

**MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
REPORT**

SUBJECT:	Green Fleet Taxi Pilot
DIRECTORATE:	Social Care, Safeguarding and Health
MEETING:	Licensing and Regulatory Committee
Date to be considered:	18th May 2021
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:	All Wards

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To consider amendments to the Taxi and Private Hire Policy and Conditions 2020 in order to permit the Welsh Government Green Fleet Pilot scheme.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 To permit the usage of the livery for Welsh Government and Cardiff Capital Region on vehicle(s) as part of the Green Fleet Pilot scheme.
- 2.2 To permit the change of the hackney carriage roof light to state 'taxi' forward facing on vehicle(s) as part of the Green Fleet Pilot scheme.

3. KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 The Welsh Government are introducing a Green Fleet Pilot scheme in three areas across Wales, which includes the authorities within the Cardiff Capital Region, which in turn includes Monmouthshire County Council. The scheme will operate a 'try before you buy' initiative, allowing taxi drivers to try a fully electric, wheelchair accessible vehicle for 30 days free of charge. The trial will include free electric charging, insurance, vehicle licensing and breakdown cover funded by Welsh Government.
- 3.2 On completion of the trial, drivers will be asked to complete an evaluation survey and be provided with information on schemes/assistance available for long term ownership/lease of zero-emission vehicles.
- 3.3 The pilot is intended to assist Welsh Government in achieving its target of decarbonising the taxi fleet entirely by 2028. It is hoped it will help taxi drivers to realise the financial and environmental benefits of zero-emission vehicles and, in turn, contribute to the transition from diesel/petrol vehicles to zero emission vehicles. The scheme will run for 2-3 years.
- 3.4 The scheme will use vehicle(s) of hackney carriage design and will therefore be used for hackney carriage vehicles and not private hire vehicles, in accordance with Section 48 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. This Section states a private hire vehicle cannot be of such a design and appearance as to lead any person to believe that the vehicle is a hackney carriage. However, use of the vehicle will be open to those currently licensed for private hire purposes, as well as those licensed for hackney carriage, with this Authority. This will be permissible as all drivers have dual purpose licences which allows them to drive both private hire and hackney carriage vehicles.
- 3.5 A full livery will be requested for the hackney carriages involved in this pilot scheme to ensure the initiative is advertised across the area and to encourage others to be part of the scheme. A copy of the requested advertisement is detailed

in Appendix A. Appendix K of the Monmouthshire County Council's Taxi and Private Hire Policy and Conditions 2020 refers to advertisement and livery of vehicles licensed with this Authority, and is attached as Appendix B to this report. This report requests Members permit the livery on the body work pertaining to Welsh Government (WG) and Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) be displayed on the vehicles for the purposes of the duration of the 'try before you buy initiative.'

- 3.6 Monmouthshire's policy referred to in 3.5 above also requires the following -
"(Hackney Carriages only) A sign mounted on the roof, or just above the windscreen so as to be clearly visible at all times when the vehicle is available for hire. The sign shall have the word "Tacsi" facing toward the front of the vehicle and "Taxi" facing towards the rear of the vehicle and shall be illuminated when plying for hire."

This report also request that Members approve the Green Scheme Vehicle(s) be permitted to have the wording 'Taxi' forward facing for the duration of the initiative. The Welsh word 'Tacsi' is on the main body of the livery of the vehicle(s) that will be trialled.

4 REASONS

- 4.1 The Welsh Government initiative supports the drive for zero emission by tailpipe by 2028, and the change to the existing vehicle specification is considered relatively minor. Given that the livery relates to only Welsh Government and Cardiff Capital Region logos, the green nature of the initiative and there is Welsh signage of 'Tacsi' albeit not on the roof light, Members are therefore encouraged to approve the change for the trial period.
- 4.2 Under Section 47 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 the Council may impose such conditions upon hackney carriage licences as it may consider reasonably necessary.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 There are no financial implications.

6. WELLBEING AND FUTURE GENERATIONS IMPLICATIONS:

- 6.1 Amending the current Monmouthshire Taxi and Private Hire Policy and Condition 2020 to enable trial of electric vehicles will generally have a positive impact. It will increase the amount of licensed wheelchair accessible vehicles available in the County, and encourage take up of zero emission vehicles in support of Welsh Governments long term de-carbonisation strategy, and signage on the vehicle is bilingual in English and Welsh. An evaluation has been provided in Appendix C.

7. CONSULTEES:

Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Operators licensed by Monmouthshire County Council have been informed of the proposal to have a trial of Green Fleet Vehicles, and were invited to a webinar organised by Welsh Government on 29th March 2021.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None

9. AUTHOR:

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APPENDIX B

APPENDIX K

HACKNEY CARRIAGE/PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE ADVERTISING

1. A wheelchair accessible sign may be displayed on a wheelchair accessible vehicle without authorisation but must not exceed 300mm x 210mm in size.
2. The advertisement of the Hackney Carriage/Private Hire company name and details, which the licence refers to for that vehicle can be displayed without authorisation, providing they follow the basic principles below.
3. The basic principles for approval of all advertising on or within the vehicles are:
 - All advertising shall be uncluttered so as not to cause confusion.
 - Approval will not be given for advertising that may obstruct the windows of the vehicle.
 - There shall be no additional advertising on or within a vehicle such as an operator advertising for drivers.
4. In no circumstances, (other than those not requiring authorisation mentioned in items 1 and 2 above) shall advertising be placed on or within a vehicle without prior written approval from the LA.
5. Advertising approval is not transferable between vehicles and operators. Where a vehicle is changed new approval must be obtained and all decisions will be based on the criteria laid down in this Policy.
6. Advertising authorisations shall be kept in the vehicle at all times and available upon request by an authorised officer.
7. A screen displaying scrolling or moving advertisements may be securely fitted within the vehicle, provided that the screen shall not be within the vision of the driver of the vehicle, and the Council has previously approved in writing the content of any material shown. A notice must be fitted within view of the rear seat passengers stating that the screen will be switched off at the request of the passenger.
8. All advertisement must conform with the standards of the Advertising Standards Council in all matters relating to good taste, both in content and appearance and must not relate to matters concerning tobacco, alcohol or matters of a sexual nature.