

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL

PLANNING, TAXI LICENSING AND RIGHTS OF WAY COMMITTEE

Date: 23rd November 2023

REPORT AUTHOR: Licensing Team Manager

REPORT TITLE: Taxi Licensing Fees 2024/25

REPORT FOR: Decision

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To consider and approve taxi Licensing fees for the period April 2024-25 for public consultation in line with statutory requirements.

2. Background

- 2.1 The setting of fees is governed by The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, it allows for the recovery of costs in connection with administering, controlling, and supervising the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing regime.
- 2.2 Fees are calculated using a toolkit devised by the All-Wales Licensing Expert Panel with assistance from our finance team. The committee usually approves fees for consultation at this time of year ready for implementation the following April 1st.
- 2.3 The number of current licences is:

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Joint Driver Licences | 475 (516) |
| Private Hire Operators | 67 (69) |
| Private Hire & Hackney Carriage Vehicles | 408 (429) |

These are an increase on the last two years, but licence numbers have not yet recovered to pre-covid levels (19/20 figs in brackets).

- 2.3 Proposed fees for 2024/25 are set out below :

| | | | |
|--|------------|-------------------------|--|
| | 23/24 Fees | Proposed fees for 24/25 | |
|--|------------|-------------------------|--|

| | | | |
|---|---------|------|-------------------------------------|
| Vehicles (1 year) Hackney Carriage Private Hire | £146 | £150 | |
| Driver Licence (3 year) | £270.50 | £284 | excludes DBS fee (currently £40.50) |
| Private Hire Operators (5 years) | £358 | £355 | excludes DBS fee |

For 24/25 the difference in income on the proposed vs current fees is approx. £4600 equating to a 3.8% increase overall.

- 2.8 Should members approve the revised table of fees then The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, Section 70 requires them to be advertised in the local press giving at least 28 days for objections.
- 2.9 Any objections to the proposed fees will need to be considered and reported back to this committee along with any revisions considered appropriate. If no objections are made, then these fees will come into effect on 1st April 2024.
- 2.10 For reference only it may be useful to see fees currently charged by some of our neighbouring authorities. It must be remembered that it is difficult to make direct comparisons as fees calculated using the toolkit will be specific to local staffing and on-costs, they also factor in the number of licences that are administered by the authority, both these can vary a great deal between authorities. The greatest variation that can be noted is in the vehicle fees and this is because many authorities require in-house testing of vehicles at council garages, this adds significant extra cost to the processing of a licence that is then recovered through the fee, in Powys we don't currently carry out in-house garage checks, we rely on a recent MOT hence the higher vehicle licence fees charged by other authorities.

| Fees all in £'s | Driver 3 year | Operator | Private Hire Vehicle | Hackney Carriage |
|---------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Blaenau Gwent | 251 | 324 | 239 | 239 |
| Carmarthenshire | 137 | 639 | 147 | 148 |
| Ceredigion | 330 | | 166 | 171 |
| Denbighshire | 270 | 420 | 200 | 200 |
| Herefordshire | 276 | 306 | 321 | 321 |
| Merthyr Tydfil | 272 | 115 | 154 | 154 |
| Monmouth | 221 | 837 | 189 | 196 |
| Neath Port Talbot | 282 | 650 | 275 | 275 |
| Rhondda Cynon Taff | 138 | 468 | 276 | 276 |
| Shropshire | 190 | 319 | 188 | 175 |
| Torfaen | 365 | 742 | 203 | 203 |

| | | | | |
|----------------|-----|-----|-----|--------|
| Wrexham | 220 | 550 | 201 | 175.50 |
|----------------|-----|-----|-----|--------|

3. Advice

- 3.1 Fees need to be reviewed periodically to ensure that full cost recovery is achieved, if fees are not reviewed then the fees may not achieve full cost recovery. The All-Wales tool kit was devised to enable us to establish a fee. The fees proposed have been set using this toolkit in consultation with our finance team and are therefore recommended for approval.

4. Resource Implications

- 4.1 The costs for advertising the fees and the officer work in relation to determination of costs and calculating the fees, production of this report and presenting to committee will be recovered in the next fee review (to determine 2025/26 fees) in the same way that costs and officer work to determine fees for 23/24 (this time last year) are captured in this review.
- 4.2 The Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer) notes the report and can support the recommendation.

5 Legal implications

- 5.1 The setting of fees is governed by The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. It only permits cost recovery for administering, controlling, and supervising the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing regime. Fees cannot be routinely uplifted; they must be transparent and can be subject to legal challenge. Compliant fees are based on actual costs.
- 5.2 The Head of Legal Services and the Monitoring Officer has commented as follows: “ I note the legal advice and support the recommendation.

6. Data Protection

- 6.1 There are no implications for processing of personal data in the consideration or approval of this report.

7. Comment from local member(s)

- 7.1 N/A fees are Powys wide.

8. Impact Assessment

Not considered necessary, this is a routine annual review to ensure cost recovery and compliant taxi licence fees.

8. Recommendation

- 8.1 That taxi fees for 2024/25 are approved to go out for consultation in the local press in line with statutory requirements and if not objected to will be in place for 1st April 2024. Any objections to the fees will come back to this committee for consideration.

| | |
|---------------------|---------------|
| Contact Officer: | Natalie Jones |
| Tel: | |
| Email: | |
| Head of Service: | Gwilym Davies |
| Corporate Director: | |