



Complete Agenda

Democratic Services
Swyddfa'r Cyngor
CAERNARFON
Gwynedd
LL55 1SH

Meeting

GENERAL LICENSING COMMITTEE

Date and Time

10.00 am, MONDAY, 5TH DECEMBER, 2022

Location

Virtual Meeting

* For public access to the meeting, please contact us*

Contact Point

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(DISTRIBUTED Friday, 25 November 2022)

GENERAL LICENSING COMMITTEE

MEMBERSHIP (15)

Plaid Cymru (10)

Councillors

Alan Jones Evans
Gareth Tudor Jones
Edgar Wyn Owen
Rheinallt Puw
Huw Rowlands

Annwen Hughes
Linda Ann Jones
Gwynfor Owen
Arwyn Herald Roberts
Elfed Williams

Independent (5)

Councillors

Gareth Williams
Eryl Jones-Williams
John Brynmor Hughes

Angela Russell
Anwen J. Davies

Ex-officio Members

Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council

A G E N D A

1. APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

To receive any declaration of personal interest.

3. URGENT ITEMS

To note any items that are a matter of urgency in the view of the Chairman for consideration.

4. MINUTES

4 - 6

The Chairman shall propose that the minutes of the meeting of this Committee, held on 24th October 2022 be signed as a true record.

5. GENERAL LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES

7 - 10

To submit, for information, minutes of the General Licensing Sub-committee meeting held on the following date –

- a) 4th October 2022

6. PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON THE MAXIMUM HACKNEY CARRIAGE TAXI FARES - FOR DECISION

11 - 25

To approve a proposal to increase the maximum taxi fares and consider representation following public consultation on raising the maximum fares

Agenda Item 4

GENERAL LICENSING COMMITTEE 24-10-22

Present: **Chair** **Cllr. Annwen Hughes**
 Vice-chair **Cllr. Elfed Williams**

Councillors: Anwen Davies, John Brynmor Hughes, Eryl Jones-Williams, Gareth Tudor Jones, Linda Ann Jones, Edgar Wyn Owen, Gwynfor Owen, Rheinallt Puw, Huw Rowlands, Angela Russell and Gareth Williams

Officers: Iwan Evans (Head of Legal Section), Gareth Jones (Assistant Head of Planning and the Environment) and Lowri Haf Evans (Democracy Services Officer)

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillor Arwyn Herald Roberts

2. **DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST**

No declarations of personal interest were received from any members present.

3. **URGENT ITEMS**

None to note

4. **MINUTES**

The Chair signed the minutes of a meeting of this Committee that took place on 27 June 2022 as a true record.

5. **MINUTES OF THE LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEES**

Accepted, for information, the minutes of the General Licensing Sub-Committees held on 27 June 2022 and 15 July 2022

1. **MAXIMUM HACKNEY CARRIAGE TAXI FARES**

- a) A report was submitted by the Assistant Head of Planning and the Environment which responded to a request from the industry in Gwynedd to change the maximum fare.

In accordance with The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 that places regulation duties on the Licensing Authority in relation to operating a maximum fare the public can be charged when travelling in hackney vehicles within the County, it is required that any request to change the maximum fare charged is submitted by the industry. It was confirmed that 5 recent requests had been received from the taxi company owners to review the fares and that these fares were for hackney vehicles only and not private vehicles. It was added that the Act allowed the

provision of a price table together with the statutory requirement to use a taxi meter as a mechanism to regulate the fares and protect the interests of the public.

It was noted that a successful application to increase the maximum fare had been received in 2019, after 9 years of the maximum fare staying the same, and there had been no change since then. It was added that the increase from £5 to £6 for the first two miles of a taxi journey in 2019 had been a substantial increase that reflected the average inflation costs for the period.

Reference was made to those factors that had affected taxi businesses recently (lockdown period over covid 19, a significant increase in fuel costs together with a significant increase in inflation) noting that these had been factors that affected everyone. The importance of evaluating the impact of the current situation was noted, ensuring fairness for the industry and taxi users.

Reference was made to the Licensing Authority's proposal and recommendations to increase some fares compared to the current rates and it was reported that there would be a period of consultation on the proposal following the Committee's decision. It was added that the proposal would need to be renegotiated if objections were presented by the industry.

- b) During the ensuing discussion, the following observations were made by Members:
- That the offer was generous
 - That the offer for professional cleaning costs was a significant increase
 - Need to ensure that the fare is not too much for those who are dependent on the service
 - That some vulnerable people are confined to their homes due to cuts in bus services - need to ensure that those will not be affected by the increase for a taxi service.
 - Concern that raising the cost of transporting bags could impact local shops- suggestion that people would turn to online shopping
 - That a negative impact on consumers needs to be avoided
- c) In response to a comment that some companies avoided short journeys as they were too much bother and that such a situation had been a cause of concern for vulnerable individuals, the Assistant Head stated his wish for any such case to be referred to the Licensing Authority.

In response to a comment that trip fares vary significantly in some areas, it had been suggested that private companies were doing this but that any examples should be presented to the Licensing Authority so that the issue could be looked into. It was added that any situation of putting people at risk should be reported.

In response to a significant increase in the costs of professional 'valet' cleaning (£45 - £120), it had been noted that these costs reflected the true cost of cleaning a car. The comment was received that it would be necessary to consider each situation and define the relevance of each individual situation, but that the recommended fee was reasonable.

It was proposed and seconded to approve the proposal

RESOLVED:

- **To approve the proposal to increase the maximum fare in accordance with the recommendations**

- **To approve a 14 days public consultation**
- **Accept the need to renegotiate if there are objections to the proposal before taking action**

6. REVIEW OF SEX ESTABLISHMENTS LICENSING FEES

- a) A report by the Head of Environment Department was presented asking the Committee to approve fees for the licensing and regulation of sex establishments. Members were reminded that this Committee, in December 2021 adopted the provisions of Schedule 3 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 ("1982 Act") as amended by the Crime and Policing Act 2009 ("2009 Act") for the whole county.

It was explained that the provision allowed the Council to charge a fee for sex establishment licences which was sufficient to recover costs only. It was added that the fees had to be reasonable and proportionate to the cost of the licensing processes, which included administration, as well as carrying out compliance inspections. Fees could not be used to make a profit or act as an economic barrier to prevent certain types of businesses from operating in the area. It was noted that each Licensing Authority was expected to determine the level of fees in accordance with what was appropriate to ensure cost recovery; that each licensing authority's fees were different, and that the comparative fees of other authorities should not be used as a basis for determining a fee.

The Monitoring Officer confirmed that the Licensing Department had considered actual costs rather than estimated costs or assumed costs and that there had been no element of making a profit to the cost.

- b) During the ensuing discussion, the following observations were made by Members:
- There was a need to ensure that the costs were recovered
 - The fees needed to be reviewed annually

In response to a question regarding the definition of a sex shop, the Monitoring Officer stated that a sex shop was defined as an establishment which offered 30% or more of the shop's floor space for the display and sale of sexual goods / toys (beyond clothes only).

RESOLVED

- **To approve the setting of the fees which reflects the administration, compliance and processing of applications for sex establishment licences.**
- **To approve an annual review of those fees.**

The meeting commenced at 10.15 and concluded at 10:50

GENERAL LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE 04-10-2022

Present:

Councillors: Councillor Elfed Williams (Chair)
Councillors Linda Jones and Gwynfor Owen

Officers: Siôn Huws (Senior Solicitor), Gwenan Mai Roberts (Licensing Manager) and Lowri Haf Evans (Democracy Services Officer)

1. APOLOGIES

None to note

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received from any members present.

3. URGENT ITEMS

None to note

4. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was **RESOLVED** to exclude the press and public from the meeting during the discussion on the following items due to the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 12 and 13, Part 4, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. These paragraphs applied as the individuals in question were entitled to privacy and there was no overriding public interest that required the disclosure of personal information relating to those individuals, or their identities. Consequently, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

5. APPLICATION FOR A HACKNEY / PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER'S LICENCE – Mr A

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. He explained that the decision would be made in accordance with Gwynedd Council's licensing policy. It was noted that the purpose of the policy was to set guidelines for the criteria when considering the applicant's application, with the aim of protecting the public by ensuring that:

- The person is a fit and proper person
- The person does not pose a threat to the public
- The public are safeguarded from dishonest persons
- Children and young people are protected
- Vulnerable persons are safeguarded
- The public have confidence in using licensed vehicles.

The Licensing Officer presented a written report on an application received from Mr A for a hackney carriage/private hire driver's licence. The Sub-committee was requested to consider the application in accordance with the DBS record, the guidelines on criminal offences as well as the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency's report and medical certificate. The Licensing Authority recommended that the Sub-committee approved the application.

In response to the licensing officer's presentation, that stated the need for the applicant to expand why he did not acknowledge a drink driving offence on his application form for a licence, the licensing officer highlighted that this sentence in the report was an error and apologised for misleading the sub-committee.

The applicant was invited to expand on the application and provide information about the background of the convictions on his licence and his personal circumstances. He highlighted that they were historical convictions that had occurred during a difficult period in his teens. He highlighted that the last conviction occurred 37 years ago and since this conviction in 1985 that he had followed a career in the field of care for children and adults with learning disabilities.

RESOLVED that the applicant was a fit and proper person to be issued with a hackney/private hire vehicle driver's licence from Gwynedd Council.

In reaching its decision, the Sub-committee considered the following:

- The requirements of 'Gwynedd Council's Licensing Policy for Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles'
- The applicant's application form
- The Licensing Department's report, the DBS statement and the DVLA's report
- The applicant's verbal representations
- The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency's guidelines
- The applicant's medical form

Specific consideration was given to the following matters:

Conviction 1: In September 1980, the applicant was found guilty of theft from a shop, contrary to the Theft Act 1968 s.1. The applicant was 15 years old when the offence took place and he received a fine of £25.

Conviction 2: In August 1983, the applicant was found guilty of attempted theft from dwellings contrary to the Theft Act 1968 s.9 (1)(a). The applicant was 18 years old when the offence took place and he received a probation order for two years.

Conviction 3: In March 1984, the applicant was found guilty of two cases of theft from a shop, contrary to the Theft Act 1968 s.1; Breaching the Probation Order - Powers of Criminal Courts Act 1973 s.6. The applicant was 19 years old when the offences took place and he was detained in a detention centre for 21 days.

Conviction 4: In October 1984, the applicant was found guilty of three cases of theft from a shop, contrary to the Theft Act 1968 s.1 together with the possession of a Class A Drug contrary to the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 s5. (2). The applicant was 19 years old when the offence took place and he was detained in a youth detention centre for six months and forfeiture and disposal of the drugs.

Conviction 5: In November 1985, the applicant was found guilty of two cases of theft from a shop, contrary to the Theft Act 1968 s.1. The applicant was 20 years old when the offence took place and he received a probation order for two years with a condition to reside in a hostel for a year.

Paragraph 2.2 of the Council's Policy was considered, which states that a person with a conviction for a serious offence need not be automatically barred from obtaining a licence, but he will be expected to have been free of any conviction for an appropriate period as stated in the Policy, and to show evidence that he is a fit and proper person to hold a licence. The onus was on the applicant to prove that he was a fit and proper person. Paragraph 2.4 states that when an applicant has a conviction(s) or there are other related matter(s) to be considered in connection with that, the Council cannot review the merits of the conviction or other matter.

Paragraph 4.5 was considered which states that the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) (Amendment) Order 2002 allows the Sub-committee to take into account all convictions recorded against an applicant, whether spent or otherwise, under the 1974 Act.

Paragraph 8.0 of the Policy, which deals with dishonesty offences, was considered together with paragraph 8.1 which states that a serious view shall be taken of any conviction involving dishonesty. Paragraph 8.2 states that an application would normally be refused where the applicant has a conviction for a listed offence, and was convicted less than three years prior to the date of the application. It was noted that the list of offences included theft, amongst other offences.

Paragraph 9.1 states that a serious view will be taken of any drugs-related offences with paragraph 9.4 stating that an application where the applicant has a single conviction concerning the possession of drugs would usually be refused unless a period of three years had elapsed.

Paragraph 16.1 of the Policy deals with repeat offences. Firstly, it must be ensured that the convictions satisfy the policy guidelines individually, but that they together create a history of repeat offending that indicates a lack of respect for the welfare and property of others. The Policy states that ten years must have elapsed since the most recent conviction.

The Sub-committee concluded that the period of time noted in the Policy where applications should be refused due to such offences had elapsed - the last conviction was issued 37 years ago (which was far beyond the period of 3 years), and therefore none of the assumptions to refuse the application survived, and therefore there were no grounds to refuse the application.

The 'pattern' of repeat offending was also considered under paragraph 16.1 that states that the application should be refused if a period of 10 years hasn't passed since the last conviction. Although it was found that there was an obvious pattern of dishonesty (mainly theft), there were 37 years since the last conviction and no subsequent convictions had been received.

The applicant's explanation for his behaviour in his teens was considered and the Sub-committee congratulated him on managing to transform his life.

The Sub-committee determined in favour of approving the application and that the applicant was a fit and proper person to hold a hackney and private hire vehicle driver's licence.

The Solicitor reported that the decision would be confirmed formally by letter to the applicant.

The meeting commenced at 10:00am and concluded at 10:30am

COMMITTEE	GENERAL LICENSING COMMITTEE
DATE:	5 December 2022
TITLE:	PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON THE MAXIMUM HACKNEY CARRIAGE TAXI FARES - FOR DECISION
PURPOSE:	TO APPROVE A PROPOSAL TO INCREASE THE MAXIMUM TAXI FARES AND CONSIDER REPRESENTATION FOLLOWING PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON RAISING THE MAXIMUM FARES
AUTHOR:	HEAD OF ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT

1.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 1.1 The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 places regulation duties on the Licensing Authority in relation to operating a maximum fare the public can be charged when travelling in hackney vehicles within the County. The Act allows the provision of a table of fares, and this along with the statutory requirement to use a taxi meter, allows a mechanism to regulate the fares charged and to protect public interests.
- 1.2 It is required that any request to change the maximum fare charged is submitted by the industry. You will recall from the previous report submitted to this Committee on 24 October 2022 (see appendix), that 5 applications have been received from the industry to review the maximum fares that can be charged for journeys in hackney vehicles.
- 1.3 The maximum fare is not relevant to journeys in private hire vehicles booked in advance.
- 1.4 A successful application to increase the maximum fare was received in 2019, after 9 years where the maximum fare remained the same, and there has been no change since then. See Appendix 1 for a table of the current maximum fares. The maximum fares were increased for the first two miles of a taxi journey from £5 to £6 in 2019; which is a substantial increase that reflected the average inflation costs for the period. Other costs such as fuel costs had remained fairly stable over the same period.

2 FACTORS THAT AFFECT THE COSTS OF TAXI BUSINESSES

- 2.1 Many factors such as an increase in fuel costs, inflation, interest rates and a general increase in the cost of living, have created an unprecedented situation for all in recent times. Taxi companies are finding it very difficult, particularly after the incredibly difficult time experienced by businesses during the Covid pandemic lockdown periods.

3. THE INDUSTRY'S PROPOSAL FOR THE NEW MAXIMUM FARE FOR HACKNEY VEHICLE JOURNEYS

- 3.1 Many councils have recently been receiving specific proposals from the taxi industry to review and increase the maximum fare in various ways. There is a specific maximum rate for different elements; including a rate for a 1 mile journey and a general rate where a journey is 2 miles or more. The maximum fare that is currently implemented for journeys in hackney vehicles in the six counties of north Wales can be seen in the table below and it is noted if the maximum fares have been the subject of recent review.

Table - an equivalent fare for a 2 mile journey

	Current Gwynedd	The current average for the six counties	Anglesey	Conwy	Flintshire	Denbigh-shire	Wrexham
	£6.00	£5.97	£5.80	£6.60	£5.80	£6.00	£5.60
Review year	2019		2017	2022 Increase	2022 Remain the same	2022 Increase	2011

- 3.2 Many of the companies who submitted initial proposals, applied to increase the maximum fare for the first mile from £3.60 to £4.00. This proposal is understandable, as the costs of a vehicle and driver are higher for short journeys.
- 3.3 People who use taxis during the day for short journeys are more likely to be unable to use other modes of travel, and are more likely to be elderly or vulnerable. The opinion of the Licensing Authority is that increasing the maximum fare for short journeys during the day will have a negative impact on the population that is more likely to be deprived, and therefore will be impacted most by the current cost of living crisis.
- 3.6 With inflation and the cost of living so incredibly high at the moment, there is a need to consider alternative options to increasing the maximum fare so that we evaluate the impact of the existing situation on everyone, and to seek to be fair with the taxi industry and also taxi users.
- 3.5 Proposals were made to increase specific elements of the prices, based on some suggestions made by the industry, namely -
- increasing the price of taxi journeys after midnight
 - costs of transporting additional bags/cases
 - costs of cleaning a taxi when customers soiled the vehicle
 - introducing a higher tariff for journeys where there are between 5 and 8 passengers in a mini bus due to the additional costs of running a mini bus taxi; and these are usually 'optional' journeys.
- See the appendix to this report for full details of the proposals submitted.
- 3.4 It is important to note that a taxi company does not have to charge the maximum fare for hackney vehicle journeys. Many companies choose not to do so, and charge lower fares that are in accordance with what is considered to be a competitive rate.
- 4. THE DECISION OF THE GENERAL LICENSING COMMITTEE ON 24 OCTOBER 2022**
- 4.1 Having considered all factors that are important in the current economic context - the members of this Committee decided to accept the proposals to increase prices for the purposes of the public consultation, in line with the recommendation, namely -
- Keep the maximum fare for a one mile journey and a journey of two miles or more the same - because the fare currently charged is around the average when comparing with other Councils in north Wales, and increasing the basic rates for short journeys would disadvantage the most vulnerable in our society.

- Increase the maximum cost for transporting additional bags in the vehicle's boot from 30p per item to 50p per item.
- Increase the cost of cleaning valet from £45 to £120 to reflect current professional cleaning costs, and the time when the vehicle is not available for hire.
- Increase the cost rate to hire a taxi between 00:00 and 07:00 from 50% higher than the basic rate to 60% higher than the basic rate, from £4.50 to £4.80 per mile.
- Create a new tariff for journeys in a mini bus where there are between 5 and 8 passengers - to £6.60 for a journey of more than two miles.

A table comparing the proposed amendments with the current situation

Relevant maximum fare	Current rates	Recommendation
Where the journey is less than a mile	£3.60	No change
Where the journey is more than a mile, for the first mile	£3.00	No change
Create an additional tariff for journeys in a mini bus where there are between 5 and 8 passengers	£3.00	£3.30
Maximum cost for transporting additional bags in the vehicle's boot	30p	50p
Maximum cost of professional valet cleaning	£45	£120
For hiring the vehicle between midnight and 7:00am any day or at any time on a Bank Holiday, except for Christmas Day and New Year's Day.	50% in addition to the basic rate £4.50	60% in addition to the basic rate £4.80

5. THE RESULT OF THE CONSULTATION

- 5.1 In line with statutory arrangements, a consultation was undertaken on the above proposal for 14 days in a local paper; and the intention is for the new maximum fare to become operational from the date when the notice expires. Correspondence was also sent to the taxi industry before the consultation commenced.
- 5.2 The consultation ended on 17 November, and 5 objections were received with representations from industry representatives. Please see copies of the representations received in the appendix to the report.
- 5.3 As an objection to the proposal was received during the consultation period, the proposal has been referred back to you for careful consideration, before a final decision is made.
- 5.4 The representations and the grounds for objection varied, but in general, the following objections were raised -
- Objection to creating a different 'tariff' for journeys in a mini bus with between 5 and 8 passengers
 - That licence costs and the restrictions on the maximum fare for a journey in a hackney vehicle meant that taxi drivers worked for less than the national minimum wage if they relied on short, local journeys to earn a living - without increasing the maximum fare for the first two miles

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee considers the objections received, and makes a final decision based on those considerations.

COMMITTEE	GENERAL LICENSING COMMITTEE
DATE:	24 OCTOBER 2022
TITLE:	MAXIMUM HACKNEY CARRIAGE TAXI FARES
PURPOSE:	APPROVE A PROPOSAL BY THE INDUSTRY TO INCREASE THE MAXIMUM FARES
AUTHOR:	HEAD OF ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT

1.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 1.1 The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 places regulatory duties on the Licensing Authority in relation to operating a maximum fare the public can be charged when travelling in hackney vehicles within the County. The Act allows the provision of a fare chart, and this along with the statutory requirement to use a taxi meter, allows a mechanism to regulate the fares charged and to protect public interests.
- 1.2 It is required that any request to change the maximum fare charged is submitted by the industry. Five requests were recently received from Mr Trevor Roberts, Mr Colin Owen, Hughie John Jones, Gareth Evans and Siôn Edwards who are taxi company owners - to review the fares. A detailed proposal was sent by Mr Trevor Roberts only; and he submitted the proposal on his own behalf as well as for 10 other taxi companies. See the appendix to this report for full copies of the proposals and the correspondence received from the industry.
- 1.3 The maximum fare is not relevant to journeys in private hire vehicles that have been booked in advance.
- 1.4 A successful application to increase the maximum fare was received in 2019, after 9 years of the maximum fare staying the same, and there has been no change since then. See Appendix 1 for a table of the current maximum fares. The maximum fares were increased for the first two miles of a taxi journey from £5 to £6 in 2019; which is a substantial increase that reflected the average inflation costs for the period. Other costs such as fuel costs had remained fairly stable over the same period.

2 FACTORS THAT AFFECT THE COSTS OF TAXI BUSINESSES

- 2.1 Due to the negative impact the Covid Pandemic and the lockdown periods had on the taxi industry, you may remember that this Committee in 2021 voted not to increase the fees for taxi licences.
- 2.2 However, as you will all be aware we have been in an unprecedented position in respect of country's economy over the last 6 months. There has been a significant increase in fuel costs for various geo-political reasons (such as war in Ukraine and pressure on the fuel market coming out of a pandemic). The forecasts note that there is another significant increase on the horizon in gas and electricity costs that will affect everyone.
- 2.3 The increase in fuel costs and basic foods has been consistent throughout this year, with the situation in turn having a far-reaching effect on inflation levels, which has reached a rate of 10.1% in July 2022, and it is likely that the rate will go up again by the date this report is discussed by the Committee.

- 2.4 The most significant increase in inflation since 1982 has led to the Bank of England responding to attempt to control inflation by increasing interest rates.
- 2.5 The costs of appropriate insurance for licensed vehicles is high and of course there are annual costs attached with licensing a taxi vehicle and costs attached every three years in respect of drivers' licences.

3. THE INDUSTRY'S PROPOSAL FOR THE NEW MAXIMUM FARE FOR HACKNEY VEHICLE JOURNEYS

- 3.1 Many councils have recently been receiving specific proposals from the taxi industry to review and increase the maximum fare in various ways. There is a specific maximum rate for different elements; including a rate for a 1 mile journey and a general rate where a journey is 2 miles or more. The maximum fare currently charged for journeys in hackney vehicles in the six counties of North Wales can be seen in the table below and it is noted if the maximum fares have been the subject of recent review.

Table - an equivalent fare for a 2 mile journey

	Current Gwynedd	The current average for the six counties	Anglesey	Conwy	Flintshire	Denbighshire	Wrexham
	£6.00	£5.97	£5.80	£6.60	£5.80	£6.00	£5.60
Review year	2019		2017	2022 Increase	2022 Remain the same	2022 Increase	2011

- 3.2 Many of the companies who have submitted a proposal to increase the maximum fare suggest an increase in the rate for the first mile from £3.60 to £4.00. This proposal is understandable; as the costs of a vehicle and driver are higher for short journeys.
- 3.3 People who use taxis during the day for short journeys are more likely to be unable to use other modes of travel, and are more likely to be elderly or vulnerable. The opinion of the Licensing Authority is that increasing the maximum fare for short journeys during the day will have a negative impact on the population that is more likely to suffer deprivation, and therefore will be impacted most by the current cost of living crisis.
- 3.4 The Bank of England inflation rate costs were used to calculate the maximum fare in 2019; with an average inflation rate between 2011 and 2019 added to the maximum fare of a journey of two miles or more.
- 3.5 One taxi company makes the point that a company has to commit to pay the minimum wage rate to their drivers when accepting a school transport contract with the Council; and this is difficult under the current circumstances; without being able to charge more for taxi journeys.

- 3.6 With inflation and the cost of living so incredibly high at the moment; there is a need to consider alternative options to increasing the maximum fare so that we evaluate the impact of the existing situation on everyone; and to seek to be fair with the taxi industry and also taxi users.
- 3.7 Some who have submitted proposals from the industry also suggest that we should look carefully at the maximum fares in relation to the following matters -
- taxi journeys after midnight;
 - costs of transporting additional bags/cases
 - Costs of cleaning a taxi when customers soil the vehicle
 - Issue a higher tariff for journeys where there are between 5 and 8 passengers in a mini bus due to the additional costs of running a mini bus taxi; and these are usually 'optional' journeys.
 - Present a higher rate for the first mile and short journeys late at night.
- See the appendix to this report for full details of the proposals submitted.
- 3.4 It is important to note that a taxi company does not have to charge the maximum fare for hackney vehicle journeys. Many companies choose not to do so, and charge lower fares that are in accordance with what is considered to be a competitive rate.

4. THE LICENSING AUTHORITY'S PROPOSAL

- 4.1 Having considered all the factors that are important in the existing economic context - it is proposed that the fares are increased as follows -
- Keep the maximum fare for a one mile journey and a journey of two miles or more - the same - as the fare currently charged is around the average when comparing with other Councils in North Wales, and increasing the basic rates for short journeys would disadvantage the most needy in our society.
 - Increase the maximum cost for transporting additional bags in the vehicle's boot from 30p per item to 50p per item
 - Increase the cost of a cleaning valet from £45 to £120 to reflect current professional cleaning costs, and the time when the vehicle is not available for hire.
 - Increase the cost rate to hire a taxi between 00:00 and 07:00 50% higher than the basic rate to 60% higher than the basic rate of £4.50 to £4.80 per mile.
 - Create a new tariff for journeys in a mini bus where there are between 5 and 8 passengers - to £6.60 for a journey of more than two miles.

A table comparing the proposed amendments with the current situation

Relevant maximum fare	Current rates	Recommendation
where the journey is less than a mile	£3.60	No change
Where the journey is more than a mile, for the first mile	£3.00	No change
Create an additional tariff for journeys in a mini bus where there are between 5 and 8 passengers	£3.00	£3.30
Maximum cost for transporting additional bags in the vehicle's boot	30p	50p
Maximum cost of professional valet cleaning	£45	£120
For hiring the vehicle between midnight and 7:00am any day or at any time on a Bank Holiday, except for Christmas Day and New Year's Day.	50% in addition to the basic rate £4.50	60% in addition to the basic rate £4.80

5. CONSULTATION WITH THE INDUSTRY

- 4.1 If this Committee accepts the recommendation, we will hold a consultation on the proposal for 14 days in a local newspaper, with the intention of implementing the new maximum fare from the end date of the notice.
- 4.2 If any objections to the proposal come to hand during the consultation period, the recommendation will be referred back to this Committee to consider the basis of the objection, and it will not be implemented until a final decision is made by the Committee.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee approves the proposal to increase the maximum fare in accordance with the recommendations; or approve other options to increase the maximum fare, for journeys in the County's hackney vehicles.

Yn unol ag adran 65 o'r Deddf Llywodraeth Leol (Darpariaethau Amrywiol) 1976 – mae Cyngor Gwynedd yn cyhoeddi y bwriad i amrywio prisiau cludo ar gyfer cerbydau hacni fel a ganlyn:

In accordance with Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 – Gwynedd Council hereby publish a proposed variation in hackney carriage fares as follows:

CYNGOR GWYNEDD COUNCIL	
<p>PRISIAU CLUDO CERBYD HACNI/HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARE 2022 yn weithredol trwy ardal y Cyngor o 17/11/22 <i>in operation throughout the area of the Council as from the 17/11/22</i></p>	
Milltiroedd / Mileage	Cost
Oni fydd y pellter cyfan yn fwy nag un filltir <i>If the distance does not exceed one mile for the whole distance</i>	£3.60c/p
Os yw'r pellter yn fwy nag un filltir; am y filltir cyntaf <i>If the distance exceeds one mile; for the first mile</i>	£3.00
Am bob degfed rhan o filltir wedyn neu ran o hynny <i>For each subsequent one-tenth of a mile or uncompleted part thereof</i>	£0.30c/p
Amser Disgwyl / Waiting Time	
Am bob cyfnod o 1 munud neu ran o hynny <i>For each period of 1 minute or uncompleted part thereof</i>	£0.30c/p
Milltiroedd - bws mini sy'n cario 5 i 8 teithiwr Mileage – Minibus carrying 5 to 8 passengers	
Os yw'r pellter yn fwy nag un filltir; am y filltir cyntaf <i>If the distance exceeds one mile; for the first mile</i>	£3.30
Taliadau Ychwanegol / Extra Charges	
1. Am logi'r cerbyd rhwng hanner nos a 7:00y.b. unrhyw ddydd neu ar unrhyw amser ar Ŵyl y Banc, heblaw am Ddydd Nadolig a Dydd Calan <i>For hirings between midnight and 7:00a.m. on any day or at any time on Bank Holidays except Christmas Day and New Year's Day</i>	60% o'r cyfradd dal uchod 60% of the above rates
2. Dydd Nadolig a Dydd Calan <i>Christmas Day and New Year's Day</i>	100% o'r cyfradd dal uchod 100% of the above rates
3. Am bob cês a bag yn ychwanegol or un cês a gludir to allan i'r caban teithwyr <i>For each article of luggage in excess of one case conveyed outside the passenger compartment of the carriage</i>	£0.50c/p
4. Am bob person yn fwy nag un, am y cyfan o'r daith <i>For each person in excess of one of the whole journey</i>	£0.40c/p
5. Am gludo anifeiliaid, h.y. Cwn a Cathod <i>Carriage of animals, i.e. Dogs and Cats</i>	£1.20c/p
Nodir: Fod dim tal i'w godi am gludo Ci Tywys Note: No Charge shall be made for the carriage of Guide Dogs	£0
6. Baeuddu'r cerbyd <i>Soiling the vehicle</i>	£120
Cyngor Gwynedd Council Swyddfeydd y Cyngor/Council Offices Stryd y Jêl/Shirehall Street Caernarfon Gwynedd LL55 1SH	Dafydd Wyn Williams Pennaeth Adran Amgylchedd/Head of Environment Department Gwasanaeth Gwarchod y Cyhoedd/Public Protection Services

Unrhyw wrthwynebiad i'r bwriad i'w wneud yn ysgrifenedig i Gyngor Gwynedd drwy e bost at trwyddedu@gwynedd.llyw.cymru erbyn **17/11/2022** (14 diwrnod ar ol cyhoeddiad) . Mae copi o'r rhybudd ar gael yn Swyddfeydd y Cyngor a gwefan y Cyngor www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru.

Any objections to the proposal must be made in writing to Gwynedd Council by e-mail to Licensing@gwynedd.llyw.cymru by the **17/11/2022** (14 days after publication). A copy of the notice is available at the Council Offices and the Council website for inspection at www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru.

CYNGOR GWYNEDD COUNCIL	
PRISIAU CLUDO CERBYD HACNI/HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARE yn weithredol trwy ardal y Cyngor o 9/9/2019 <i>in operation throughout the area of the Council as from 9/9/2019</i>	
	
Milltiroedd / Mileage	Cost
Oni fydd y pellter cyfan yn fwy nag un filltir <i>If the distance does not exceed one mile for the whole distance</i>	£3.60c/p
Os yw'r pellter yn fwy nag un filltir; am y filltir cyntaf <i>If the distance exceeds one mile; for the first mile</i>	£3.00
Am bob degfed rhan o filltir wedyn neu ran o hynny <i>For each subsequent one-tenth of a mile or uncompleted part thereof</i>	£0.30c/p
Amser Disgwyl / Waiting Time	
Am bob cyfnod o 1 munud neu ran o hynny <i>For each period of 1 minute or uncompleted part thereof</i>	£0.30c/p
Taliadau Ychwanegol / Extra Charges	
1. Am logi'r cerbyd rhwng hanner nos a 7:00y.b. unrhyw ddydd neu ar unrhyw amser ar Wyl y Banc, heblaw am Ddydd Nadolig a Dydd Calan <i>For hirings between midnight and 7:00a.m. on any day or at any time on Bank Holidays except Christmas Day and New Year's Day</i>	50% o'r cyfradd dal uchod 50% of the above rates
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4. Am bob person yn fwy nag un, am y cyfan o'r daith <i>For each person in excess of one of the whole journey</i>	£0.40c/p
5. Am gludo anifeiliaid, h.y. Cwn a Cathod <i>Carriage of animals, i.e. Dogs and Cats</i>	£1.20c/p
Nodir: Fod dim tal i'w godi am gludo Ci Tywys Note: No Charge shall be made for the carriage of Guide Dogs	£0
6. Baeuddu'r cerbyd <i>Soiling the vehicle</i>	£45
Cyngor Gwynedd Council Swyddfeydd y Cyngor/Council Offices Stryd y Jêl/Shirehall Street Caernarfon Gwynedd LL55 1SH	Dafydd Wyn Williams Pennaeth Adran Amgylchedd/Head of Environment Department Gwasanaeth Gwarchod y Cyhoedd/Public Protection Services

Oddi wrth: Trwyddedu <Trwyddedu@gwynedd.llyw.cymru>

Anfonwyd: Dydd Mawrth, 15 Tachwedd 2022 11:42

At: Gwenan Mai Roberts (AMG) <gwenanmairoberts@gwynedd.llyw.cymru>; Robert Arthur Taylor (AMG) <robertarthurtaylor@gwynedd.llyw.cymru>; Tomos Wyn Jones (AMG) <TomosWynJones@gwynedd.llyw.cymru>

Pwnc: FW: Ymgynghoriad Prisiau Tacsï 2022 Taxi Prices Consultation

From: Trev's Taxi <

Sent: 15 November 2022 11:34

To: Trwyddedu <Trwyddedu@gwynedd.llyw.cymru>

Subject: Ymgynghoriad Prisiau Tacsï 2022 Taxi Prices Consultation

Good Morning,

I write to express that **I do not agree** with your proposal for the rise in the taxi fares.

The truth is there is no rise - the minimum fare during the day still remains at £3.60.

This is a kick in the teeth to all Gwynedd taxi drivers who have suffered with minimal work during COVID-19 and continued to work on the front line putting their lives at risk during the pandemic.

The cost-of-living crisis is getting worse and worse each passing month. The current inflation level is above 10%. There are talks this week that the minimum wage will increase by around 10% to £10.40 per hour but your proposal does not take this into consideration. There will also be an increase to universal credit payments and pension payments yet Gwynedd taxi drivers are expected to work for less than minimum wage.

We also need to feed our families; many drivers are already looking for other work and are ready to leave the industry. This will have a detrimental effect on the number of drivers available to perform the daily school contracts carrying the county's vulnerable children to and from school. It will also have an effect on people trying to get home after a night out.

It is the responsibility and duty of Gwynedd Council to ensure that we are not pushed into poverty and all drivers are able to make at least the minimum wage.

When tendering on school contracts with Gwynedd Council we must agree to the ethical employment law. This means that all drivers and passenger supervisors performing the work are paid at least the minimum wage. When the cost-of-living crisis started and the cost of fuel increased quickly, Gwynedd Council Education department awarded a 20% increase to all existing contracts in order for ethical employment to be maintained.

Can someone who makes the decisions on how much the taxi fares are explain to me and other taxi drivers in Gwynedd how drivers are meant to make minimum wage after vehicle running costs?

I will give you a breakdown of the current rate.

Minimum Fare	£3.60
Less VAT	-£0.60
	£3.00
Vehicle running costs per mile £0.45. Less 1 mile paid and 1 mile returning to the rank	- £0.90
Balance	£2.10
Balance of fare after costs	£1.05 each between the driver and the taxi company.

In order for a driver to make the new minimum wage of £10.40 per hour the driver would need to make 10 short journeys within the hour. This would be a new customer every 6 minutes for every hour they work. It is not possible to make 10 short journeys every hour. This will be made even more difficult next year when the speed limits are reduced to 20 miles per hour in built up areas.

I propose the minimum fare is increased to £4.00.

We had to wait 8 years for the last rate increase in Gwynedd, please do not make us wait any longer.

Trevor Roberts
Trev's Taxis Ltd
Mobile [REDACTED]

Oddi wrth: Trefor Pritchard [REDACTED]
Anfonwyd: Dydd Llun, 31 Hydref 2022 12:30
At: Trwyddedu <Trwyddedu@gwynedd.llyw.cymru>
Pwnc: Objection to the new tariff fees

Why is there a different charge for minibuses of 5 to 8 persons?

- 1: The operators have chosen to use minibuses, as they can convey more passengers. Which they can charge extra person, as with cars.
- 2: Can operators of mpv/6 seaters charge more for their vehicles, as like minibuses.
- 3: What is there to prevent an operator of those vehicles, charging the new rate. When they have 4 or less passengers?

This system is open to abuse, despite potential claims that it won't be. Those operators who are requesting an increase for those vehicles, will still do the " Llanberis to Pen y Pass" type run for £20 or so, as it is claimed they do now. Or even uncut other operators to get a fare.

It was agreed back in 2010(i think) that, the only way to get minibus was for it to be 3years or younger for first registering as a taxi. I have not seen anything in statue stating otherwise, superseding this requirement.

Some were given plates because they claimed, that there NO TAXIS OPERATING IN THEIR AREA, ESPECIALLY LATE NIGHT. ie, Groeslon, Nefyn, Llanrug and the like. But as soon as they got their vehicles, they were then operating out of the main towns, and not the place they requested for. The councillors claimed in the press, that they were unaware of any cherry picking of fares. But this has been reported many times to licencing, and requested that the Inspectors carry out spot checks/stingers. Maybe the councillors could try the taxis, to learn how they operator. As long as the driver does not know the "Stinger person", then they will be treated as a member of the public. The whole business is rife with wrong doers, who go about completely unchecked.

Trefor Pritchard

Oddi wrth: Trwyddedu <Trwyddedu@gwynedd.llyw.cymru>

Anfonwyd: Dydd Gwener, 11 Tachwedd 2022 10:53

At: Robert Arthur Taylor (AMG) <robertarthurtaylor@gwynedd.llyw.cymru>; Gwenan Mai Roberts (AMG) <gwenanmairoberts@gwynedd.llyw.cymru>; Tomos Wyn Jones (AMG) <TomosWynJones@gwynedd.llyw.cymru>

Pwnc: FW: Objection

Pwysigrwydd/Importance: Uchel

From: Ken Evans >

Sent: 11 November 2022 10:52

To: Trwyddedu <Trwyddedu@gwynedd.llyw.cymru>

Subject: Objection

To whom it may concern;

I object to the new taxi prices as cars should have the same increase in price as a mini bus as the fuel price increase effects us all.

The starting price should go up from £3.60 to £4 again due to fuel cost and cost of living gone up (tyres, maintenance cost etc)

Kind regards

Ken Evans

Oddi wrth: [REDACTED]

Anfonwyd: Dydd Llun, 31 Hydref 2022 14:40

At: Gwarchod y Cyhoedd <MA2013@gwynedd.llyw.cymru>

Pwnc: Re: Ymgynghoriad Prisiau Tacsï 2022 Taxi Prices Consultation

There should not be a different tariff on an eight seater vehicle for carrying more people than 5 or more they can already charge 40 pence per head most vehicle of this size are used for school contracts and booking witch they already charge more for or start on tariff 2 before 12 o'clock midnight they should stay as they are .

Oddi wrth: Chris O'Neal [REDACTED]
Anfonwyd: Dydd Llun, 31 Hydref 2022 12:32
At: Trwyddedu <Trwyddedu@gwynedd.llyw.cymru>
Pwnc: Objection to proposal

Dear Licensing Section.

We as operators of approx 30 vehicles in your county wish to oppose the new proposal.

We firmly believe these proposed changes have been considered with no consultation with the trade or the service users and do not show a reflection of what the trade wants or needs.

May I point out that increasing the nightly rate to 60% will force more drivers to shift from day working to night working and currently the need for taxi services in the day time is great especially in and around the peak times etc.

What would be good is a proper consultation with the trade and whilst you're at it consideration should be given to making it compulsory that all vehicles take card payments.

Regards
Chris

The Premier Group North Wales