

Hackney Carriage Ranks (Environmental Services, Robert Smith)

Synopsis of report:

To make Members aware of the current situation regarding hackney carriage ranks in the Borough

Recommendation(s):

None. This report is for information.

1. Context and background of report

- 1.1 Under section 63 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976-part II, councils may provide hackney carriage stands (known as ranks).
- 1.2 In Runnymede there are 48 licensed hackney carriages, these are able to operate and pick up passengers from strategically placed ranks around the Borough. These ranks are located at the following five locations and comprise a total of 17 bays.

Egham Railway Station	6 bays
Virginia Water Station Parade	2 bays
Chertsey Railway Station	2 bays
Addlestone Railway Station	2 bays (out of use since Sept 2022 due to railway maintenance work)
Thorpe Park	5 bays

A drop off/pick up point for use by hackney carriage and private hire vehicles has been provided at the front of the new Waitrose store in Egham.

2. Report and, where applicable, options considered and recommended

- 2.1 The ranks on railway station land at Addlestone, Egham and Chertsey, South Western Railway (SWR) are subject to an annual contract between South Western Railway (SWR) and Runnymede Borough Council (RBC). This is a long standing arrangement which has been in place for over 15 years.
- 2.2 SWR makes an annual charge to the Council for use of the ranks. Prior to 2008 the contract had no provision for increased charges and the amount charged to Council for the taxi ranks before 2008 was £150 per year per bay. A total of £1,500 plus VAT for all station ranks
- 2.3 Post 2008, provision for annual increases were included in the contracts and these have gradually increased, for the most recent year (2023) they stand at £500 plus VAT per bay. A total of £5,000 for all station ranks
- 2.4 In order to recover the Council's costs for these ranks a surcharge to the licence fee for hackney carriages. This ensures recovery of the SWR charges through hackney carriage vehicle licence fees. This accounts for the difference in cost between hackney carriage and private hire vehicle fees, for

example in the financial year (FY)2023/24 the difference is £143, a hackney carriage vehicle licence will cost £339 and a private hire vehicle licence £196.

2.5 This is a very reasonable charge for the ranks and compares very favourably with the situation at most other stations where drivers themselves enter into individual contracts with South Western Railways which are in the region of £1000 per year or higher.

2.6 As far as Officers can ascertain the ranks at Egham and Chertsey Railway Stations are in constant use but the others are used infrequently.

3. **Policy framework implications**

3.1 None identified.

4. **Resource implications/Value for Money (where applicable)**

4.1 None identified.

5. **Legal implications**

5.1 The Council has no legal obligation to provide the taxi ranks or bays on behalf of taxi Drivers and it can be described as a discretionary service. The Council has the power to 'appoint stands' maintainable at public expense under Section 63 of the Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1976, which lays down certain requirements. Before a stand is appointed a notice must be advertised in a local newspaper and the Chief Officer of Police for the area must be notified.

5.2 A period of 28 days must be given from the date of publication of the notice and thereafter any representations or objections must be considered.

6. **Equality implications**

6.1 None identified.

(For information)

Background papers

None.