GENERAL LICENSING COMMITTEE 22/06/26

Attendance:

Councillors: Alan Jones Evans, Gwilym Evans, Annwen Hughes, Edgar Wyn Owen, Huw Rowlands, Elfed Williams, Gwynfor Owen, Arwyn Herald Roberts, Angela Russell, Gareth Williams and Hefin Underwood.

Officers: Gwenan Mai Roberts (Licensing Manager), Andrew Parry (Trading Standards and Licensing Manager), Nia Grisdale (Legal Services Manager) and Lowri Haf Evans (Democracy Services Officer).

1. ELECT CHAIR

It was proposed and seconded to re-elect Councillor Gwynfor Owen as Chair for 2026/27.

RESOLVED TO RE-ELECT COUNCILLOR GWYNFOR OWEN AS CHAIR FOR 2026/27

2. ELECT VICE CHAIR

It was proposed and seconded to re-elect Councillor Arwyn Herald Roberts as Vice-chair for 2026/27.

It was proposed to elect Councillor Gareth Williams as Vice-chair for 2026/27. It was not seconded.

RESOLVED TO RE-ELECT COUNCILLOR ARWYN HERALD ROBERTS AS VICE-CHAIR FOR 2026/27

3. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Gareth Tudor Jones, Meryl Roberts and John Brynmor Hughes.

Councillor Anwen Davies was having problems with her technology equipment and therefore was unable to attend the meeting.

4. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received from any members present

5. URGENT ITEMS

None to note

6. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of a meeting of the committee held on 9 March 2026 as a true record.

7. GENERAL LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES

The minutes of the Central Licensing Sub-committee held on 10-02-2026 were submitted and accepted for information.

8. HACKNEY CARRIAGE TAXI FARES

A report was submitted by the Head of the Environment Department stating that an application had been received from three taxi company owners in Gwynedd for the Licensing Authority to review maximum hackney carriage taxi fares. Members were reminded that it was required that any request to change the maximum fare should be submitted by the industry. It was reported that an application to increase the maximum fare had been approved in 2019 and later in 2022, but there had been no change since then. An increase was seen in the maximum fare for the first two miles of a trip, but there had been no increase in the basic rates.

Reference was made to those factors affecting taxi fares, such as an increase in national insurance costs and an increase in the minimum wage rate over recent years, which had undermined the ability of small businesses such as taxi companies to make a profit. In addition, the country's economic situation over the past few months had seen a significant increase in fuel costs, with projections that fuel costs would not decrease in the near future, and another increase in gas and electricity costs on the horizon. It was noted that the rate of inflation remained above the Government's 2% target and that while the rate of inflation had fallen recently, the increase in fuel costs and geopolitical factors in the Middle East meant that inflation and basic food costs were likely to rise over the coming months.

It was noted that appropriate insurance costs for licensed vehicles were high, with annual costs attached to licensing a taxi vehicle, and costs every three years associated with drivers' licences.

Prices in other councils across north Wales were referred to, highlighting a variation in the maximum fare rate from £3.50 to £4.00. It was confirmed that a number of companies that had submitted an application to increase the maximum fare were proposing to increase the rate for the first mile from £3.60 to £4.00. Although an application was made to raise the rate in 2022, the request was rejected due to concern that elderly or vulnerable people, who were unable to use other modes of travel, would be affected by this additional increase together with an increase in the cost of living. It was also noted that with rising wage and vehicle maintenance costs, taxi companies were reporting that the costs were no longer being recouped by charging £3.60 for the first mile.

The Licensing Authority's recommendation, taking into account all the factors that were important to the current economic context, was to propose that the fares be increased as follows -

- To increase the maximum fare for a one-mile journey from £3.60 to £4.00 to be consistent with several other councils and acknowledge the increase in the costs of running a taxi.

- To increase the operational hours of the late-night tariff to be operational between 21:00 and 07:00, instead of being operational from 00:00 midnight.
- To reduce the cost rate of late-night tariff journeys from being 60% higher than the basic rate back to being 50% higher than the basic rate to correspond generally with other councils.

It was reported that if the Committee accepted the recommendation, the Licensing Authority would hold a consultation on the recommendation for 14 days, with the intention that the new maximum fare would be effective from the day the notice expires. Should an objection to the proposal be received during the consultation period, the recommendation would be referred back to the Committee to consider the grounds for the objection. There would be no adjustment to the maximum fare until there was a final decision by the Committee.

b) Observations arising from the ensuing discussion:

- That this was only a change in the first mile
- That the basic rate had not increased since 2019

In response to a question as to whether the increase would have an impact on school taxi transport, it was noted that the schools transport agreement was funded differently, with prices established in accordance with relevant factors – school agreements were usually generously funded and contributed to factors such as vehicle maintenance. It was confirmed, therefore, that the recommendation would not have an impact on school agreements – only an increase in hackney carriage fares was being proposed here.

In response to a question about proposing that the late-night tariff be operational from 21:00 instead of 00:00 and what was the rationale for proposing this time, it was noted that the industry had proposed 21:00. It was reported that the Committee had the freedom to accept this time or offer a different time. It was considered that operating from 21:00 would be more profitable for the industry as it would potentially encourage more companies to operate in the evenings.

It was proposed and seconded to accept the Licensing Authority's recommendation.

An amendment was proposed and seconded to accept the recommendation of the Licensing Authority, but for the late-night tariff to be effective from 22:00 as 21:00 seemed too early.

RESOLVED:

- **To increase the maximum fare for a one-mile journey from £3.60 to £4.00 to be consistent with several other councils and acknowledge the increase in the costs of running a taxi.**
- **To increase the operational hours of the late-night tariff to be operational from 22:00 until 07:00, instead of being operational from 00:00 midnight.**
- **To reduce the cost rate of late-night tariff journeys from being 60% higher than the basic rate back to being 50% higher than the basic rate to correspond generally with other councils.**
- **To instruct the Licensing Authority to proceed with a statutory public consultation on the proposals.**

The meeting commenced at 10.10 am and concluded at 10.30 am

CHAIRMAN