

REPORT TO:	Licensing Committee
DATE:	7 th December 2022
LEAD OFFICER:	Head of Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services
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SUBJECT:	Update on review of Hackney Carriage Vehicles Table of Fares and Charges

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To update Members on the review of the current Hackney Carriage Vehicles Table of Fares and Charges (“tariff”) and seek direction for future actions.

2.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 Following a request by Members at a previous meeting Officers have reviewed the current tariff charges.
- 2.2 It is proposed that there is no change to the tariff.

3.0 POWER TO MAKE THE DECISION

- 3.1 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

4.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 4.1 Hackney Carriage vehicles, commonly referred to as taxis, are distinct in that they can operate via a rank or be hailed in the street unlike private hire vehicles which must be pre-booked through an operator’s base. It should be noted that a hackney carriage can carry out private hire duties but a private hire cannot operate as a hackney carriage.
- 4.2 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 hackney carriage vehicle. There is no such requirement to set private hire charges.
- 4.3 The tariff rates as determined are the maximum rates a proprietor / driver can charge for a journey and will be calculated by a meter appropriately calibrated to the published tariff.

- 4.4 Members considered a report on the tariff charges at the Licensing Committee meeting in June and resolved that the tariff be amended. The current tariff is attached at Appendix 1. Further, Members requested that Officers review the charges and report back to Committee within 6 months.
- 4.5 A suitable Consultant led on consulting, collating and reporting on the findings and that report is attached at Appendix 2.
- 4.6 Following some engagement with the licensed taxi trade locally a proposed tariff was put to public consultation. The consultation was promoted directly with licensees in the taxi trade and widely through local press and social media. The responses from both the trade and public are summarised at Annex C and D attached to the Consultant's report.
- 4.7 The message from responses was generally that a change in the tariff was not needed.

5.0 CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 Members will note that the consultant's report recommends:
- a. The introduction of three Tariffs for Taxis that seat four people and a tariff for taxis that seat five or more people.
 - b. The rounding of the tariff unit rate, to 10s of pence to eliminate the use of copper coins.
 - c. A yearly fare increase/decrease, in line with the Retail Price Index for Motoring.
 - d. Adoption of the proposed methodology
- 5.2 Section 4 of the Consultant's report provides a comprehensive methodology which should allow the Council to set a fair and transparent table of fares, taking all relevant matters into account from average salaries to the total cost per mile. Members will note that in order to be able to implement the proposed methodology all current data, including the typical journey distance, will be required from operators and proprietors so that actual costs can be effectively assessed when considering any future changes to the current tariff.
- 5.3 Finally, Members should note that the Welsh Government have confirmed they are intending on publishing a white paper for consultation early in 2023 in respect of taxi legislation, which may have some considerations on the setting of fees in the future.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION

6.1 That Members consider the contents of this report along with the findings of the Consultant report at Appendix 2 and resolve to:

- keep the tariff as currently set out in Appendix 1, and
- instruct Officers to conduct further research, with necessary input from local licensees, to enable Members to determine appropriate tariff charges in the future.