

Regulatory Committee

9.30am, Thursday, 2 December 2021

Review of Taxi Fare Structure – Outcome of Consultation

Executive/routine	
Wards	All
Council Commitments	N/A

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that Regulatory Committee:
 - 1.1.1 Notes the content of this report and that the Council’s statutory duties have been met in relation to consultation;
 - 1.1.2 Considers the representations received during the statutory public consultation period, as attached at Appendix 3;
 - 1.1.3 Agrees the fare changes, as set out in paragraphs 4.2 and 4.8, to fix the taxi fare scales (shown in Appendix 4) with an effective date of 30 December 2021; and
 - 1.1.4 Note that, if the above recommendations are approved, officers will carry out the statutory notification procedures in relation to the revised taxi fare scales as fixed by Committee.

Paul Lawrence

Executive Director of Place

Contact: Andrew Mitchell, Regulatory Services Manager

E-mail: andrew.mitchell@edinburgh.gov.uk | Tel: 0131 529 4208

Report

Review of Taxi Fare Structure – Outcome of Consultation

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 Jacobs was engaged to carry out initial work on the review of the current taxi fare scales and their report, together with details of further consultation undertaken with the taxi trade, was presented to the Regulatory Committee on [26 October 2021](#). Committee agreed on the proposed revised taxi fare scales for public consultation.
- 2.2 This report sets out proposed changes to the taxi fare scale to reflect the feedback received.

3. Background

- 3.1 Under section 17(2) of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 (the Act), the Council, as Licensing Authority, has a duty to review and set a taxi fare structure within the city. The taxi fare structure represents the maximum fare which a customer can be charged for a taxi journey within the city.
- 3.2 The Council engaged Jacobs to undertake the initial work in relation to the review of the fare structure, and their report and conclusions along with details of further consultation with the taxi trade, were presented to the Regulatory Committee on 26 October 2021.
- 3.3 Committee agreed the proposed revised taxi fare scales and instructed officers to advertise the changes in line with the statutory requirements of the Act.
- 3.4 There is a right of appeal against any Committee decision regarding fares. This can be exercised by any taxi licence holder or an organisation representative of taxi operators with the appeal made to the Scottish Traffic Commissioner.

4. Main report

Statutory Consultation

- 4.1 On 26 October 2021, Committee agreed proposed changes to the existing taxi fare scales. The existing fare scales are attached at Appendix 1 and the proposed revised fare scales are attached at Appendix 4.
- 4.2 Specific proposed changes are as follows:

- 4.2.1 Increase all tariffs by 2.9%;
 - 4.2.2 Increase the 'additional passenger charge' from 30p to 40p when there are more than three passengers; and
 - 4.2.3 Amend the festive tariff so that Tariff 4 should be applied to Christmas Day and New Year's Day irrespective of day of the week, noting that Tariff 4 is retained during night times on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve.
- 4.3 As required by the Act, an advert was published in a local newspaper, namely the Edinburgh Evening News, on 27 October 2021. Interested parties were invited to submit representations in writing by 27 November 2021. The advertised tariff was as set out in Appendix 2.
- 4.4 The proposed taxi fare tariff was also advertised on the Consultation Hub on the Council's website where the public could comment.
- 4.5 Responses to the consultation are attached at Appendix 3. Broad themes are:
- 4.5.1 Respondents were broadly supportive of the general tariff increases;
 - 4.5.2 Some respondents said that taxi fares are too expensive; and
 - 4.5.3 A significant number of respondents from the taxi trade think that the permitted drop-off charge at the airport should be increased from £2 to £4.

Effect of Proposed Tariff Change

- 4.6 A trade publication ranks all Local Authorities with respect to the fares charged for a two-mile taxi journey during the day. In July 2021, the City of Edinburgh Council sat at 50 of 365 authorities (*Private Hire and Taxi Monthly* publication, July 2021).
- 4.7 Should the proposed changes be implemented, Jacobs calculate that, based on the July 2021 rankings, the City of Edinburgh Council would climb to position 25 in the ranking, as set out in the table below:

Local Authority	Current Rank
East Lothian	24
City of Edinburgh	25
Fife	40
Glasgow	41
Midlothian	120
West Lothian	262
Falkirk	272

Consultation outcome

- 4.8 The issue of a change to the airport drop-off fee was raised after the Jacobs' consultation work was completed but before the report was finalised. Trade representatives were therefore encouraged to include this request as part of the second stage of the statutory process. Having considered consultation feedback on this matter, it is recommended that Committee agrees to an increase to £4 but does not agree to having an unlimited fee passed to customers. This is consistent with

previous advice to Committee that an actual monetary fee needs to be specified in the fare tariff.

- 4.9 An updated fare scale has been prepared and is attached in Appendix 4 to reflect this proposed change.
- 4.10 The new fare scale will take effect from 30 December 2021. This will allow for the statutory 14 day period during which operators can appeal against the new fare scale.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 If the report recommendations are approved:
 - 5.1.1 Officers will arrange to advertise the Committee's final decision;
 - 5.1.2 Officers will notify licence holders of the new tariff, including their right of appeal.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 There is no direct financial impact to the Council of these changes.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 If the taxi trade, specifically any operator, has a concern about the Council's decision on the new fare scales, taxi licence holders may appeal that decision individually or as a group, including any decision not to implement an increase in the fare scales. Details of this process are outlined at 3.4 above.
- 7.2 Matters described in this report have no relationship to the public sector general equality duty, thus there is no direct equalities impact arising from this report.
- 7.3 There is no environmental impact arising from the contents of this report.
- 7.4 Following consultation with the trade and committee agreeing the proposed revised taxi fare scales, further public consultation was carried out. This was done in line with statutory requirements through advertisement in a local newspaper and additionally on the Council website.
- 7.5 Officers reached out to stakeholders to try to encourage responses from groups representing elderly or vulnerable people. These organisations included Age Scotland and the Equality and Rights Network.

8. Background reading/external references

- 8.1 None

9. Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix 1: Current fare card (from 7 April 2020)
- 9.2 Appendix 2: Revised example fare card as advertised
- 9.3 Appendix 3: Comments received
- 9.4 Appendix 4: Proposed fare card after consultation

Appendix 1 Current tariff (from 7 April 2020)

THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL
CIVIC GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 1982

FARE TABLE FOR TAXIS

With effect from 7 April 2020

FOR UP TO 2 PASSENGERS

TARIFF 1 Monday - Friday 6am – 6pm	TARIFF 2 Monday - Friday 6pm – 6am the following day 6am Saturday – 6am Monday
TARIFF 3 Monday - Friday 6am – 6pm during Christmas and New Year	TARIFF 4 Monday - Friday 6pm – 6am the following day 6am on Saturday – 6am Monday during Christmas and New Year
Tariffs 3 and 4 shall only be charged during the following dates and times: CHRISTMAS 6pm on 24 December to 6am on 27 December NEW YEAR 6pm on 31 December to 11.59pm on 2 January	

CHARGES	TARIFF 1	TARIFF 2	TARIFF 3	TARIFF 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Initial hire not exceeding 516m ▪ Initial 105 seconds of waiting time ▪ Combination of initial time and distance 	£3.00	£4.00	£4.00	£5.00
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Each additional 168m up until 1860m and thereafter each additional 195m ▪ Each additional 36 seconds of waiting time ▪ Combination of additional time and distance 	£0.25	£0.25	-	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Each additional 184m up until 1988m and thereafter each additional 213m ▪ Each additional 39 seconds of waiting time ▪ Combination of additional time and distance 	-	-	£0.35	£0.45

When more than 2 passengers		Each	£0.30
Note: Only 2 children under 12 years will be reckoned as one passenger. No extra fare will be charged for one child under 5 years of age.			
Each passenger must be properly seated			
Hires ending at Edinburgh Airport Inner Drop-off Zone (See Note 4 below)			£2.00
Call Out Charge	£0.80	Airport Pickup	
Applicable when pre-booked		For hires commencing at Edinburgh airport	
Cancellation Fee	£2.20	The amount charged at the exit gate subject to a maximum of £5.00, providing it is no more than the actual amount charged.	
Applicable when taxi is pre-booked but not used			
Soiling Charge – maximum of £50.00 payable by a passenger, where a vehicle is required to be removed from service for cleaning in order for it to be restored to a usable state and condition			

EXTRA PAYMENTS

NOTES

- (1) The above Tariff is applicable only within the City of Edinburgh.
- (2) Any hire which terminates outside the City of Edinburgh area – FARE MUST BE NEGOTIATED AND AGREED WITH DRIVER BEFORE THE JOURNEY COMMENCES.
- (3) A copy of the Licensing Conditions can be inspected at the Council's Licensing Offices, 249 High Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1YJ and downloaded from www.edinburgh.gov.uk
- (4) The Airport Extra is only payable if passenger is dropped off in the covered inner drop-off zone at Edinburgh Airport and the driver has explained to the passenger before the start of the journey - (1) He will take the passenger to the drop off point just beside the airport terminal and that there is a £2 extra for this. (2) If the passenger states he is disabled, the £2 extra still has to be paid, but the driver understands that the passenger can reclaim this from the airport at the drop-off point. (3) If the passenger wishes to avoid the £2 extra, he can be taken to an outer drop-off point. However, this is further from the airport terminal, involves the use of a free shuttle bus and will require more time for the passenger to get to the airport terminal.

COMPLAINTS

Any hirer aggrieved at the level of the fare charged for any hire or for any other reason may discuss the matter with the Taxi Licensing Officer (0131 529 4250). Any complaint must be made in writing and addressed to the Complaints Officer, Licensing Service, The City of Edinburgh Council, 329 High Street, Edinburgh EH1 1YJ, and should include the vehicle's licence number and time and date of the incident.

Appendix 2

THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL **FARE TABLE FOR TAXIS**

FOR UP TO 2 PASSENGERS

TARIFF 1 Monday - Friday 6am – 6pm	TARIFF 2 Monday - Friday 6pm – 6am the following day 6am Saturday – 6am Monday
TARIFF 3 Monday - Friday 6am – 6pm during Christmas and New Year period	TARIFF 4 25 December – ALL DAY 1 January – ALL DAY Where Christmas period falls on Saturday and Sunday - ALL DAY Monday – Friday between 6pm and 6am during Christmas and New Year period
CHRISTMAS PERIOD	6pm on 24 December to 6am on 27 December
NEW YEAR PERIOD	6pm on 31 December to midnight on 2 January

CHARGES	TARIFF 1	TARIFF 2	TARIFF 3	TARIFF 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Initial hire not exceeding 501m ▪ Initial 105 seconds of waiting time ▪ Combination of initial time and distance 	£3.00	£4.00	£4.00	£5.00
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Each additional 163m up until 1805m and thereafter each additional 190m ▪ Each additional 35 seconds of waiting time ▪ Combination of additional time and distance 	£0.25	£0.25		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Each additional 179m up until 1933m and thereafter each additional 207m ▪ Each additional 38 seconds of waiting time ▪ Combination of additional time and distance 	-	-	£0.35	£0.45

EXTRA PAYMENTS

When more than 3 passengers	Each	£0.40
Note: Only 2 children under 12 years will be reckoned as one passenger. No extra fare will be charged for one child under 5 years of age.		
Each Passenger must be properly seated		
Hires ending at Edinburgh Airport Inner Drop-off Zone (See Note 4 below)		£2.00
Call Out Charge Applicable when pre-booked	£0.80	Airport Pickup For hires commencing at Edinburgh airport The amount charged at the exit gate subject to a maximum of £5.00, providing it is no more than the actual amount charged
Cancellation Fee Applicable when taxi is pre-booked but not used	£2.20	
Soiling Charge – maximum of £50.00 payable by a passenger, where a vehicle is required to be removed from service for cleaning in order for it to be restored to a usable state and condition		

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Appendix 3

James Allan	Ridiculous, taxi fares are already absurdly high and if anything fares should be reduced.
Greig Cockburn	<p>On the existing tariff, 6 people travelling in a taxi together would incur an 'extras payment' of £1.20, and 3 people would incur extras of £0.30.</p> <p>On the new proposed tariff, 6 people would still pay £1.20, however 3 people would incur zero extras.</p> <p>This represents a reduction in the charges/costs to passengers when travelling in groups.</p> <p>Why?</p> <p>It is also important that the 'extras' button on taximeters is programmed to £0.20p increments, as the current £0.10p increment is tediously frustrating when adding multiple pounds of extras onto the meter while servicing airport jobs.</p>
john gray	Totally disagree with any increase for taxi's fares due to the recent budget and petrol increases. Taxi's have had it far too cushy for to long. Black cabs have been overcharging people for many decades as can be seen with their charges compared to private hire.
Michael Kelly	<p>Increase is not nearly enough.</p> <p>Price of fuel has rocketed.</p> <p>Inflation expected to hit 5% this year.</p> <p>This paltry increase will not attract much needed drivers to the profession. Who comes up with these proposals?</p>
ZAFAR Iqbal	Fair should increase because of petrol prices and inflation and daily food prices going up every day
Colin Farrer	In the current situation that the country is in at the moment, I don't think an increase in fares is a good idea
Akbar Ali	Yes
Mohammad Naseer	No need to increase any sort of the fare taxis in edinburgh already very expensive
Michelle Brunton	I'm fine with the proposed new tariff. There needs to be parity though associated with tariffs and taxi tests between public and private hire taxis in Edinburgh or this will be an unfair penalisation to public hire drivers.
Noel mathew	No need to change
Moira Savage	Unnecessarily complicated and guaranteed to bamboozle any taxi user, should they wish to delve into the minutiae of the charging system. Taxi fares in Edinburgh are outrageously high compared to other major Scottish cities. There is no good reason for this to be the case. It is so high it is prohibitive.
George Cowie	Not needed the fares are high enough as they are

	It seems fare, considering it is in line with inflation.
Colin Jones-Evans	However, there are no details on the arrangements for Christmas and the New Year
James Gray	I think the tariff should not be increased.
	Discounts should apply for passengers over 60 and/or with limited mobility conditions.
Karl Wendland	Too complicated to work out how much a journey will cost. OK if you live in Edinburgh but very confusing for visitors. Edinburgh is very congested, when you work out average journey price compared to other cities how do you compare the travel time. A two mile trip can could take 5 minutes or 20 minutes which in a taxi has a big impact on what you pay.
Suzanne Bruce	I do not agree with it. Taxi's in Edinburgh are very expensive and you will not get people out of their cars if alternatives are not affordable.
William Moore	Taxi fares are already very expensive. To increase taxi tariffs now at a time when private car use in Edinburgh is being discouraged is nothing short of grotesque.
Hamish Barrie	Compared to many cities around the world Edinburgh taxi's are amongst the most expensive in the world. They are already way too expensive. Many only take cash so they dont register the fare and pay tax.
Daniel Tebb	Agree with the increase, inflation is at a 10 year high, drivers costs for Euro 6 vehicles are high, the increase is a must!
Steve McCaffery	I think that the proposal is a fair review of the current charges.

From: Murray Fleming
Sent: 03 November 2021 13:35
To: Licensing <Licensing@edinburgh.gov.uk>
Cc:
Subject: Request to increase Airport drop-off fee from £2 to £4

FAO Regulatory Committee,

Further to the publication of the fare review report which was considered at the Regulatory meeting held on 26th October 2021.

We write to request that the airport drop off fee is increased from £2 to the current fee being charged by Edinburgh Airport which is £4.

During the consultation period trade representatives were unaware that Edinburgh Airport had increased the fee, hence the reason why this was not included in our proposals.

At the time of the consultation airport pick ups were not a regular occurrence.

The matter was raised with Jacobs in September and the trade intimated our wish for the drop off fee to be increased, we had anticipated that this would be raised in more detail at

the meeting, on reflection the trade should have requested a deputation to ensure Councillors were advised.

I have copied in the other trade representatives who have intimated their support for this request..

Kind Regards

Murray Fleming

For and on behalf of Central Taxis.

From: Andy Taylor

Sent: 03 November 2021 23:46

To: Murray Fleming

Subject: Re: Request to increase Airport drop-off fee from £2 to £4

FAO Regulatory Committee

Further to Murray Flemings attached email, Unite the Union, Edinburgh Cab Section fully support the request to increase the airport drop-off fee to £4.00, for all the same reasons detailed in his email.

We would also propose that a mechanism be put in place to allow for the automatic increase to what can be charged to the customer, every time the airport decide to increase the drop-off and pick-up fees. It is morally wrong that self employed taxi drivers should be out of pocket when dropping off and picking up at Edinburgh Airport.

Regards

Andy Taylor

On behalf of Unite the Union, Edinburgh Cab Section

Appendix 4

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