

**Swale House, East Street,
Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 3HT**
DX59990 Sittingbourne 2
Phone: 01795 417850
Fax: 01795 417141
www.swale.gov.uk



Dear drivers and operators

IMPORTANT INFORMATION – PLEASE READ!

TAXI POLICY CONSULTATION

As you will be aware the current Swale Taxi Policy is currently being revised. There was a public consultation that ran between 7 March 2022 and 27 May 2022, and we invited comments from all of the taxi trade as well as the public.

Whilst most of the proposed changes in the policy are for clarity or to comply with new legislation it is proposed to make major changes to vehicle specifications which will affect many of you. The proposed changes are:

- From 1 April 2023, all vehicle licence applications for newly licensed vehicles (i.e. all applications other than those to 'renew' an existing vehicle licence for the same vehicle by the same holder) must be for low emission vehicles (LEV) - either all electric, electric/fuel hybrid or Euro 6 diesel and Euro 6 petrol compliant. Older vehicles have over 3 times and some as much as 6 times the permitted emissions limit of Euro 6 diesel and petrol.
- From 1 April 2023, all Euro 6 diesel and Euro 6 petrol vehicles will be licensed for a maximum period not to exceed 1 April 2030. Any Euro 6 diesel or Euro 6 petrol driven vehicles licensed before 1 April 2023 will also cease to be licensed on 1 April 2030.
- From 1 April 2025, all new vehicle licence applications must be for vehicles that are ultra-low emission (ULEV) i.e: less than 75 grams of CO₂. ULEV includes battery electric vehicle (BEV), extended range electric vehicle (E-REV) plug in hybrid electric vehicle (PHEV) or fuel cell electric vehicle (FCEV-hydrogen vehicle).

We were most surprised that we had an extremely small number of responses to the consultation on the policy as a whole, and that only 2 operators raised their concerns about the above changes. It is hard for us to know whether you as a trade are happy with the proposals or whether you are not fully aware of the implications. It has therefore been decided that we will restart the consultation with the trade only and that we will now take comments for another six weeks until **5th August 2022**.

In addition, we intend to hold face-to-face meetings with you in the next few weeks so that we can all discuss the proposed policy changes in person and that anything of note that comes out of the meetings can be recorded and reflected in the report that will be put before the Licensing Committee on 4th October when the taxi policy is to be adopted.

If you wish to attend the Licensing Committee you are most welcome. However, if you wish to speak and address the Members in person then you need to be formally invited, so please let us know if that is your intention so that this can be arranged.

If you want a copy of the draft taxi policy and the table of amendments, then please contact us and we will send them to you. You can email your comments to: TaxiPolicy@swale.gov.uk or write to us at the address above.

TAXI TARIFF CONSULTATION

Just as with the taxi policy, responses to the taxi tariff consultation amounted to only 15% letting us know what your thoughts were in this regard. We are concerned that Members will take the opinion that as 85% did not bother to respond you don't want a pay rise so again, we will take further comments until **5th August 2022**.

Below is what you were previously asked:

	Please tick
A. You support an increase in the tariff	
Or	
B. You think the tariff should stay as it is	

If you do support an increase, we have calculated some proposed fares for you to select which option you prefer as shown below. For information the current tariff has a flag of £3.00 and the 2 mile fare is £6.80

	Flag	Fare at 2 miles	Please tick
Option 1	£3.20	£7.80	
Option 2	£3.20	£7.60	
Option 3	£3.20	£7.40	
Option 4	£3.20	£7.20	

Option 5	£3.40	£7.80	
Option 6	£3.40	£7.60	
Option 7	£3.40	£7.40	
Option 8	£3.40	£7.20	

We also intend to introduce double time for Sundays as this is missing from the current tariff.

To respond you can either post this newsletter back to us at the address above, you can email a response to us at TaxiFares@swale.go.uk or you can complete your response using Survey Monkey with the link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/XZ6BWYN>

We cannot stress how important it is that you engage with us so that your feelings can be accurately reflected to Members. Please help us to help you.

Kind regards, Licensing Team