

Impact Assessment - First Stage

It is essential that all initiatives undergo a first stage impact assessment to identify relevance to equalities and the Welsh language as well as an evaluation of how the proposal has taken into account the sustainable development principle (the five ways of working); an incorrect assessment could ultimately be open to legal challenge.

The first stage is to carry out a short assessment to help determine the need to undertake a more in-depth analysis (the second stage).

Relevance will depend not only on the number of people/service users affected, but also the significance of the effect on them.

When completing the first step you must have regard to the following:

- Does the initiative relate to an area where important equality issues have been, or are likely to be, raised? (For example, funding for services to assist people who are victims of rape/sexual violence or individuals with particular care need; disabled people's access to public transport; the gender pay gap; racist or homophobic bullying in schools)
- Is there a significant potential for reducing inequalities, or improving outcomes? (For example, increasing recruitment opportunities for disabled people).
- Does the initiative relate to instances where opportunities to use the Welsh language are likely to be affected or where the language is likely to be treated less favourably? (For example, increase the number of Welsh speakers moving from/to a certain area; closing specific Welsh language services or put those services at risk services;
- Does the initiative relate to the improvement of economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being? To what extent does the initiative prevent things getting worse? (For example, funding for services to assist in cultural well-being; changes in policies that promote independence and/or assist carers)

1. Provide a description and summary of the initiative.

Identify which service area and directorate has responsibility for the initiative.

2. Identify who will be affected by the initiative.

If you answer **Yes** to service users, staff or wider community continue with the first stage of the assessment

If you answer **No** to service users, staff or wider community or **Yes** to 'Internal administrative process only', go to **Question 5 – sustainable development principle**.

3. Using relevant and appropriate information and data that is available to you think about what impact there could be on people who share protected characteristics; whether they are service users, staff or the wider community.

Some things to consider include:

- transport issues
- accessibility
- customer service
- cultural sensitivity
- financial implications
- loss of jobs

Definitions of impacts (either positive or negative):

- High – likely to be highly affected by the initiative
- Medium - likely to be affected in some way
- Low - likely to be affected by the initiative in a small way
- Don't know - the potential impact is unknown

You **must** provide reasons, and indicate what evidence you used, in coming to your decision.

4. Using relevant and appropriate information and data that is available, think about what impact there could be on opportunities to use the Welsh language and in treating the language no less favourably than English.

Definitions of impacts are the same as in **Question 3**.

The classification 'Don't Know' should be categorised as 'High Impact' in both questions 3 & 4.

5. Consider how the initiative has embraced the sustainable development principle in accordance with the Section 7c of the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015.

Give details of the initiative in relation to the 5 ways of working:

- **Long term** - how the initiative supports the long term well-being of people
- **Integration** - how the initiative impacts upon our wellbeing objectives
- **Involvement** - how people have been involved in developing the initiative
- **Collaboration** - how we have worked with other services/organisations to find shared sustainable solutions;
- **Prevention** - how the initiative will prevent problems occurring or getting worse

6. The most appropriate statement must be selected (and the relevant box ticked) based on the first stage of the assessment and an explanation of how you have arrived at this decision must be given.

In addition a summary of the how the initiative has embraced the sustainable development principle must also be included.

Where the first stage of the assessment indicates that a more in-depth analysis is required the second stage of the assessment will need to be completed and this will need to be started immediately.

A first stage assessment must be included as a background paper for all Cabinet/Cabinet Board/ Scrutiny Committee Reports.

Where the first stage assessment is completed by an accountable manager it must be signed off by a Head of Service/Director.

Impact Assessment - First Stage

1. Details of the initiative

Initiative description and summary: Hackney Carriage Maximum Permitted Fare Increase
Service Area: Legal Regulatory Services
Directorate: CeX

2. Does the initiative affect:

	Yes	No
Service users	✓	
Staff	✓	
Wider community	✓	
Internal administrative process only		✓

3. Does the initiative impact on people because of their:

	Yes	No	None/ Negligible	Don't Know	Impact H/M/L	Reasons for your decision (including evidence)/How might it impact?
Age	✓				M	<p>An increase to the maximum permitted fare for hackney carriages will lead to an increase in the amount it costs to hire a taxi in Neath Port Talbot. It will therefore affect any person that uses taxis, regardless of whether they have a protected characteristic.</p> <p>It is likely however that the most affected would be those that are the most heavily reliant on public transport; the elderly, disabled and potentially other groups such as i.e. parents with young children - The impact on these groups is marked as medium, not high, for several reasons:</p>
Disability	✓				M	

						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although it is proposed to increase the maximum permitted fare, it is not mandatory for all taxi firms to do so. Operators will sometimes charge less than the maximum fare, particularly where the individuals are taking regular journeys with the same operator. • Regular users of taxis who use this mode of transport for various reasons e.g. commuting to work, hospital appointments, shopping etc. will often have a private contract in place with a specific taxi company or driver and would have already agreed a fare. Officers are aware that this is common practice through discussions with the taxi association representatives and taxi operators. • Low cost community transport is provided by not for profit companies operating within Neath Port Talbot, designed to meet the needs of older people and people with disabilities. There are various organisations offering these services within Neath Port Talbot which are advertised online. • The proposed increase to the maximum permitted fare would add 10p to a 1 mile journey and 30p to a 2 mile journey.
Gender Reassignment		✓				<p>An increase to the maximum permitted fare will not specifically impact on persons because of their protected group. The impact will be the same for all users of taxis regardless of the protected group that they belong to. The level of impact will be dictated by a person's ability to pay a higher fare for taxi journeys.</p>
Marriage/Civil Partnership		✓				
Pregnancy/Maternity		✓				
Race		✓				
Religion/Belief		✓				
Sex		✓				

Sexual orientation		✓				
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4. Does the initiative impact on:

	Yes	No	None/ Negligible	Don't know	Impact H/M/L	Reasons for your decision (including evidence used) / How might it impact?
People's opportunities to use the Welsh language		✓				These are not impacted by the fact that a taxi user needs to pay more for a journey. The Welsh language is not impacted by this proposal.
Treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English		✓				

5. Does the initiative impact on biodiversity:

	Yes	No	None/ Negligible	Don't know	Impact H/M/L	Reasons for your decision (including evidence) / How might it impact?
To maintain and enhance biodiversity		✓				This is not impacted by the fact that a taxi user needs to pay more for a journey.
To promote the resilience of ecosystems, i.e. supporting protection of the wider environment,			✓			The increase to the maximum permitted fare is quite low, but it is possible that if a taxi driver has an increase in pay, then it could lead to the driver purchasing a newer, more environmentally friendly vehicle.

such as air quality, flood alleviation, etc.						
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6. Does the initiative embrace the sustainable development principle (5 ways of working):

	Yes	No	Details
Long term - how the initiative supports the long term well-being of people	✓		The last increase to the maximum permitted fare was in April 2022. This means that taxi drivers have not had a pay increase for 2 years. The maximum permitted fare increase proposed attempts to strike a balance between ensuring that taxi drivers can earn a sufficient salary, whilst protecting those that are reliant on the use of taxis.
Integration - how the initiative impacts upon our wellbeing objectives	✓		<p>Taxi drivers build up experience and have training to identify and report safeguarding concerns (children and adults) and offer assistance to vulnerable people particularly those who are disabled and / or elderly.</p> <p>Taxi drivers also play an important role in ensuring a safe night time economy, providing an essential service for people to get home safely.</p> <p>Where taxi drivers are able to make a good living from driving taxis it will ensure that professional experienced drivers are retained with the service, taxi standards at kept high and ensure the availability of an efficient service that the public can rely on.</p>

<p>Involvement - how people have been involved in developing the initiative</p>	<p>✓</p>		<p>Meetings have taken place between the licensing authority and the taxi associations and unions. If the proposed increase is approved, then a public notice must be published that allows the public to make comments in respect of the proposal. Any comments received would then need to be considered prior to implementation.</p>
<p>Collaboration - how we have worked with other services/organisations to find shared sustainable solutions</p>	<p>✓</p>		<p>Meetings have taken place between the licensing authority and the taxi associations and unions to try and agree an appropriate increase to maximum permitted fare.</p>
<p>Prevention - how the initiative will prevent problems occurring or getting worse</p>	<p>✓</p>		<p>An increase to the maximum permitted fare for hackney carriages will lead to an increase in the amount it costs to hire a taxi in Neath Port Talbot. It will therefore affect any person that uses taxis, regardless of whether they have a protected characteristic.</p> <p>Taxis play an important role in an integrated transport network, and are often an essential mode of transport for enabling people to access local services and health care. In addition, a vibrant day and night time economy relies on taxis to ensure that people are transported safely to and from venues.</p> <p>Where taxi drivers are able to make a good living from driving taxis it will ensure that professional experienced drivers are retained with the service, taxi standards at kept high and ensure the availability of an efficient service that the public can rely on.</p>

7. Declaration - based on above assessment (tick as appropriate):

<p>A full impact assessment (second stage) is not required</p>	<p>✓</p>
<p>Reasons for this conclusion</p>	

There doesn't appear to be any studies / research carried out in relation to taxi usage which can be referenced when making some of the assumptions in this assessment. The proposal strikes a fair balance between an appropriate increase to pay for taxi drivers, whilst ensuring that those who most rely on taxi services are not overly affected. It is anticipated that an increase in the cost of using taxis would most impact those who have less mobility e.g. the elderly, disabled, but would also impact those that rely on taxis and have low incomes. It is considered however, a full impact assessment is not necessary in this instance, as the increase to the maximum permitted fare proposed in the report is consistent with the increases in the cost of living, particularly since there has been no increase to the maximum permitted fare since April 2022.

A full impact assessment (second stage) is required	
Reasons for this conclusion	

	Name	Position	Signature	Date
Completed by	Neil Chapple	Legal Regulatory Manager	Neil Chapple	9/4/24
Signed off by	Craig Griffiths	Head of Service/Director	Craig Griffiths	9/4/24