

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

13 November 2023

TAXI FARE REVIEW

Report by Strategic Lead, Legal and Governance

(Report No 23/299)

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The Council is required to review the scales of fares for Taxis in this area at intervals of not more than 18 months. This report outlines the findings of the most recent review and proposes that there be an increase in the fares and alterations made to the current tariff card.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee:

- (i) Agree the current scale of fares be increased by 7.5% rounded up to the nearest 10 pence.
- (ii) Agree all the changes to the current taxi tariff card as detailed within section 4.5 of this report.
- (iii) Agree that the scale of fares be advertised in the local press and interested parties are invited to respond within one month of the advertisement.
- (iv) Agree that if no adverse comments or representations are received after advertising, the new scale of fees and changes to the taxi tariff card commence from a date specified by the Head of Legal and Governance Services in the advertisement, that date to be approximately six weeks after the date of the advertisement.

3. STRUCTURE OF REPORT

- 3.1 This report is structured over the following sections:

- Section 4: Background
- Section 5: Proposals
- Section 6: Conclusion

4. BACKGROUND / MAIN ISSUES

- 4.1 In terms of Section 17 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982, the Council is required to set taxi fares and scales and keep these under review. The last review was concluded in April 2022 which resulted in a 15% increase across all tariffs.
- 4.2 The 1982 sets out the process to be followed when carrying out a review. That process was commenced in October 2023. All individual operators and organisations representing, or appearing to be, representative of the operators of taxis were consulted in relation to proposals for a fare increase and changes to the current taxi tariff card.
- 4.3 As detailed within a previous report to the committee (Report number 23/261) dated 2 October 2023, the Taxi Federation Group requested changes to the current tariff card and the committee agreed to the changes in principle. The changes were then subsequently put out for consultation to all those operators with meters fitted.
- 4.4 76 operators with meters fitted in their vehicles were provided with three fare increase options to choose from and a total of 45 replies were received. The results were as follows:
- 7 indicated they would like an increase of 6%,
 - 29 indicated they would like an increase of 7.5% and
 - 9 indicated they would like the tariffs to remain unchanged.
- 4.5 Operators were also asked their views on the following:
- The introduction of an additional tariff to be used for larger vehicles within the fleet which carry 5 or more passengers for example a minibus (Tariff 2 would be utilised only when transporting 5 or more passengers any time of day or night)
(31 agree and 14 disagree)
 - The introduction of a new Tariff 4 to be used when carrying 5 or more passengers for hirings begun on December 24,25,26,31 and January 1 and 2.
(25 agree and 20 disagree).
 - The ability to charge Tariff 2 from 10pm until 6am. Currently, Tariff 2 is utilised between 11pm and 6.30am.
(36 agree and 7 disagree and 2 did not respond)
 - Any bridge tolls or airport parking charges should be met by the customer (only chargeable on production of a receipt to the hirer);
(39 agree and 6 disagree)

- To delete the Spring Bank Holiday, May Bank Holiday and August Bank Holiday from the current Tariff Card with only the Easter holidays (operate Tariff 2), Christmas and New Year holidays (operate Tariff 2 and 3) remaining;
(26 agree, 18 disagree and 1 did not respond)
- Increase the soiling charge to £75.00.
(41 agree, 4 disagree)
- The charge for additional yards across all tariffs reverts to 10 pence rather than the current 12 pence.
(33 agree, 11 disagree and 1 did not respond to the question)

4.6 Before any new scale of fares and other charges can come into force the Council must advertise any new proposed scale in the local press to give an opportunity for public representations. The notice must also specify the date on which it is proposed that the tariff shall take effect, which must take account of the period for representations and for appeals to the Traffic Commissioner. It is therefore suggested that the proposed date of coming into effect should be approximately 6 weeks after the date of advertising. Following the coming into effect of the tariff, all operators would be advised of the changes and the date on which the change comes into effect.

5. PROPOSALS

5.1 The Committee has four possible courses of action open to it:

Option 1 – Agree to a 7.5% increase across the tariffs as per results of consultation with the trade.

Option 2 – Disagree to a 7.5% increase and opt for either 6% or no increase at all.

Option 3 – Agree to all other changes to the tariff card as per section 4.5 of this report.

Option 4 – Disagree to all or some of the changes to the tariff card.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 This report refers to proposed changes to the current taxi tariffs and scales and sets out the options available to the Licensing Committee. The Committee should consider the balance between costs to the operator with regard to the running and upkeep of vehicles alongside how any increase in fares may affect paying members of the public.

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Approved

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1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes / None
Community Plan	Yes
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	None
Workforce	None
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	None
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	None
Strategic Environmental Assessment	None
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	None
Legal and Governance	None
Risk	None
Consultation	
Internal	None
External	Yes
Communication	
Communications Plan	None

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan

- 1.1 Maintaining the current fare structure for the hire of Taxis and Private Hire vehicles will promote a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy by allowing affordable travel for members of the community. Equally it will support people to lead independent, healthy and active lives.

Corporate Plan

- 1.2 Offering an affordable travel option will promote an inclusive economy and support people to lead independent lives. It will give access to commercial and leisure venues throughout the region to the benefit of all.

2. Resource Implications

Financial

- 2.1 Not applicable

Workforce

- 2.2 Not applicable

3. Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for plans and policies allows the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties.

An initial Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and recognises the balance between costs to the operator with regard to the running and upkeep of vehicles alongside how any increase in fares may affect paying members of the public.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.2 Not applicable

4. Consultation

Internal

- 4.1 None

External

- 4.2 All metered operators

5. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 5.1 Appendix 1 – Current Tariff Card