

REPORT TO:	Licensing Committee
DATE:	2 nd March 2022
LEAD OFFICER:	Head of Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services
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 number of licensed drivers to review the current tariff charges officers have drafted proposals for further consultation.

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 Two options were put forward by licensed drivers, namely:

- Proposal 1
 - increase to 3.50 start and 2.50 a mile
 - Tariff 2 to start at 11pm until 7am
- Proposal 2
 - £3.50 Start with £2.50 per mile and removal of the initial £3 for the first $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile.
 - surcharge per passenger for journeys more than 4 passengers.
 - Tariff 1 to start at 0700 and Finish at 2259 and Tariff 2 to start 2300 and finish 0659
 - Sundays to be permanently Tariff 2 all day.

- 4.3 A supplement to Proposal 2 above put forward by another driver is that Tariff 2 should start at 6pm on a Friday and Saturday night so as to encourage sufficient drivers to meet customer demand.
- 4.4 The current tariff for Denbighshire is attached at Appendix A and those changes proposed are highlighted.

5.0 CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 The “table of fares” was last amended in 2018.
- 5.2 The charges for distance are used to compile a “league table” of taxi fares throughout the UK, produced by the Private Hire and Taxi Monthly. Based on current charges Denbighshire are listed at number 259 out of a total number of 359 UK wide Local Authorities; 12 out of 22 in Wales and 5 out of 6 in north Wales (December 2021). Members may wish to note this proposal would take Denbighshire to 5th highest in Wales and joint second with Gwynedd in north Wales
- 5.3 Comparisons are based on two-mile journey on the normal tariff and does not take account of any extras / additions. Position “1” is dearest
- 5.4 The proposals amount to a 7% increase in charges for a two-mile journey.
- 5.5 Should Members resolve to support the proposals and move to consultation officers propose to consult publically whilst directly informing licensed drivers of the proposals.
- 5.6 Any objections at that stage will be brought back to the Licensing Committee for consideration of a final tariff.
- 5.7 If there are no objections, 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. Members should note that for this action a Lead Member Delegated Decision is required to ensure the Council meets its constitutional obligations.
- 5.8 If no objections are received at that stage the amended scale of fares and charges will come into effect after the expiration of the public notice i.e. the 15th day
- 5.9 Again, any objections at that stage will be brought back to the Licensing Committee for consideration for a final tariff.

5.10 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

5.11 Members may put forward a different preferred tariff or reject the representations to amend the tariff.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION

6.1 That Members:

- authorise officers to proceed with consultation on either
 - Proposal 2 at paragraph 4.2, together with the supplement at paragraph 4.3, or
 - A preferred version of a tariff agreed by Members
- instruct officers to prepare a report for the next Licensing Committee if any objections are received
- instruct officers to publish the requisite public notice if no objections to the consultation are received and implement the tariff after the statutory timeframe if no further objections are submitted thereafter
- instruct officers to prepare a report for the next Licensing Committee if any objections are received following the statutory notice