the fare for the distance from the place of finding to the office of the council, whichever be the greater) but not more than five pounds. (Byelaw 18)

MEDICALS

Please note, your medical due date is on the top left side of your badges. It is your responsibility to ensure you have passed your medical and submitted to us a Medical Examination Report Form,

signed by your GP confirming you are fit to drive BEFORE that date. If you do not, you will not be able to continue to work as a school transport driver until you do. The medical form is available on our website:

<http://www.reading.gov.uk/businesses/licences-and-permits/VehicleandDriverLicences/medical-procedure-drivers/>

RENEWALS

It is YOUR responsibility to ensure that you submit the correctly completed renewal application form, fee and supporting documentation to this office no later than 6 weeks prior to the expiry of your licence. Failure to do so may lead to your application not being processed before the licence expires.

PLEASE READ - IMPORTANT INFORMATION - NO MORE ENTITLEMENTS TO DRIVE

From 01 February 2019 we will be implementing changes to the way private hire, hackney carriage and school transport driver's licence renewal applications are processed, as approved by the Licensing Committee on 11 April 2018. Please follow the link below for full information

<http://www.reading.gov.uk/taxilicences>

RENEWAL OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE VEHICLE DRIVER'S LICENCE

Your hackney carriage vehicle driver's licence has been issued subject to satisfactory completion of the application process. Should these results come back as unsatisfactory then your licence may be subject to suspension or revocation pursuant to section 61 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. You may be required to attend a Licensing Committee for a determination to be made regarding your hackney carriage driver's licence.

DBS ONLINE UPDATE SERVICE - REMINDER

When you have received your Disclosure Certificate, you will need to apply for the Online Update Service within 30 days of the date on the certificate, via the link below. Please make a note of your check number as you will need to give that to us on your next renewal. You will then no longer need to apply for a disclosure as the online check will always be kept up to date and valid.

<https://secure.crbonline.gov.uk/crsc/apply?execution=e1s1>

PLEASE NOTE: You pay the DBS's check fee when you hand in your application form and thereafter you will pay the DBS an annual fee for the online Update Service.

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READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	POLICY COMMITTEE		
DATE:	18 MAY 2020		
TITLE:	RE-PROFILING OF £9M CAPITAL INVESTMENT IN HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR PAGE	PORTFOLIO:	STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING & TRANSPORT
SERVICE:	ENVIRONMENTAL AND COMMERCIAL SERVICES	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
LEAD OFFICER:	ANDY EDWARDS	TEL:	0118 937 3458
JOB TITLE:	ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND COMMERCIAL SERVICES	E-MAIL:	andrew.edwards@reading.gov.uk

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To provide an update on the £9m capital investment in the Highways Maintenance programme and seek approval for a reprofiling of the project given the current Covid-19 emergency situation.

2 RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That Option 1 is taken forward which recommends a reduced Year 1 programme of £1.5m, with the balance of £7.5m being delivered over Years 2 & 3 subject to capital funding remaining available.

3.0 POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy sets out a £9m (over 3 years) capital investment programme in Reading's local residential road and pavement network.
- 3.2 A report on the above programme was due to be considered for approval at the Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport (SEPT) Committee meeting planned for Monday 16th March 2020. The report outlined the £9m 2020-2023 capital investment into minor residential roads and pavements resurfacing programme and sought spend approval. The SEPT meeting was cancelled, following Government restrictions put in place as a result of the COVID 19 outbreak.
- 3.3 The report (referred to in 3.2 above and other delayed reports) were presented to the Chief Executive for consideration. The full £9M 3-year programme spend recommendation was approved; Decision Notice 589 dated 8th April 2020 applies.
- 3.4 The pandemic has had an impact on the delivery of the proposed Programme. This report sets out those impacts and proposes an amended scheme and reprofiled spend.

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Since the approval of the Capital Programme and subsequent Decision Book report 589, Highways Officers have finalised the list of residential roads and pavements proposed to be resurfaced in the originally planned Year 1 of the programme, taking into account the road assessment priorities, known utility works and planned developments.
- 4.2 Based on an initial £3million expenditure in year 1 and using last financial year's cost rates (2019/20), an estimate of the numbers of roads and pavements that could be resurfaced in Year 1 was produced. In addition, a reserve list of residential roads and pavements that could also be resurfaced in Year 1, should the tender rates be favourable was also prepared.
- 4.3 The £3million expenditure in year 1 was to include £2 million on contracted micro asphalt surfacing. The balance of £500k on pre-patching before the surfacing and £500k on footway improvements, were both to be undertaken using Council's internal Highways Team.
- 4.4 It is anticipated, following early discussions with potential contractors, that it is unlikely the works contracted will be able to be commenced until late May/early June, as a result of the restrictions currently in place for COVID 19. This is due to the increased number of parked cars in our residential roads not moving during the day and night making it impractical for the contractor to resurface roads without requiring the public to move large numbers of cars during the lockdown / restrictions period.
- 4.5 Once it is known when the restrictions are lifted or amended, contractors have advised that they could quickly be in a position to start the programmed surfacing works. The window to carry out this programme will be open this year until the end of October before weather conditions deteriorate and could reopen again in March 2021. It is anticipated that a window of 10-14 weeks would be required to deliver the surfacing element of Year 1 of the programme. Traffic Management capabilities have an impact on the number of road closures per day possible and therefore work rate, which could impinge on the pace of the project if the timescale was significantly reduced.
- 4.6 Pre-patching works by our internal Highways Team could still be completed (subject to staff not needing to be redeployed to COVID 19 priority tasks), so that as soon as the restrictions are lifted or amended the contractor could be deployed to start. Most of the patching is likely to be in the centre of the road as this is where most vehicles run and therefore the area that deteriorates most quickly. If there are any areas that officers are unable to patch due to parked vehicles it will be patched prior to the start of the contract.
- 4.7 The contract will need to be awarded with a longer completion date to enable Year 1 delivery to be completed. Under normal circumstances officers would expect Year 1 to be completed by a set date, for example no later than the end of March 2021. This is to ensure the work is carried out in a timely fashion and would keep each year of this programme in separate financial years. In this instance officers are proposing allowing additional time for completion of Year 1 as, at present, there is uncertainty as to when the current restrictions will be lifted or amended.
- 4.8 In light of the uncertainty of when COVID 19 restrictions presently in place will end, it is recommended that this option is no longer feasible to deliver in full in Year 1.

5.0 WAY FORWARD:

- 5.1 There are a number of options to consider taking into the account the current situation caused by the pandemic:

5.2 Option 1 - Reduce the Contract value of the minor road surfacing in year 1 (2020/21) to £ 1M with reduction to £ 0.25M pre-patching and reduced pavements / footways programme to £ 0.25M. Total Year 1 value £1.5m. Increase Year 2 & 3 to £3.75m each year subject to capital funding being available

- This proposal will reduce the area of surfacing and number of roads & pavements / footways that can be resurfaced by approx. 50% but will provide a manageable programme should Covid 19 restrictions persist to later this year.
- It would still follow the contract tender preparation timescales being worked to for the current planned programme. A decision could be made on whether to award a reduced spend contract in May based on the latest information known on the COVID 19 implications at that time.
- The likelihood of delivering a 50% reduced programme in late Autumn would be more realistic and manageable with any slippage completed early Spring in March 2021.
- This option also reduces the risk of causing too much traffic disruption by avoiding squeezing a full programme of works into a condensed timeframe.
- This keeps contract programmes within separate financial years and delivers half of the agreed year 1 investment.
- It should be noted that the current condition of residential (unclassified) roads that were originally included in year 1 will continue to deteriorate reducing the expected improvement in overall road condition.
- A reduced programme may see the cost per m² rate increasing thereby reducing the total surfacing area and number of roads than can be resurfaced, which will reduce the expected improvement in road condition.
- The revised programme will provide flexibility should the Council need to review its capital expenditure plans as a result of COVID 19.

5.3 Option 2 - Delay contract award by 1 year and deliver over 3-year period (2021/22 to 2023/24)

- Benefit would be that the Project Engineer can work on a single longer-term contract including the full programme of resurfacing and the Engineering team will have time to deliver the programme as effectively as possible and look to collaborate with the term contractor to include innovative practices and solutions in the term contract.
- The current condition of residential (unclassified) roads will however continue to deteriorate reducing the expected improvement in the residential road condition.
- The cost of £m² rate may increase thereby reducing the number of roads than can be resurfaced, which will reduce the expected improvement in residential road condition.
- No delivery of any residential (unclassified) roads or pavement improvements in current financial year - original Year 1 of programme

5.4 Option 3 - Delay contract award by 1 year and deliver £9m programme over 2-year period (2021/22 to 2022/23)

- Benefit would be that the Project Engineer can work on a single longer-term contract including full programme of resurfacing and the Engineering team will have time to deliver the programme as effectively as possible and look to collaborate with the term contractor to include innovative practices and solutions in the term contract.
- The current condition of residential (unclassified) roads will however continue to deteriorate reducing the expected improvement in the residential road condition
- The cost of £m² rate may increase thereby reducing the number of roads than can be resurfaced, which will reduce the expected improvement in residential road condition.

- Increased volume / number of roads compressed into 2 years will cause increased disruption on the highway network (closing more roads at the same time, moving cars etc.).
- No delivery of any residential (unclassified) roads or pavement improvements in current financial year - original Year 1 of programme.

5.5 Option 4 - Delay contract award by 1 year and deliver a reduced contract value over 2-year period (2021/22 to 2022/23)

- Benefit would be that the Project Engineer can work on a single longer-term contract including full programme of resurfacing and the Engineering team will have time to deliver the programme as effectively as possible and look to collaborate with the term contractor to include innovative practices and solutions in the term contract.
- The current condition of residential (unclassified) roads will however continue to deteriorate reducing the expected improvement in the residential road condition
- The cost of £m2 rate may increase thereby reducing the number of roads than can be resurfaced, which will reduce the expected improvement in residential road condition.
- The reduced residential (unclassified) road surfacing programme will result in the residential condition of unclassified roads not improving as much as they would with the larger original programme.
- Public have been informed of the £9M programme and are expecting to see a significant improvement in the overall road condition.
- No delivery of any residential (unclassified) roads or pavement improvements in current financial year - original Year 1 of programme.

5.6 All delayed options (2, 3 and 4) will likely see the presently projected improvement in residential road condition reduced in actual terms and further deterioration in residential (unclassified) roads over any period of delay.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The Proposed £9m 3-year Highway Maintenance investment funding was agreed as part of the Council's Capital Programme, which was approved at Full Council at the end of February 2020.

6.2 The Proposed Highway Maintenance Programme 2020/2021 will be fully funded by the Councils £9M 3-year Capital Investment.

6.3 The Proposed Re-Profiling option will reduce the borrowing requirement in 2020/21 and the expenditure profile will be re-profiled across the 3 year MTFS.

6.4 Delivery of the full £9M 3 Year programme will be subject to a review of affordability, as the Council considers its financial situation following the pandemic.

7.0 CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

7.1 The Council has adopted a Strategic Framework (March 2020) which sets out the Council's key priorities including:

- To keep social care services running for the children and adults who need them;
- To support vulnerable and isolated people during the crisis;
- To support business and the economy, which will secure the long term recovery of Reading.

8.0 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

8.1 A full communications plan will be developed alongside implementation.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

9.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149 the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

9.2 The Council has reviewed the scope of the proposals as outlined within this report and considers that the proposals have no direct impact on any groups with protected characteristics. However, the service will meet with representatives to determine whether they have any concerns or issues regarding the proposals.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 It will be necessary to enter into a contract with the successful tenderer for each of the maintenance operations described in this report.

10.2 In each case, the tender process will be conducted in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and the principles of the Open process as defined by the Public Contract Regulations 2015 ("the Regulations"). It is intended that each contract will be entered into based on the most economically advantageous tender received.

10.3 The Council, as Highway Authority, has a duty under the Highways Act 1980 to carry out highway maintenance and maintain highway structures.

11. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The proposed resurfacing contracts will include a carbon reduction and environmental element aimed at reducing the impact on the environment by the works. The intent is to reduce the amount of carbon used to produce the material by lower temperature products, use of recycled materials and reducing the uncontrolled waste in the environment to reduce pollution of the natural environment.

11.2 We will be ensuring through the procurement process that the successful contractor's operations support the Council's net zero carbon ambitions.

12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

12.1 Strategic Environment Planning & Transport Committee (SEPTc) report of 16th March 2020.

12.2 Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (February 2020).

12.3 Decision Book 589 dated 8th April 2020.

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