

**CIVIC GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 1982
TAXI FARE SCALE REVIEW**

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In terms of Section 17 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982, the Local Authority requires to fix maximum fares and other charges in connection with the hire of taxis operating in their area and to review the scales for taxi fares and other charges on a regular basis. The new fare structure requires to come into force by 25th July 2017. The fares were last reviewed by members on 21st October 2015 and took effect on 25th January 2016.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee are asked to:

- Review the existing scales and publish them proposing a date when the proposed scales shall come into effect.
- Authorise the Head of Governance and Law to advertise the proposed changes to tariffs and to invite any responses within one month of the advertisement and report back to members at their meeting in March 2017.
- Should no objections or representations be received in relation to the proposal delegate authority to the Head of Governance and Law in consultation with the Chair of PPSL to conclude the review without the requirement for the Committee to consider a further report on the review.

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1. SUMMARY

1.1 In terms of Section 17 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982, the Local Authority requires to fix maximum fares and other charges in connection with the hire of taxis operating in their area and to review the scales for taxi fares and other charges on a regular basis. The new fare structure requires to come into force by 25th July 2017. The fares were last reviewed by the Council on 21st October 2015 and the decision not to increase the fares took effect from 25th January 2016:-

1.2 The current maximum fares are:

Tariff 1 £3.00 (hiring between 7am and 10pm)
Initial charge (860 yards or part thereof)
Subsequent charge (each 176 yards or part thereof)

Tariff 2 £3.60 (hiring between 10pm and 7am)
Initial charge (860 yards or part thereof)
Subsequent charge (each 150 yards or part thereof)

Tariff 3 £4.20 (public holidays)
Initial charge (860 yards or part thereof)
Subsequent charge (each 120 yards or part thereof)

Charges in respect of soiling, waiting and telephone bookings are £100 (maximum), 35p per minute and 30p respectively.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2.

The Committee are asked to:

2.1

- Review the existing scales and publish them proposing a date when the proposed scales shall come into effect.
- Authorise the Head of Governance and Law to advertise the proposed changes to tariffs and to invite any responses within one month of the advertisement and report back to members at their meeting in March 2017.
- Should no objections or representations be received in relation to the

proposal delegate authority to the Head of Governance and Law in consultation with the Chair of PPSL to conclude the review without the requirement for the Committee to consider a further report on the review.

DETAIL

3.

3.1 All 133 taxi operators were invited to consultation meetings. These meetings took place in each of the following areas and an indication of those in attendance is provided.

3 from Campbeltown/Kintyre
1 from Lochgilphead/Mid Argyll
3 from Oban/Lorn
3 from Helensburgh/Lomond
2 from Rothesay/Bute
4 from Dunoon/Cowal

Operators were asked for their views on taxi fares and whether they felt they should be increased. The general consensus from the meetings is as follows:-

Cowal

The view was that the market was so poor that no increase should be sought at this time, as many operators are already discounting the maximum fares to customers.

Lomond

The view was that the market was poor that no increase should be sought at this time, there might need to be an earlier review if fuel prices keep rising over the next year or so.

Oban

The view was that the market was so poor that no increase should be sought at this time, as many operators are already discounting the maximum fares to customers.

Kintyre

The view was that the market was so poor that no increase should be sought at this time, as many operators are already discounting the maximum fares to customers.

Mid Argyll

The view was that the market was so poor that no increase should be sought at this time.

Bute

The view was that the market was so poor that no increase should be sought at this time, unless fuel prices jumped substantially.

3.2 On 3rd November 2016 a letter was issued to all taxi operators requesting their views on taxi fares by 2nd December 2016. As a result of the latest consultation 4 written responses were received, 2 from Lorn, 1 from Cowal and 1 from Lomond requesting no increase be made.

3.3 Enquiries were made with Highland Council and Aberdeenshire Council regarding their existing taxi charges for the purpose of comparison and the findings are noted below.

	Argyll and Bute Existing Fares	Aberdeenshire Council's Fares	Highland Council's Fares
Tariff 1	£3.00 860 yards then 176 @ 20p	£2.60 880 yards then 1/11 of a mile @ 20p	£2.70 785 yards then 130 @ 10p
Tariff 2	£3.60 860 yards then 150 @ 20p	£3.60 880 yards then 1/11 of a mile @ 20p	£3.30 560 yards then 92 @ 10p
Tariff 3	£4.20 860 yards then 120 @ 20p	£3.90 880 yards then 1/11 of a mile @ 30p	£3.90 444 yards then 74 @ 10p

It should be noted that Highland Council are currently reviewing their fares and the general effect of the proposed changes for tariff 1 the price of the first mile to be increased from £3.80 to £3.90 and the price per mile thereafter to be increased from £1.40 to £1.50p.

3.4 The Committee are advised that the National Statistics website detailed that prices overall rose this year. The price of petrol, as recorded for the Retail Price Index, rose by 1.0 pence per litre between September and October 2016, to stand at 112.3 pence per litre, compared with a fall of 1.6 pence per litre last year to stand at 109.0 pence per litre. Diesel prices rose by 1.0 pence per litre, to stand at 114.4 pence per litre in October 2016, compared with a rise of 0.9 pence per litre last year to stand at 110.8 pence per litre.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 Members are now required to review the matter of taxi fares. As previously advised in terms of Section 17 the procedure for reviewing taxi fares has changed.

In carrying out a review, the licensing authority must-

- (a) consult with persons or organisations appearing to it to be, or to be representative of, the operators of taxis operating within its area,
- (b) following such consultation –
 - (i) review the existing scales, and
 - (ii) propose new scales (whether at altered rates or the same rates)
- (c) publish those proposed scales in a newspaper circulating in its area-
 - (i) setting out the proposed scales
 - (ii) explaining the effect of the proposed scales
 - (iii) proposing a date on which the proposed scales are to come into effect, and
 - (iv) stating that any person may make representations in writing until the relevant date, and

(d) consider any such representations

In reviewing the matter of taxi fares members are invited to consider whether;

- A)** They wish to accept the general consensus from all the taxi meetings and the 4 written responses received that no increases to fares are made.

When considering all of the above proposals members may wish to have regard to:-

1. The lack of representation or response to the proposed review of taxi fare scales for or against from consultees. A total of 133 were consulted with 4 providing written representations.
2. The comparison of the general effect of Argyll and Bute's existing fares with those in place in Aberdeenshire and Highland Council.
3. The fluctuation in the price of fuel.

- B)** They wish to reaffirm the current scale of maximum fares previously reviewed by the Council in October 2015 which came into force 25th January 2016 also having regard to the 4 written responses requesting that there are no increases to the taxi fares. Members may also wish to have regard to:-

1. The lack of representation or response to the proposed review of taxi fare scales for or against from consultees.

Members should be aware that any person or any persons or organisations appealing to the Traffic Commissioner to be representative of taxi operators in the area who operates a Taxi in an area for which scales have been fixed or in respect of which a review has been carried out will still have the opportunity to lodge an appeal to the Scottish Traffic Commissioner within a 14 day period.

5. IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Policy – None

5.2 Financial – None

5.3 Legal – The Council require to review taxi fares in terms of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982

5.4 HR – None

5.5 Equalities – None

5.6 Risk – None

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