

REPORT TO:	Licensing Committee
DATE:	6 th December 2017
LEAD OFFICER:	Head of Planning and Public Protection
CONTACT OFFICER:	Public Protection Business Manager licensing@denbighshire.gov.uk 01824 706066
SUBJECT:	Proposed Changes to Hackney Carriage Vehicles Table of Fares and Charges

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To review the current tariff charges for hackney carriage vehicles (taxis).

2.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 Following a request by a delegation of licensed drivers to review the current tariff charges representations officers have consulted with all drivers to ascertain an appropriate tariff charge.

2.2 Members are requested to comment further on a preferred option.

3.0 POWER TO MAKE THE DECISION

3.1 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

4.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

4.1 Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 (“the Act”) allows the Council to fix the rates or fares within the county in connection with the hire of a vehicle.

4.2 A delegation of around 150 licensed drivers submitted a request to the council for the current tariff charges to be increased. This request included two options for consideration. The documents supporting a review are attached at Appendix A.

4.3 At the last meeting of the Licensing Committee Officers were authorised to consult further with interested parties. This consultation was available via the Denbighshire website and highlighted in the October newsletter

sent to all drivers. The consultation document is at Appendix B. Members will note that the document puts forward five options:-

- 1) Inflation increase
- 2) Proposal from delegation of drivers
- 3) Further proposal from delegation of drivers
- 4) Option from Denbighshire
- 5) Further option from Denbighshire

4.4 A number of representations have been received commenting on the proposed options. These representations are attached at Appendix C.

5.0 CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 Members should consider all the objections and comments outlined in Appendix C to decide if the table of charges require modification.

5.2 The “table of fares” was last amended in 2010.

5.3 A recognised organisation - the Private Hire and Taxi Monthly – produce a “league table” of taxi fares throughout the UK. Based on current charges Denbighshire are listed at number 288 out of a total number of 368 UK wide Local Authorities (November 2017). Members may wish to note that a comparison in 2012 showed Denbighshire at position 219 in the league table and, to further assist Members, officers have indicated below where the authority would sit in the league table for each of the proposed options.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
Wales	1	7	3	1	1
UK	111	221	181	117	82
<i>Rates are based on a two mile journey. Positon “1” is dearest</i>					

5.4 Should Members resolve to vary current fares and charges, it is suggested that licensees be given a reasonable period of time, 14 days, to alter their meters.

5.5 Should Members approve an alteration to the current scale of fares, then this will require a Lead Member Delegated Decision to ensure the Council meets its constitutional obligations. Thereafter the Authority must publish a public notice in one local newspaper circulated in the County which should detail the proposed new tariff and specify a period which shall be not less than 14 days from the date of publication, within which objections can be made in writing to the Authority.

- 5.6 If no objections are received the amended scale of fares and charges will come into effect after the expiration of the public notice i.e. the 15th day.
- 5.7 If an objection is received and not withdrawn, officers will report back to Members of the Licensing Committee within two months, when the objections will be considered.
- 5.8 Members may then set a date when the revised table of fares and charges shall have effect with or without modification.
- 5.9 Members should note that although the Council set the table of charges a hackney carriage proprietor can charge a customer a lesser fee; the set charge is the maximum permitted.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION

6.1 That Members:

- 1) Approve an amendment to the current table of charges as follows:
 - Introduce option 2 of the costs per mile.
 - Introduce stepped changes in multiples of £0.10 per 1/20th of a mile only.
 - Increase the soiling charge to £100.
 - Increase waiting time for Tariff 1 to £0.30 per minute.
 - Retain waiting time for Tariff 2 as £0.40 per minute
 - Include Easter Sunday into Tariff 2.
 - Include wheelchairs and pushchairs in the exclusions to the luggage charge.
 - Retain the extra charge of £0.20 for each item of luggage outside the passenger compartment (excluding shopping).
 - Introduce an extra charge of £0.20 for each domestic pet, excluding guide dogs.
- 2) Authorise officers to prepare a report for Lead member Delegated decision to adopt the amendments in sub-paragraph 1) above
- 3) Authorise officers to publish the changes in a local newspaper for the necessary consultation, and if no objections are received, they will come into effect on 1 February 2018.
- 4) Request that where any objections are received, the Licensing Committee will consider those objections at their next meeting with a view to implementing (with or without modification) not later than 1 April 2018.