

Appendix 1

Question 1: Any one-off costs? If so, what would the one-off costs to your authority be for? How much would the costs be? Please provide a monetary value in pounds, if possible, otherwise the resource time required in hours.

It is impossible to answer this question, as it impossible to ascertain with any degree of certainty what the one-off costs of migrating taxi licensing to LTAs may produce at this time, as the Licensing Authority will be forming a Unitary Authority over the next two years, and costs will be affected by this process. However, it is considered that the areas we would expect to see one off costs are redundancy payments and recruitment costs.

Question 2: Any ongoing costs? If so, what would the ongoing costs to your authority be for? How much would the additional costs be? Please provide a monetary value in pounds, if possible, otherwise the resource time required in hours.

It is impossible to answer this question, as it impossible to ascertain with any degree of certainty what the on-going costs of migrating taxi licensing to LTAs may produce at this time, as the Licensing Authority will be forming a Unitary Authority over the next two years, and ongoing costs will be affected by this process.

However, whilst it is not possible to state with certainty, at present every taxi licence holder pays towards fixed costs the LA incurs such as, staffing and software licensing fees etc, in the same other licence holders have to, and if there are fewer licence holders contributing to these fixed costs because of taxis being moved to LTAs, then the remaining licence holders will need to pay higher contribution levels to ensure the LA can still function, or the tax payer will be required to subsidise businesses by way of covering these Licensing Authority operating costs.

Question 3: Any one-off savings? If so, what would the savings to your authority be for? How much would the savings be? Please provide a monetary value in pounds, if possible, otherwise the resource time required.

It is impossible to answer this question, as it impossible to ascertain with any degree of certainty what the one-off savings of migrating taxi licensing to LTAs may produce at this time, as the Licensing Authority will be forming a Unitary Authority over the next two years, and one-off savings will be affected by this process. However, it is anticipated that there will be no one-off savings as a result of migrating taxis to the LTA, as taxi income is set at cost recovery.

Question 4: Any ongoing savings? If so, what would the savings to your authority be for? How much would the savings be? Please provide a monetary value in pounds, if possible, otherwise the resource time required.

It is impossible to answer this question, as it is impossible to ascertain with any degree of certainty what the on-going savings of migrating taxi licensing to LTAs may produce at this time, as the Licensing Authority will be forming a Unitary Authority over the next two years, and ongoing savings will be affected by this process. However, given that taxi income is set at levels designed to be cost recovery, and all existing operating costs would still be incurred by a Licensing Authority to administer the remaining licensing regimes such as, alcohol, entertainment, scrap metal, gambling etc, it is not anticipated that there will be any savings.

Question 13: Should all local transport authorities be responsible for taxi and private hire vehicle licensing? Why?

As a committee we strive to uphold standards of both vehicles and drivers so that fare paying passengers are safe and comfortable. To that end, taxi licensing is about more than just cost and how much can be saved by reducing the number of authorities who oversee the issue of licences.

As a Licensing Committee it is part of our responsibility to ensure the safety of passengers and drivers alike. Some of the most vulnerable people in our society rely on taxis to take them to school and to hospital appointments; to safely deliver them home after a night out, to assist the elderly and infirm with their shopping, and it is our duty to ensure that the people performing that function are 'fit and proper'. We also have a duty to ensure that our drivers are protected from violent or aggressive passengers.

Another responsibility as a Licensing Committee is to hold hearings when complaints are made. We listen to both sides, weigh the evidence and reach our conclusions. This process is carried out by elected members not officers of the council. This is a cornerstone of the rights of taxi licence holders and the travelling public to be heard by an unbiased panel of members.

It is the opinion of this Council that moving taxi licensing to LTAs will not remove the issues of "cross bordering" and "licence shopping" that have been created in recent years by technology and deregulation. Whilst LGR or migrating taxis to LTAs will reduce the number of boundaries, there will still be in the region of 70 boundaries and the likelihood of differing fees, standards and expected turnaround times between these remaining authorities, which are the true factors driving licence shopping. The ability to sub-contract and sub-contract bookings to an unlimited extent presents huge challenges for enforcement, and this will not be addressed by moving taxi licensing away from post LGR Unitary Authorities and giving it to LTAs. Drafting legislation to create national standards for drivers and vehicles, standardising fees and implementing service standards or KPIs for the new Unitary Authorities to abide by is a far better way to achieve the outcomes that everyone wishes to see.

As a committee and as a District Council all members are in complete agreement that this is a false economy that will potentially result in placing members of the public in harms way and should be abandoned as a really bad idea.

Question 14: Are there wider economic benefits in making all local transport authorities responsible for taxi and private hire vehicle licensing? If so, what are they?

Without knowing exactly how any migration will be legislated for, this is impossible to answer with any degree of certainty. However, if LTAs were to become responsible for taxi licensing the most obvious economic benefit that could be achieved would be a possible lowering in licensing fees for the trade, due to greater economies of scale in some areas of the country. It is worth noting that some licence holders could end up paying more than they currently do for the same licences due to the change.

Question 15: Are there other costs in making all local transport authorities responsible for taxi and private hire vehicle licensing? If so, what are they?

Without knowing exactly how any migration will be legislated for, this is impossible to answer.