

RECORD OF DECISION MADE UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

Any interest to declare / or conflict and any dispensation granted: **not applicable**

SERVICE DIRECTORATE: HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

1. DECISION TAKEN

To consider the results of a public consultation and set the council's taxi fare tariff for all taxi journeys starting and ending in North Hertfordshire. With effect from 1 April 2025, the new tariff will be:

TARIFF 1 (Standard Tariff)

£4.00 for the first **1,000** yards or part thereof

£0.10 after the first **1,000** yards, for every **60** yards or part thereof, OR for each **20** seconds or part thereof (waiting time)

TARIFF 2

For hirings **commencing between** midnight and 6.00am, all day Sunday, and all day Bank/Publicly-declared Holidays

£6.00 for the first **1,000** yards or part thereof

£0.15 after the first **1,000** yards, for every **60** yards or part thereof, OR for each **20** seconds or part thereof (waiting time)

CHRISTMAS DAY SURCHARGE

For hirings **commencing on** Christmas Day **only**, a surcharge of 100% will be applied to Tariff 1 (i.e. double standard tariff)

ADDITIONAL CHARGES

£75.00 for spoiling the inside of the taxi (maximum charge to cover cleaning)

2. DECISION TAKER

Cllr Dave Winstanley, Executive Member for Housing and Environmental Health

3. DATE DECISION TAKEN

12 March 2025

4. REASON FOR DECISION

4.1 The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 allows local authorities to regulate the maximum tariff charged by taxis. Whilst there is no fixed period for a tariff to remain in effect, the council has historically reviewed its tariff annually.

4.2 The adopted taxi tariff is as advertised during the consultation period.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 No other options were considered as the decision is supported by the trade association representing the drivers and there was no public objection to the proposal.

6. CONSULTATION (INCLUDING THE EFFECT ON STAKEHOLDERS, PARTNERS AND THE PUBLIC)

- 6.1 The consultation process is defined within section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 and has been followed.
- 6.2 Prior to the formal consultation process, the Executive Member met with the trade association and invited them to submit their proposal for 2025/26.
- 6.3 Having considered the National Fare League Tables, cost of motoring statistics from the AA/RAC, and the impact on residents, the Executive Member made a small adjustment to shorter fare costs to protect the most vulnerable in society who are reliant on taxis for essential short journeys.
- 6.4 In accordance with the prescribed process, the proposal was advertised in The Comet and The Royston Crow setting out how representations could be made and the process that would be followed.

7. FORWARD PLAN

- 7.1 This decision is not a key Executive decision and has therefore not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 It has always been the council's position that the taxi tariff should be suitably placed in the National League Tables of Fares to reflect the high standards of vehicles and drivers required by the council and the local economic position compared to other areas of the country. Consideration is also given to ensuring that the position in the National Tables is comparable to other Hertfordshire authorities and neighbouring authorities.
- 8.2 North Herts have ordinarily been positioned in the top quartile in the fares league tables. The new tariff will position North Herts at joint 50th out of 337 authorities in the league tables, however many adjoining authorities have not yet implemented a 2025 increase.
- 8.3 Drivers have stated that there was a need for an increase in the initial flag rate to ensure that shorter journeys, that form a significant portion of business, receive a reasonable increase.
- 8.4 This has to be balanced against ensuring that any increase will not preclude the most vulnerable from accessing taxis for essential short journeys such as shopping, medical appointments, or socialisation.
- 8.5 Whilst there were a small number of drivers opposed to the increase, the fares set by the Council are the maximum charge. A driver may choose not to amend their meter to the new increased rate and still charge last year's rate.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 sets out the prescribed process to be followed when amending a taxi tariff.
- 9.2 The power to set fares is an executive decision however has not been reserved for the Cabinet and has been delegated to the Executive Member – Housing and Environmental Health under section 14.6.8 (b) (viii) of the Constitution.

- 9.3 The Service Director – Housing and Environmental Health has been consulted throughout the process, and endorsed the decision.
- 9.4 The Council should give adequate weight to the consultation responses as required by section 65 (4) of the 1976 Act.
- 9.5 Best Practice Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Guidance issued by the Department for Transport states the fares set should be clear, understandable and balance the needs to the travelling public as against the ability for the trade to earn a living. The decision taken reflects those requirements.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Licensing case law has clarified the legislative position that councils can recover their reasonable costs of administration and enforcement through licensing fees therefore there is no cost to the Council from this consultation process.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There is a risk that the trade challenge the decision of the council through the courts which can only be by way of Judicial Review. The decision would have to be shown to be unlawful or unreasonable for a challenge to be successful. The correct legal process has been followed, and the decision is reasonable based on all available evidence provided by officers and by the trade.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 12.2 There are no equalities implications as a result of this decision.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 The Social Value Act and “go local” policy do not apply to this decision.

14. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1. There are no known Environmental impacts or requirements that apply to this decision.

15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 15.1 There are no additional resourcing implications as a result of this decision.

16. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 16.1 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976
- 16.2 The National League Tables of Taxi Fares

NOTIFICATION DATE

Date notified to Members in MIS:	14 March 2025
Last date for call-in:	21 March 2025
Decision to take effect (if not called-in):	1 April 2025

Signature of Officer Consulted:



Date: 12/03/2025



Signature of Decision Taker:

Please Note

That unless urgency provisions apply EXECUTIVE decisions cannot be implemented until 5 clear working days have elapsed after the decision has been taken to allow for scrutiny call-in.