

**CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.**

**CABINET EXECUTIVE  
10 October 2017**

**REPORT AUTHOR:** County Councillor Jonathan Wilkinson  
Portfolio Holder for Housing & Countryside Services

**SUBJECT:** Taxi Metering – Review of Regulated Fares

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**REPORT FOR:** Decision

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**1. Summary**

- 1.1 Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 enables local authority's to set a maximum table of fares for licensed Hackney carriages within their authority. The power to do so is an executive function. The table of fares were last reviewed in 2011. Since then whilst fuel prices have either gone down or remained static other costs in running a licensed hackney carriage are likely to have increased.
- 1.2 Until recently there has not been any appetite amongst the trade to review the fares. In response to a written request made by the taxi trade earlier this year a survey was launched to gauge opinion amongst the licensed taxi trade on re-visiting the fares.
- 1.3 As a result of this consultation a new table of fares has been drawn up taking into account the feedback.

**2. Proposal**

- 2.1 As a result of the preliminary consultation a new table of fares has been drawn up taking into account the feedback. This report seeks to obtain approval to carry out the formal consultation with regards to the new table of fares and approve them subject to any feedback received.

**3. Options Considered / Available**

Current Situation

- 3.1 The current Powys table of fares consists of a number of tariffs that are applicable at different times and for different size vehicles. There are 3 different tariffs for saloon cars that carry up to 4 passengers they are:
- Tariff 1 for day journeys (6.00 to midnight)

- Tariff 2 for night journeys (midnight to 6.00) and bank holidays
- Tariff 3 for Xmas and New Year periods

For larger vehicles that are capable of carrying more than 4 passengers there are also 3 tariffs, but they only apply when the vehicle is actually carrying more than 4 passengers.

- Tariff 4 for day journeys (6.00 to midnight)
- Tariff 3 for night journeys (midnight - 6.00), this tariff doubles up as the Xmas/New year tariff for saloon cars
- Tariff 5 for Xmas and New Year periods

- 3.2 Each tariff consists of 2 elements – The flag or initial hiring fee, this is the fare that appears when the taxi driver commences his journey with passengers on board, after 1 mile the mileage rate then applies and the meter will ‘drop’ a set money amount over a set distance or waiting time. The authority’s current maximum table of fares is contained at Annex A
- 3.3 Taxi proprietors may choose to set their meters at less than the Powys maximum, however most don’t. It is an offence for a taxi driver to charge more than the Powys maximum fare; however he/she may choose to charge less usually by applying a discount to the metered fare.

#### Consultation

- 3.3 An on-line survey was sent via e-mail to all the licensed drivers who we have e-mail addresses for (approx. 50% of all our licensed drivers). This was an early consultation to gauge direction and will be followed up by a full consultation with the entire trade following consideration of this report. We received 83 responses from 212 e-mail surveys sent. The last time we consulted on tariffs in 2011 it was in writing and we had 24 completed surveys submitted back to us .
- 3.4 The results showed that 57% of those who responded were in favour of revising the tariffs. The survey went on to gauge opinion on each of the elements of the tariffs, here the results were very mixed. The elements that rated highest in needing adjustment were:
- a) The flag and 1<sup>st</sup> mile rate of Tariff 1 that is currently set at £3.40 the Wales average is £3.32, National average is £3.82, suggestions to raise this ranged from £3.50 to £4.00
  - b) The running mile rate at both Tariff 2 and Tariff 4 that is currently set at £2.20 the Wales average is £2.36, National average is £2.45, suggestions to raise this ranged from £2.25 to £2.50
  - c) A number of comments were received requesting that the time that Tariff 2 commences is made earlier than midnight, a quick poll of

other Welsh authorities showed that the Tariff 2 start time ranged from 19.00 to midnight, with either 23.00 hours or midnight being the most common start times for Tariff 2. Suggestions made by the trade ranged from 21.00 to 22.00 hours

d) There was no clear indication that any other element of the tariffs needed adjusting with there being equal support for leaving them as they are as opposed to raising them.

3.5 In conclusion the following revisions are suggested:

- a) Increase tariff 1 flag from £3.40 to £3.60
- b) Increase tariff 2 & 4 running mile rate from £2.20 to £2.40
- c) Move the start time of tariff 2 forward to 23.00 hours

Options

3.6 The options are as follows:

- To leave the tariffs as they are completely, or
- To respond to the request of the taxi trade and the responses from the survey to uplift elements of the tariffs where there was demand to do so and to leave the elements of tariffs as they are where there was no overall demand for change

#### **4. Preferred Choice and Reasons**

4.1 It was 2011 when the tariffs were last set, to date they have not been revisited as there appeared to be no demand to do so; following a request from the trade it is considered that the time has come to re-visit them. The cost in running a licensed vehicle will have risen since 2011 despite the fact that fuel prices have remained relatively stable since then. It is only right that the trade can recover their increased costs via taxi fares. The public have enjoyed no increase in fares since 2011 and the increases proposed are not dramatic.

4.2 Based on the above findings a new fare table has been drafted and is attached at Annex B. If members approve this table it will need to go on to public consultation before becoming effective as set out at Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 . This section of the Act requires that the Licensing Authority publishes in at least one local newspaper circulating in the district a notice setting out the table of fares and specifying the period, not less than fourteen days from the date of first publication and the manner in which objections to the table of fares can be made.

4.3 In addition the taxi trade will be made aware of this consultation via a Taxi newsletter that will be e-mailed or posted to each and every licensed taxi driver.

- 4.4 If no objection is made within the period specified the table of fares can come into operation as soon as agreed and communicated with the trade. Where objections are received the council may or may not decide to modify the table of fares. It is proposed that any objections will be referred back to Cabinet to consider any necessary action.

**5. Impact Assessment**

- 5.1 Is an impact assessment required? No

**6. Corporate Improvement Plan**

- 6.1 Licensing contributes in a cross cutting manner to various aspects of the Plan and the proposal serves to build on this.

**7. Local Member(s)**

- 7.1 This report has no particular significance to any one electoral division.

**8. Other Front Line Services**

- 8.1 This report has no significant impact on front line services.

**9. Communications**

- 9.1 Communications Comment: Communication will be taking place with the sector, no additional proactive communication action required.

**10. Support Services (Legal, Finance, Corporate Property, HR, ICT, Business Services)**

- 10.1 Legal- The Professional Lead-Legal notes that the recommendation in this report follows the industry's usual practices and the Legal services will give their support and assistance where and when required.
- 10.2 Finance - The Finance Business Partner for Places notes the context of the report.

**11. Scrutiny**

11.1 This report has not been scrutinised.

**12. Statutory Officers**

12.1 The Strategic Director Resources (S151 Officer) notes the comments made by finance.

12.2 The Solicitor to the Council (Monitoring Officer) has commented as follows: "I note the legal comment and have nothing to add to the report".

**13. Members' Interests**

The Monitoring Officer is not aware of any specific interests that may arise in relation to this report. If Members have an interest they should declare it at the start of the meeting and complete the relevant notification form.

<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>Reason for Recommendation:</b>
(i) That the table of hackney carriage fares set out at Annex B is approved for consultation and will be published in relevant local newspapers to enable a fourteen day period for objections to be received.	To commence public consultation on a 2017 table of fares for hackney carriages licensed by Powys County Council.
(ii) In the event that objections are raised in the consultation period a further report be brought to Cabinet for consideration	
(iii) In the event no objections are raised in the consultation period the table of fares set out at Annex B of the report shall take effect in Powys from the date that the new fares are communicated in writing to the trade after the close of the consultation.	To ensure a current set of fares are agreed at a level with which the trade and public are satisfied.

<b>Relevant Policy (ies):</b>	
<b>Within Policy:</b>	<b>Y</b>
<b>Within Budget:</b>	<b>Y</b>

<b>Relevant Local Member(s):</b>	<b>N/A</b>
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<b>Person(s) To Implement Decision:</b>	<b>Senior Licensing Officer</b>
<b>Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:</b>	<b>Following the close of the consultation and any subsequent considerations.</b>

Contact Officer:

Tel:

Email:

**Background Papers used to prepare Report:**

Private Hire Monthly published national Fare Tables

Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1976