

Regulatory Committee

9.00am, Tuesday, 26 October 2021

Taxi Fares Review 2021

Executive/routine Wards Council Commitments	All
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1. Recommendations

- 1.1 The Regulatory Committee is asked to:
 - 1.1.1 Note the attached report from Jacobs (Appendix 2), and, in particular, the recommendations following consultation with representatives of the taxi trade;
 - 1.1.2 Note that feedback was sought from the representatives of the taxi trade on the initial Jacobs report and, where possible, this has been incorporated in that report;
 - 1.1.3 Approve the advertisement of a proposed fare scale with the following changes to the current fare scale, for reasons set out in this report, as required in terms of section 17 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982:
 - 1.1.3.1 Increases all tariffs by 2.9%;
 - 1.1.3.2 Increases the 'additional passenger charge' from 30p to 40p when there are more than three passengers; and
 - 1.1.3.3 Amends the festive tariff so that Tariff 4 should be applied to Christmas Day and New Year's Day irrespective of day of the week and notes that Tariff 4 is retained during night times on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. Tariff 3 applies Monday through Friday 6am to 6pm during the defined Christmas period.
 - 1.1.4 Instruct the Executive Director of Place to publish these proposed fare scales in a newspaper circulating in the Council area in the manner required under section 17(4A) (c) of the Act including the date on which the fare scale is planned to take effect, and to report back on any representation(s) received as a result of the consultation.

Paul Lawrence

Executive Director of Place

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Report

Taxi Fares Review 2021

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report informs the Committee that the statutory review of fares has been undertaken. The Council has engaged consultants to carry out the initial work on the review and their final report is attached. Consultation with the trade has also been carried out. The report makes recommendations on the remaining steps necessary to complete the review and fix taxi fares.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Council, as Licensing Authority under the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 ('the Act') for taxis, is required, in terms of section 17, to review and fix the scale of fares and other charges which may be used by taxis licensed within the city. This review must take place at intervals not greater than 18 months. The Council last fixed taxi fares on 7 April 2020. The implementation of this change was delayed by the pandemic as the companies responsible for adjusting taxi meters were unable to operate during lockdown in spring/summer 2020. The subsequent fare review has been delayed due to pressures caused by the pandemic and prioritising safe reopening of businesses. The taxi fare tariff sets out the maximum charges which licensed taxis may charge any passenger for a journey within the city. Operators are free to alter any charge subject to that maximum.
- 3.2 The initial requirement of the review is that the Council, as Licensing Authority, must consult with persons or organisations appearing to them to be, or be representative of, the operators of taxis within their council area. In its work plan, the Committee agreed to commission consultants to carry out the initial consultation with the trade, review the fare structure and to make recommendations on any changes following consultation. Jacobs was commissioned to undertake the most recent review and the final report is attached at Appendix 2.
- 3.3 On 1 October 2021, a copy of the draft Jacobs report was provided to representatives of the taxi trade for final comment by 8 October 2021. No further responses were received during this period.

4. Main report

- 4.1 The current fee structure is set out at Appendix 1 of this report. The fee varies depending on time of day, distance travelled, and waiting time. There are particular

tariffs for certain public holidays and additional fees for a range of items, including the cleaning of the taxi if it is soiled.

- 4.2 Following consultation with representatives of the trade, the Council is required to review the existing fare scales and propose new scales. The proposed fare scale is required to be advertised for a period of not less than one month, to allow for representations, after which a further report will be brought back to the committee for consideration, and if appropriate, approval.
- 4.3 There is a right of appeal in respect of any decision Committee makes regarding the new fare scales. This may be exercised by any taxi licence holder and the appeal is made to the Scottish Traffic Commissioner. Guidance issued by the Scottish Government states that the Council should consider the costs of operating a taxi as well as the income available to operators when reviewing and fixing the taxi fare scales. Committee should also avoid restricting any increase based on concern about the impact on passengers.
- 4.4 The draft Jacobs report was circulated to the taxi trade for comment, feedback was invited and the final report making recommendations as to the revisions to the fare table is now submitted for the committee's consideration (Appendix 2).
- 4.5 Section 4 of the report outlines the responses received from the trade. Members are advised to consider this information in detail when considering the recommendations in this report. In summary, trade members seek the following:
 - 4.5.1 2.9% overall increase;
 - 4.5.2 Increases the 'additional passenger charge' from 30p to 40p when there are more than three passengers; and
 - 4.5.3 Amend the festive tariff so that T4 should be applied to Christmas Day and New Year's Day irrespective of day of the week and that T4 is retained during night times on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve.
- 4.6 Section 8 of the report provides recommendations to the Council on what fare increases could be applied, and these mirror the changes sought by the trade as detailed at paragraph 4.5 above.
- 4.7 After taking the above into consideration, it is recommended that Committee fixes a taxi fare scale with the following changes to the current fare scale:
 - 4.7.1 2.9% overall increase;
 - 4.7.2 Increases the 'additional passenger charge' from 30p to 40p when there are more than three passengers; and
 - 4.7.3 Amend the festive tariff so that Tariff 4 should be applied to Christmas Day and New Year's Day irrespective of the day of the week and that Tariff 4 is retained during night times on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve.
- 4.8 Adopting the proposed change to the festive tariff effectively removes Tariff 3 on Christmas and New Year's Days. This would further widen the gap between Tariff 1 and fares paid during those periods. Figure 7.1 at paragraph 7.2 in the report (Appendix 2) sets out the effect of the proposed percentage fare increase across the tariffs.
- 4.9 Details of the final proposals and the recommendations as detailed in paragraph 4.5 above were sent to the representatives of the trade by email on 1 October 2021. No

further responses were received. It is recommended that, having reviewed and proposed new fare scales, Committee directs officers to advertise the proposed fare scales in line with the statutory requirements set out above, and to report back when that process is complete.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 It is recommended that the committee notes this report and agrees to receive a further report after the statutory advert is published.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 There is no direct financial impact to the council. The fare structure will have a direct impact on residents or visitors to the city using a taxi.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 If the taxi trade 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.
- 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.

8. Background reading/external references

- 8.1 None

9. Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix 1 - Current tariff (from 7 April 2020)
- 9.2 Appendix 2 - Jacobs report dated 13 October 2021
- 9.3 Appendix 3 – Proposed tariff

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.



Fare review 2

Revised Draft Report

Document No. | 1

August 4, 2021

City of Edinburgh Council

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Fare review 2

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Appendix A. Additional Information

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

1.1 General

This study has been conducted by Jacobs on behalf of City of Edinburgh Council (CEC). The overall objective is to carry out a review of the taxi fare tariff in Edinburgh. The study will review the current fare tariff and advise on any changes. In terms of Section 17 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982, the Council must fix maximum scales for the fares and other charges in connection with the hire of a taxi. In terms of Section 17(2) of the said Act (as amended by Section 174(3) of the Criminal Justice and Licensing (Scotland) Act 2010) the Council has to review these scales on a regular basis. The Council must fix scales within 18 months beginning with the date on which the scales came into effect. In carrying out a review, the Council is required to consult with persons or organisations appearing to it to be, or to be representative of, the operators of taxis operating within its area.

The Second Edition of the Scottish Government's Licensing of Taxis and Private Hire Cars Best Practice Guidance for Licensing Authorities, issued in April 2012, refers Councils carrying out taxi fare reviews to pay particular regard to advice contained in paragraphs 2.34 – 2.37 of Scottish Development Department Circular 25/1986.

“The Secretary of State expects that in fixing fares authorities will want to pay primary regard to the costs incurred by the trade, having regard to the capital costs (including interest payments) of the vehicles, the costs of maintaining and replacing them to the standards required by the licensing authority, of employing drivers and the prevailing level of wages and costs in related road transport industries. In the Secretary of State's view the public interest is better served by ensuring that the maintenance of an adequate taxi service by giving the trade a fair return, than by depressing fares for social reasons, however understandable. If fares are fixed at a level higher than the market can stand, the trade is free to reduce them”.

CEC licensing conditions require all taxis in Edinburgh to be fully wheelchair accessible.

1.2 Background to fares in Edinburgh

In line with the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982, licensing authorities are required to review and fix the scale of fares and other charges which may be used by taxis licensed within the city. This review must take place at intervals not greater than 18 months. The current fares were last reviewed by the Regulatory Committee in January 2020 and councillors agreed to an increase of 40p on the flag and 3.3% on the increments on all tariffs. The additional passenger charges was increased to 30p, the pickup charge at the airport was increased and the soiling charge wording was amended.

1.3 Age limitation and emission standards

On 16 March 2016 the Regulatory Committee agreed to revise the policy on Taxis and Private Hire Cars. This policy change came effective from 7 May 2018 and introduced an age limit for taxis and private hire cars as well as an emission policy.

This policy set out that:

- **Effective 1 April 2020** a taxi or private hire car can be submitted for test prior to the 10th anniversary of its registration for renewal of licence and can continue to operate until the expiry of that licence period.
- **Effective 1 April 2020** Any taxi or private hire car which is converted to LPG will be allowed a further 4 years of operation.

In addition to the age limits set out above the committee introduced emission standards for vehicles.

- **Effective 1 April 2019** no Taxi or private hire car will thereafter be accepted for test unless it is Euro 5 or above. Any Euro 0-4 Taxi or private hire car which has passed its test and is licensed prior to 1 April 2019 may continue to be operated until its licence expires or **31 Mar 2020** whichever date is earliest.
- **4. Effective 1 April 2022** no Taxi or private hire car will thereafter be accepted for test unless it is Euro 6 or above. Separately to this requirement, any Euro 5 Taxi or private hire car that has passed its test and is licensed prior to 1 April 2022 may continue to be operated until its licence expires or **31 Mar 2023** whichever date is earliest.

For those vehicles not currently licensed by City of Edinburgh Council, no vehicle will be accepted for licensing as a taxi or private hire car or replacement vehicle for an existing Taxi or private hire car licence unless it is a Euro 6.

In November 2020, City of Edinburgh Council agreed to amend the terms of the age and emissions policy, by delaying the implementation date for the following milestones until 30 September 2021:

- For existing vehicles, no application will be accepted for licensing a taxi or PHC or as a replacement vehicle for an existing taxi or PHC if it was more than 10 years old (from the date of first registration); and

For vehicles not currently licensed, no vehicle will be accepted for licensing as a taxi or PHC or as a replacement vehicle for an existing taxi or PHC unless it is a Euro 6.

In November 2020, City of Edinburgh Council amended the terms of the Age and Emissions policy, by delaying the implementation date for the following milestones until 30 September 2021.

- For existing vehicles, no application will be accepted for licensing a taxi or PHC or as a replacement vehicle for an existing taxi or PHC if it was more than 10 years old (from the date of first registration); and
- For vehicles not currently licensed, no vehicle will be accepted for licensing as a taxi or PHC or as a replacement vehicle for an existing taxi or PHC unless it is a Euro 6.

These dates were further revised following Committee on the 21st August 2021 where it was agreed that they would take effect from 1 April 2022

1.4 Low Emission Zone (LEZ)

City of Edinburgh Council plan to implement a Low Emission Zone by Spring 2022. The proposals include a LEZ which applies both to the city centre for all vehicles, and city wide for only commercial vehicles (buses, coaches, heavy goods vehicles, light goods vehicles, vans, taxis, and private hire cars).

The proposals as they currently stand require all diesel vehicles to be Euro 6 compliant and petrol vehicles to be Euro 4 standard. A grace period of two years is proposed for Edinburgh's LEZ scheme, which means that subject to approval, enforcement of the LEZ will commence in Spring 2024.

The Council's preferred scheme is currently undergoing a period of public consultation before final approval is sought and formal notice is provided to all consultees prior to implementation in 2022. During the consultation period it is intended that engagement with key stakeholder groups including members of the taxi and PHC trade will take place.

2. Review of the Current Fare Tariff

2.1 Background

City of Edinburgh Council's current fare tariff is detailed on the following page (Figure 2.1). The current fare tariff has been in existence since April 2020¹ and is arranged in a series of four tariffs and extra charges and payments. Tariff 1 operates Monday to Friday 6am to 6pm and Tariff 2 operates Monday to Friday 6pm to 6am and all day Saturday and Sunday. In addition to these two tariffs there are additional tariffs for the Christmas and New Year period. Tariff 3 is operational 6am to 6pm over Christmas and New Year and Tariff 4 is operational 6pm – 6am Monday to Friday and all day Saturday and Sunday during Christmas and New Year. The Christmas period is defined as 6pm 24th December to 6am 27th December. The New Year period is defined as 6pm 31st December to midnight 2nd January.

In addition to these four tariffs there are a series of additional payments for soiling, pick up and drop off at the Airport, additional passengers and call out charges. Table 2.1 details the current fare for a 1 and 2-mile journey at each tariff. The publication Private Hire and Taxi Monthly issues monthly league tables of the fares for 365 authorities over a two-mile day time journey. Each journey is ranked with one being the most expensive. The July 2021 table shows Edinburgh rated 50th in the table, indicating that Edinburgh has higher than average fares. Table 2.2 provides a comparison of where a selection of other authorities in Scotland rank in terms of fares, showing that fares in Edinburgh are mid-range in comparison to other similar Scottish authorities and less than average overall

Table 2.1 Detail of fares of a 1 and 2 mile journey at each tariff

Tariff	1-mile fare	2-mile fare
Tariff 1	£4.75	£6.75
Tariff 2	£5.75	£7.75
Tariff 3	£6.10	£8.90
Tariff 4	£7.70	£11.30

Table 2.2 - Comparison of neighbouring and/or comparable authorities in terms of fares (Source Private Hire and Taxi Monthly, July 2021)

Local Authority	Rank
East Lothian	24
Fife	40
Glasgow	41
City of Edinburgh	50

¹ Whilst the Tariff has been in place since April 2020 in practice due to COVID it did not take effect until the end of July 2020 / beginning of August 2020 because it was not possible to update the meters.

Midlothian	120
West Lothian	262
Falkirk	272

Figure 2.1 Current Fare Card

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
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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
Applicable when taxi is pre-booked but not used		subject to a maximum of £5.00, providing it is no more than the actual amount charged.

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

3. Benchmarking

3.1 Introduction

In order to compare taxi tariffs in other cities in Scotland and the UK a benchmarking exercise has been undertaken. Benchmarking has been undertaken on the following:

- Tariffs
- Cost of a 2, 3- and 5-mile journey
- Additional passenger cost
- Call Out Charges; and
- Cancellation fees

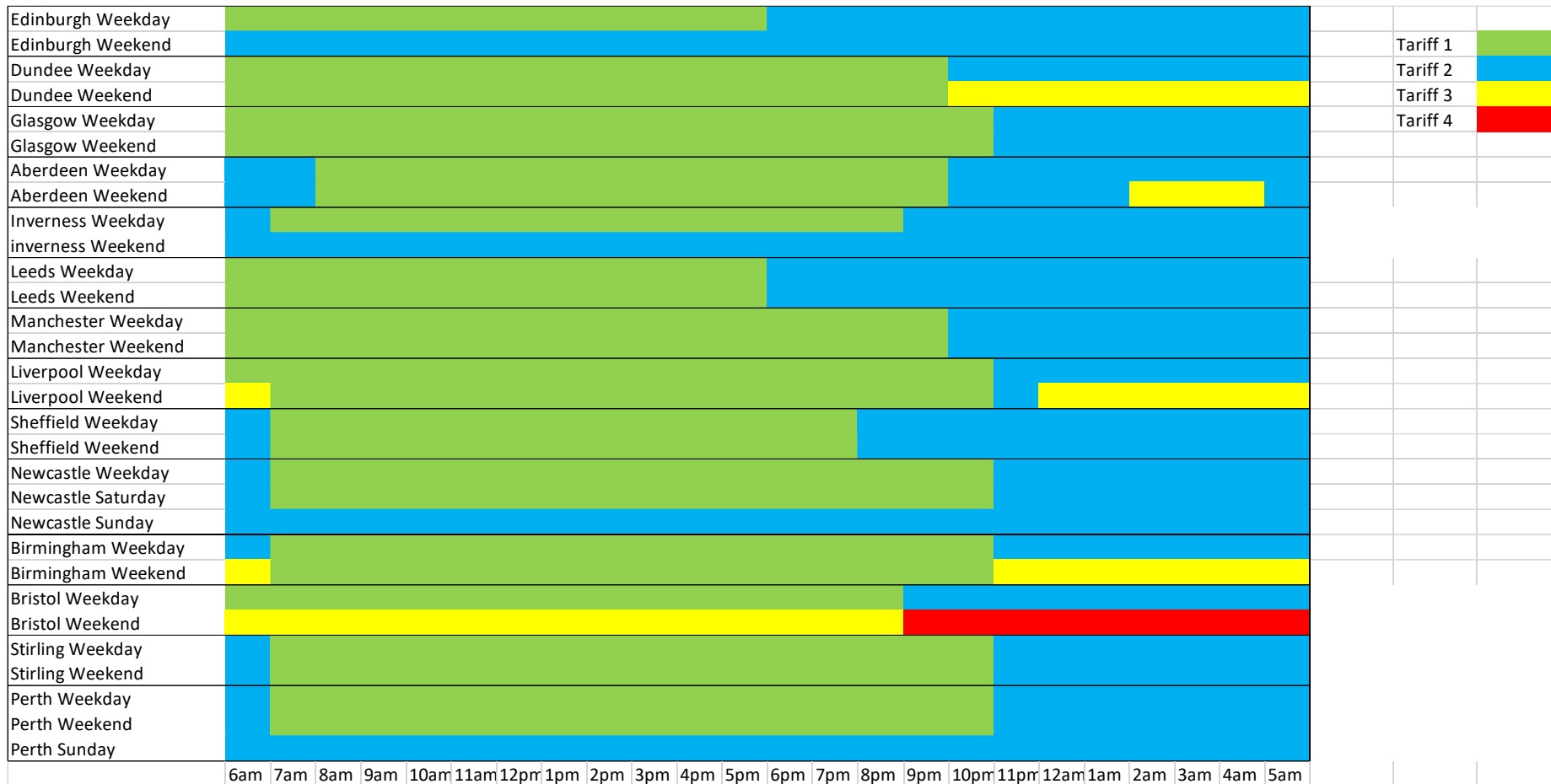
All Scottish cities and a number of Core Cities in England have been used for comparison.

3.2 Tariffs

Figure 3.1 provides detail as to when different standard tariffs apply across days of the week and times of the day for the benchmarked authorities. The majority of authorities have two tariffs – one for daytime and one for nighttime and these apply across the whole week. The time that the night-time tariff applies does vary with the earliest commencing at 6pm and the latest at 11pm. Dundee, Aberdeen, Birmingham and Liverpool have introduced a separate nighttime tariff for weekends.

Edinburgh and Leeds's nighttime tariff commences the earliest of all benchmarked authorities. Most of the benchmarked authority's nighttime tariff commences after 7pm. However, in Edinburgh it is our understanding that 6pm is also when the nighttime shift drivers commence.

Figure 3.1: Applicable tariffs by time of day and day of the week for the benchmarked authorities.



3.3 Comparison of 1,2, 3- and 5-mile fares

Figure 3.2 details the current weekday daytime fare for these authorities over a distance of 1, 2,3 and 5 miles. It illustrates that Edinburgh is towards the higher end of fares at all distances

Figure 3.2 Comparison at 1,2, 3 and 5 miles - daytime

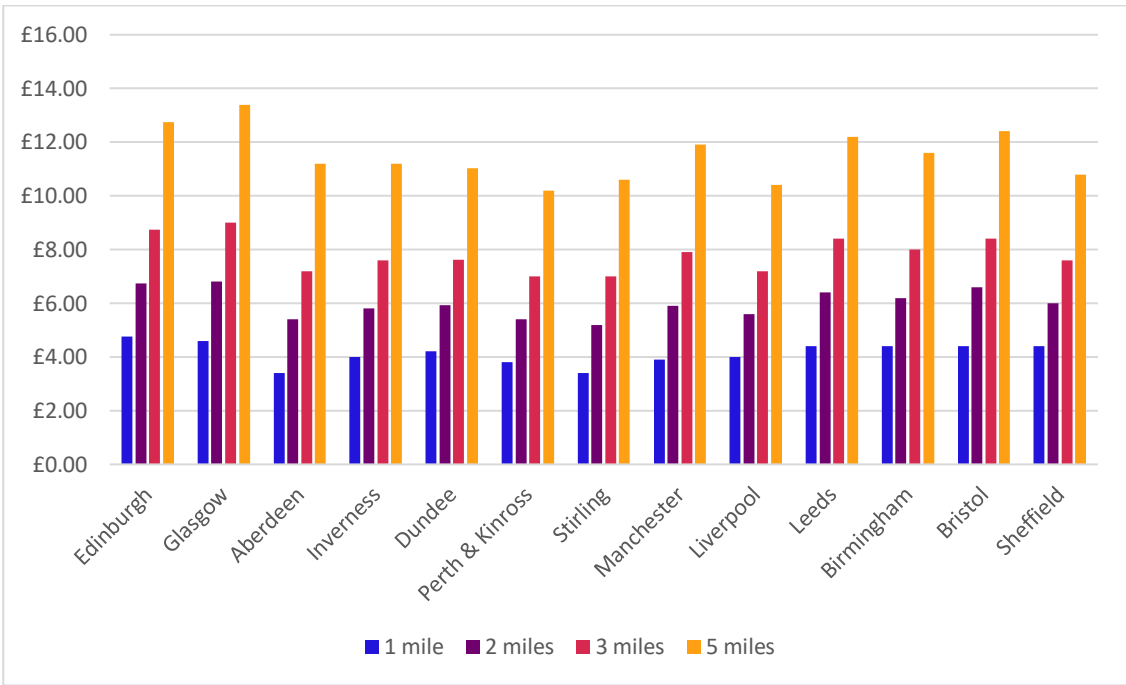
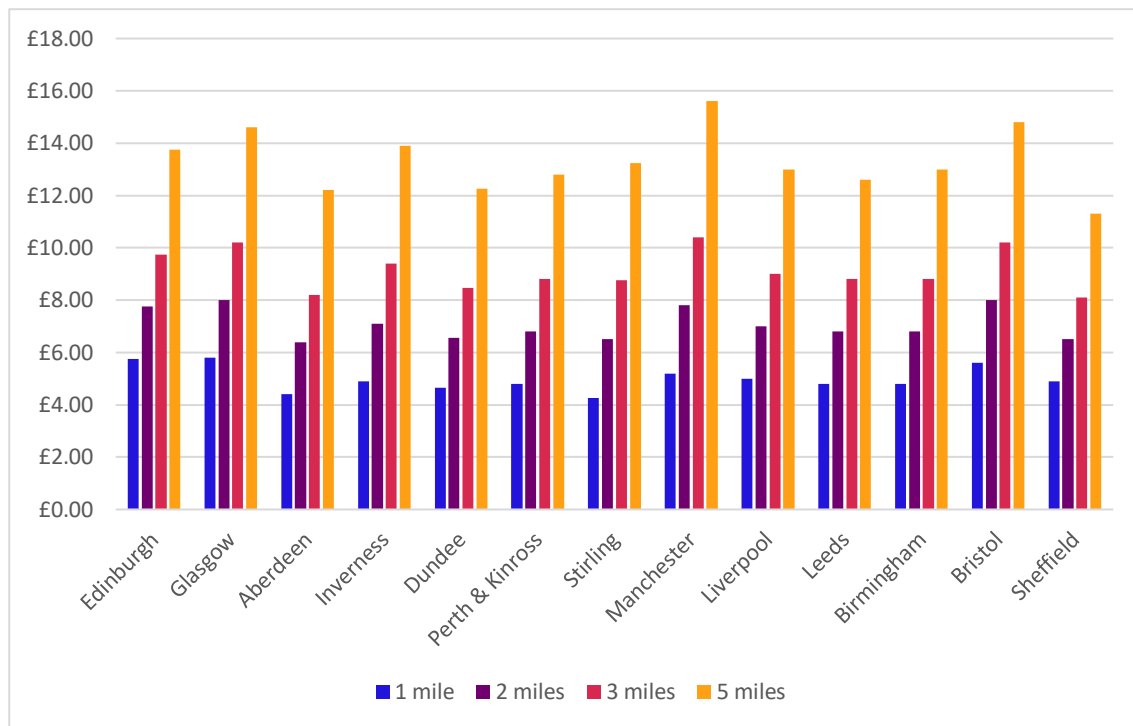


Figure 3.3 details the current nighttime fares for these authorities over a distance of 1, 2, 3 and 5 miles. It illustrates that Edinburgh is just above the average of benchmarked fares for all distances.

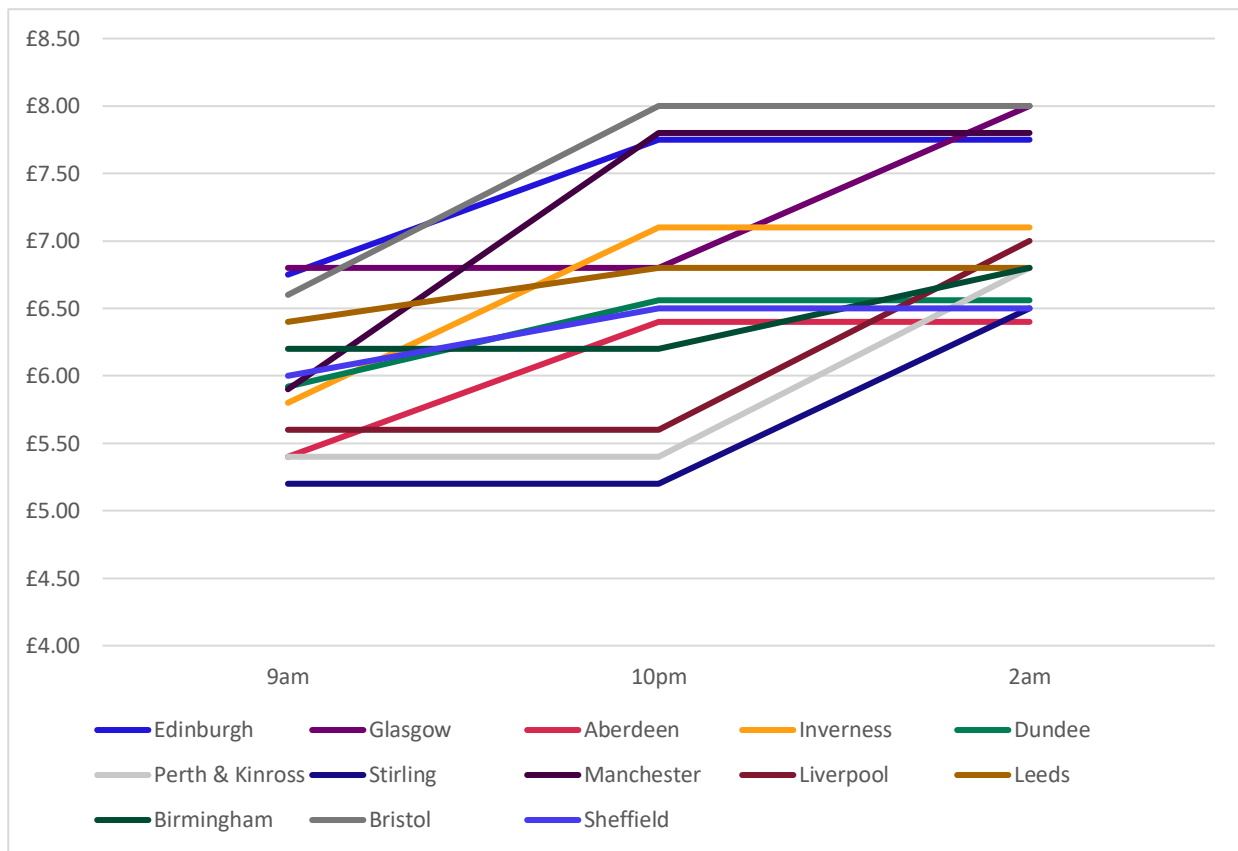
Figure 3.3 Comparison at 1, 2, 3 and 5 miles – nighttime



3.4 Fare for a 2-mile journey

Figure 3.3 compares daytime and nighttime tariffs across the benchmarked authorities. Fares have been benchmarked at three separate time periods on a standard weekday – 9am, 10pm and 2am. The average cost of a two-mile journey at 9am is £6.00; 10pm is £6.62 and £7.08 at 2am. Edinburgh is higher than average across all time periods.

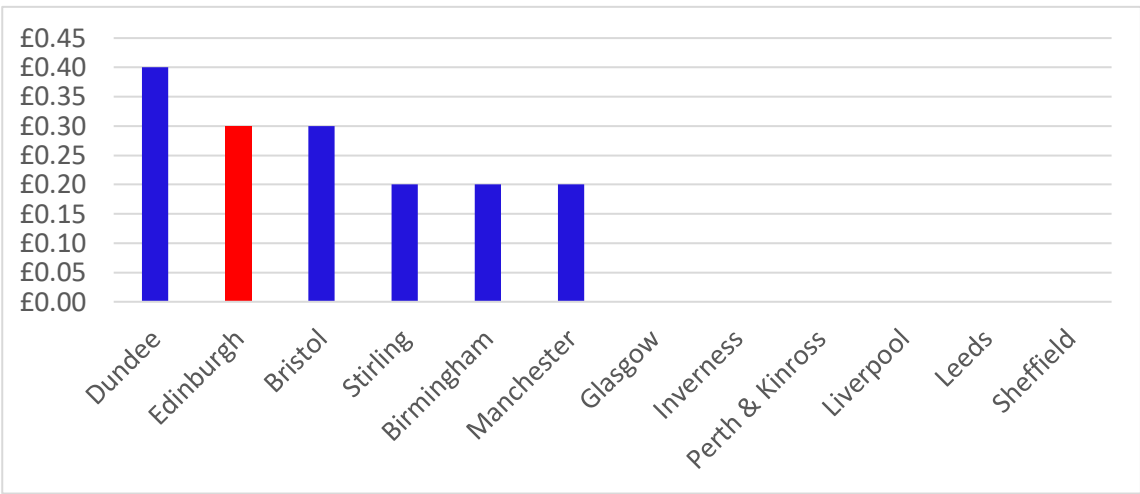
Figure 3.3 Tariff 1 and Tariff 2 comparisons



3.5 Additional Passenger Charge

In Edinburgh the fare card is applicable for journeys with up to 2 passengers. For journeys with more passengers there is an 'additional passenger charge' of 30p. Figure 3.4 illustrates that additional passenger charges do not apply in all authorities benchmarked. Of those authorities that do stipulate a charge the most expensive is in Dundee at 40p per additional passenger.

Figure 3.4 Additional Passenger Charges



3.6 Call out charges

In Edinburgh the fare card allows drivers to add 80p on to the fare when they have been prebooked. Out of the benchmarked authorities only Highland (£1), Aberdeen (£1) and Stirling (50p) have comparable charges.

3.7 Cancellation fees

Edinburgh is the only authority who charge a cancellation fee. This is applicable when a taxi is prebooked but not used.

3.8 Local benchmarking

Local benchmarking has also been undertaken to provide context with Edinburgh’s neighbouring authorities. As detailed in Figure 3.5, East Lothian Council are the most expensive for daytime fares. Figure 3.6 shows that Fife has the most expensive fares on a nighttime tariff for neighbouring authorities.

Figure 3.5 Neighbouring authorities – Daytime fares

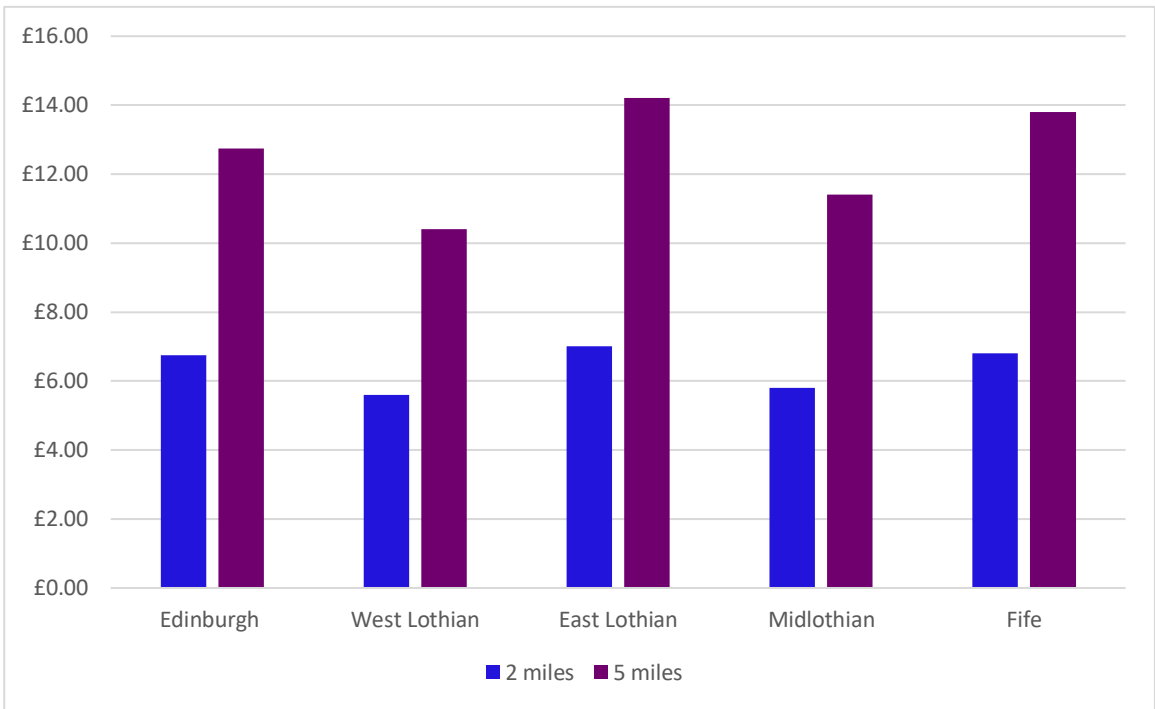
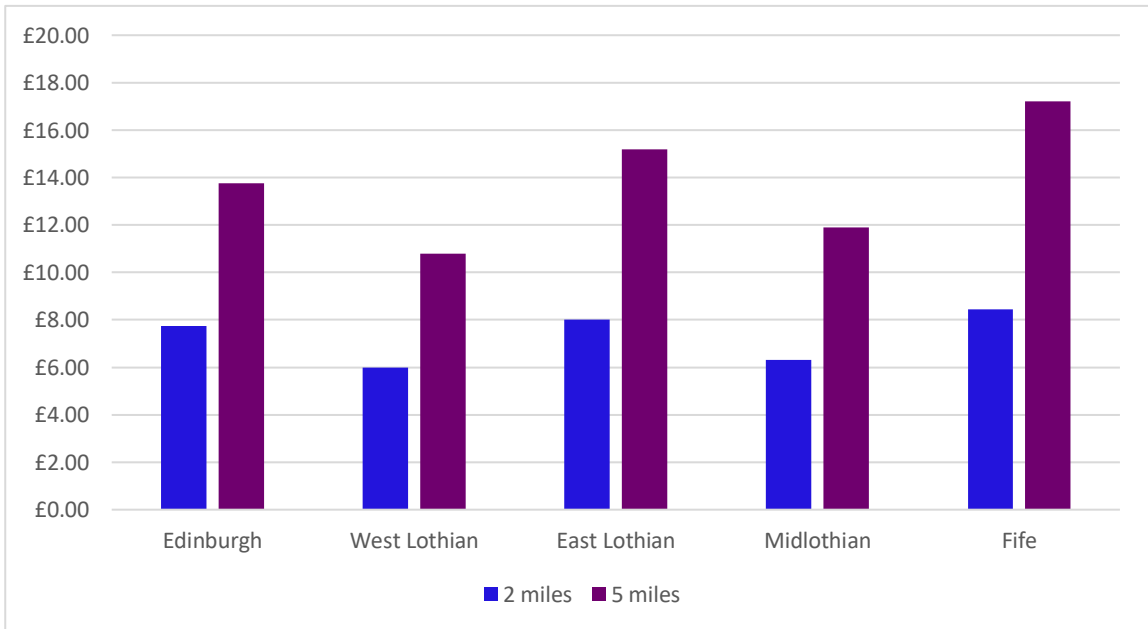


Figure 3.5 Neighbouring authorities – Nighttime fares



4. Consultation – Trade

4.1 Introduction

Three trade meetings were held with representatives of the taxi trade. The approved minutes of all meetings are appended to this report (Appendix 1).

4.2 Trade Meeting 1

The first meeting was held on 5th May 2021. The objectives of this meeting were to garner views on the existing fare card and any proposed increases in the fare card. Invitees and attendees are detailed in Table 3.1

Table 3.1 Meeting attendees

Name	Representing
Les McVay	City Cabs
Kevin Wood	Central taxis
Murray Flemming	Scottish Taxi Federation
Andy Taylor	Unite
Scott Blair	Unite

During the meeting the following was discussed:

- Trade considered that fares should be increased because CEC has increased licensing fees
- Trade wished to see Tariff 4 applying on Christmas Day regardless of what day it falls on
- Consideration that the £5 airport charge is still valid
- The charge for additional passengers should be increased to 40p
- Trade want CEC to make it mandatory that all taxis accept credit cards and the charges with this incorporated into the tariff
- Allowing vehicles to be retrofitted would help the trade as there is a shortage of second hand Euro6 vehicles across the trade

Jacobs agreed to undertake a benchmarking exercise and report back to the next meeting of the trade.

4.3 Trade Meeting 2

The second meeting was held on 29th June 2021. The objectives of this meeting were to report back on the benchmarking exercise undertaken. Attendees are detailed in Table 3.2

Table 3.2 Meeting attendees

Name	Representing
Les McVay	City Cabs
Kevin Wood	Central Taxis
Murray Flemming	Scottish Taxi Federation
Andy Taylor	Unite

Following discussion of the benchmarking exercise the trade discussed:

- Trade happy with the proposed CPI increase of 2.8%
- Increase to be applied across all tariffs
- Passenger charges – attendees want to see this increased to 40p per passenger when there are more than 3 passengers in the vehicle
- Trade to see a revised benchmarking presentation that included, London, West Lothian, East Lothian, Midlothian and Fife

4.4 Trade Meeting 3

The third trade meeting was held on August 18th 2021. Attendees are detailed in Table 3.3

Table 3.3 Meeting attendees

Name	Representing
Les McVay	City Cabs
Kevin Wood	Central Taxis
Murray Flemming	Scottish Taxi Federation
Andy Taylor	Unite

At this meeting Jacobs presented the impact on the fare card with the CPI increase of 2.9%.

Following discussion of the impact the trade stated the following:

- Trade were all in agreement with the following recommendations

- Application of 2.9% increase across all tariffs
- Additional passenger charge of 40p when more than 3 passengers travelling
- Application of T4 for Christmas Day and New Years Day

5. Consultation - Public

5.1 Introduction

A public attitude survey was designed with the aim of collecting information regarding options on taxi fares in Edinburgh. A survey was published online, on the City of Edinburgh Council's Consultation Hub website between 22nd July 2021 and 15th August 2021 and was hosted by Microsoft Forms. In total, the survey received 553 responses.

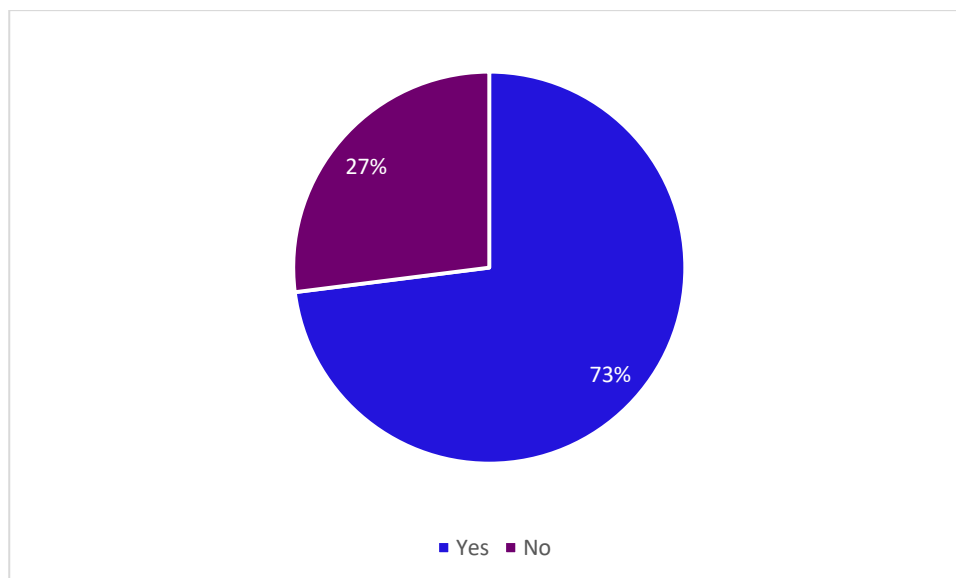
It should be noted that in the tables and figures below, the totals do not always add up to the same amount. This is due to one of two reasons:

- Not all respondents were required to answer all questions;
- Some respondents failed to answer some of the questions that were asked.

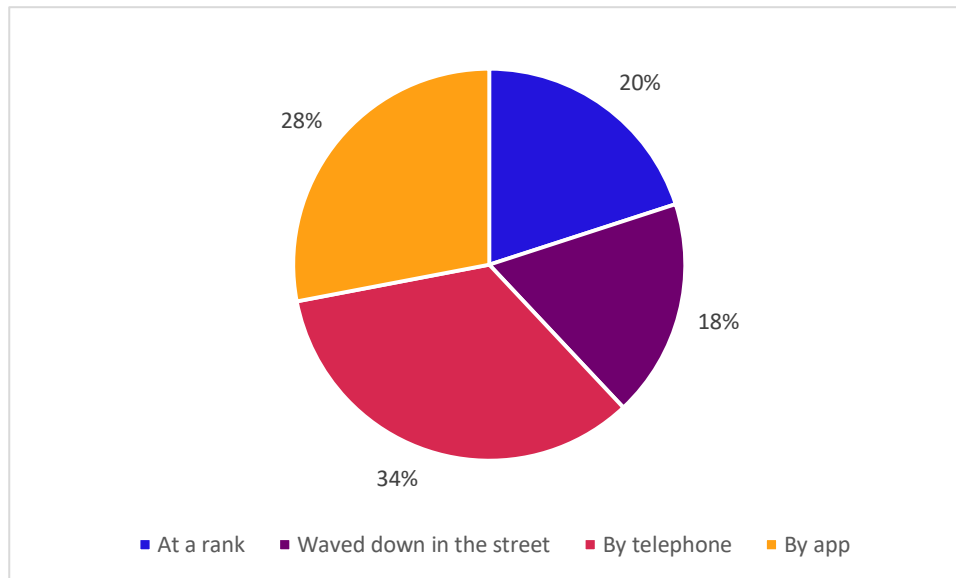
5.2 General Information

The respondents were asked if they had made a trip by taxi (black cab) in the last 3 months. Figure 5.1 displays the results, with 73% of the survey population stating they had used a taxi in this period.

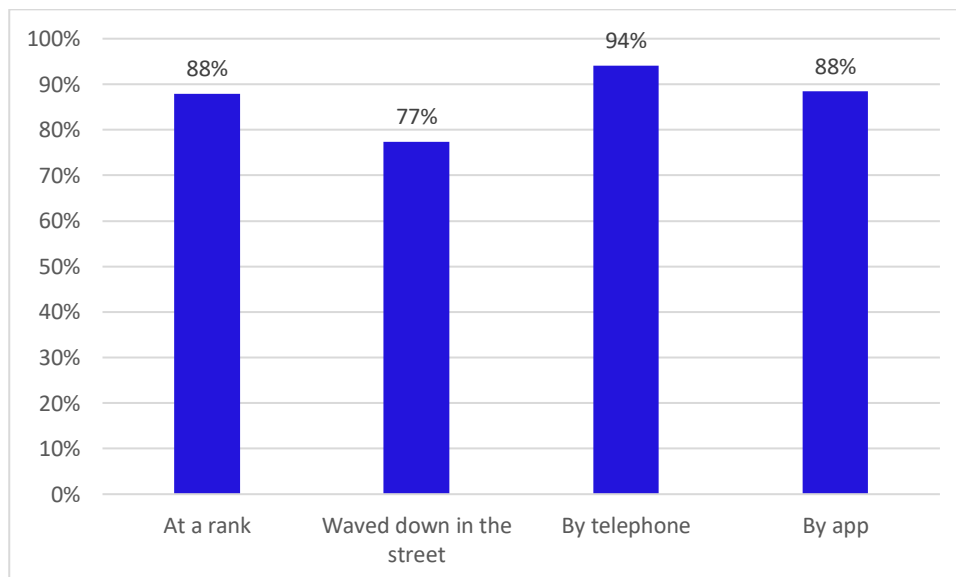
Figure 5.1 Have you made a trip by taxi (black cab) in Edinburgh in the last 3 months?



Those making a trip were asked how they obtained their taxi - Figure 5.2 details the results. The split in how they were obtained is fairly equal, ranging from 18% (waved down in the street) to a maximum of 34% (by telephone). In between lay via an app (28%) and at a specific taxi rank (20%).

Figure 5.2 How did you obtain your taxi in Edinburgh in the last 3 months?

All respondents who were making a trip, regardless of how they obtained it, were asked if they were satisfied with the time taken and promptness of arrival. Overall, 86% of the respondents were satisfied by the time taken and promptness of its arrival. On closer analysis the highest level of satisfaction came from those who obtained their taxi by pre booking the trip via telephone (94%) with the least satisfaction (77%) coming from those who waved a taxi down in the street.

Figure 5.3 Were you satisfied with the time taken and promptness of its arrival?

Respondents reported they waited between 0 – 45 minutes for their taxi.

Trip makers were then asked whether they were satisfied with the cost of their journey. Over half of trip makers were satisfied with the cost of their journey (56%), as seen in Figure 5.4.

Figure 5.4 Were you satisfied with the cost of your journey?

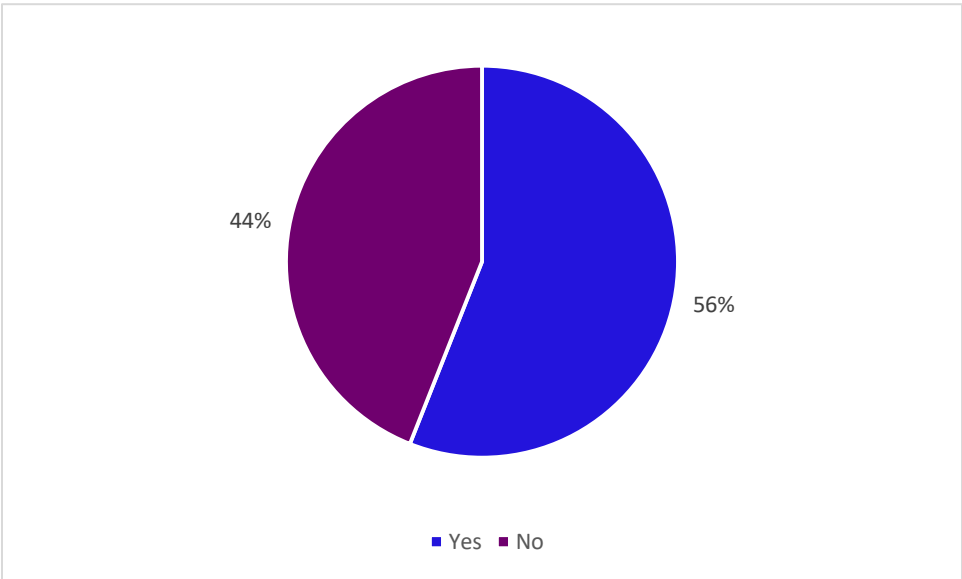
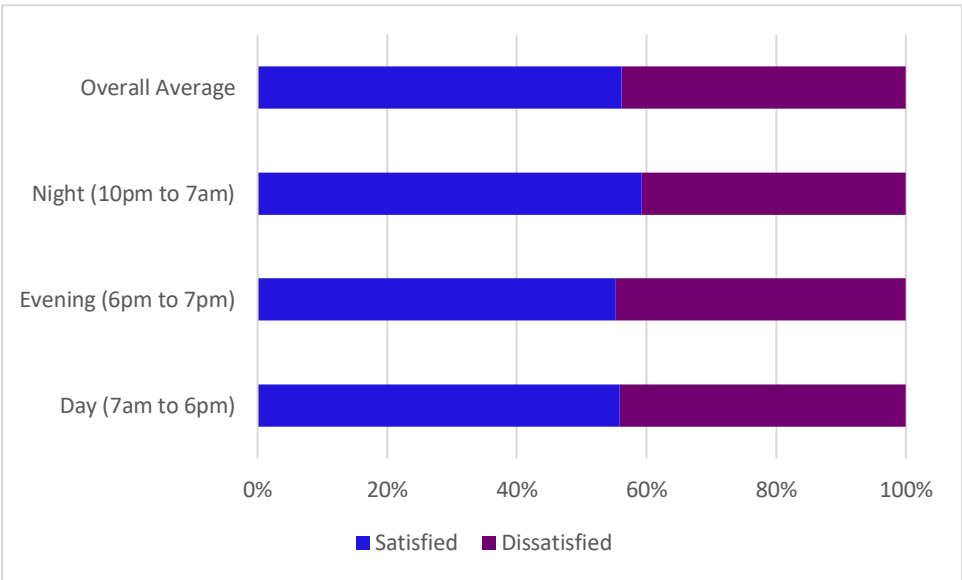


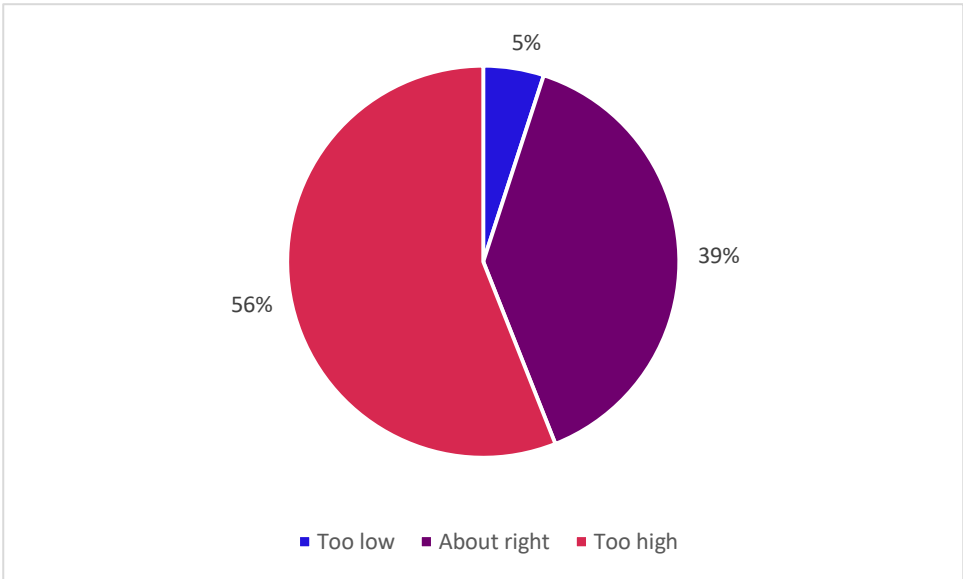
Figure 5.5 documents how this satisfaction with the overall cost varies depending on the time of day the taxi was obtained. Satisfaction was marginally higher for those who used a taxi service at night (after 10pm).

Figure 5.5 Satisfaction with cost by time of day



Respondents were then asked a series of questions relating to fares. Firstly, they were asked whether they consider fares in Edinburgh to be too low, too high or about right, there was also an option of don't know. Over half (56%) felt that fares were 'too high', with an additional 39% stating they were 'about right' – this is displayed below in Figure 5.5.

Figure 5.5 Do you consider taxi fares in Edinburgh to be...?



Respondents were then asked several questions regarding taxi fare increases and the time their trip took place. The answers to these questions have been collated in Table 5.2 below.

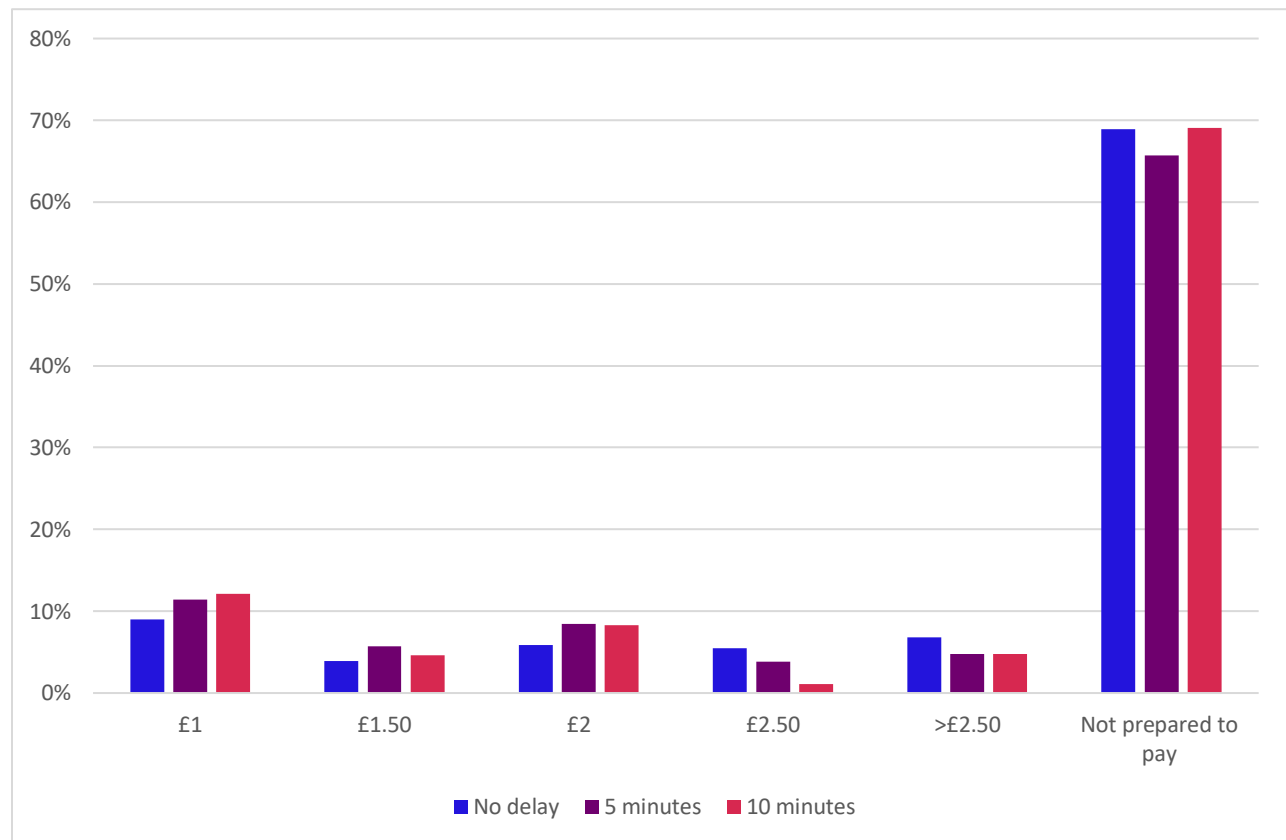
Table 5.2 Analysis of taxi fare price increase awareness and time specific situations

	Are you aware that taxi fares in Edinburgh increase after 6pm?	If taxi fares also increased from midnight to 5am, would you still travel by taxi after midnight?
Yes	70%	54%
No	30%	46%

Over two thirds of the respondents (70%) were aware that taxi fares increase in price after 6pm.

Respondents were then given the scenario of taxi fares increasing between midnight and 5am and were asked if they would still use them if this were the case. Some 54% of them stated that they would still use a taxi for their trip if this were to happen.

Respondents were then asked to consider a range of scenarios in relation to the length of time they would be prepared to wait for a taxi. Respondents were asked whether they would be prepared to pay extra should the delay be limited by either 5 or 10 minutes, or no delay at all. Figure 5.6 shows these results.

Figure 5.6 What would you be prepared to pay to reduce delay?

Most respondents would not be prepared to pay any extra. Some 69% would not be prepared to pay any more even if it meant there was no delay at all. From the data obtained it's clear the majority of people are not prepared to pay any more to reduce the length of time that they have to wait for a taxi.

Respondents were then asked about whether they travelled by taxi over the festive period. Two thirds of respondents did not travel by taxi over the festive period, which is indicative of the lockdown in place over the festive period. Those who had travelled by taxi were asked if they were satisfied with the length of time they had to wait. Some 81% were satisfied with the length of time they had to wait. Those 19% that were not satisfied stated the following:

- 'Hard to get a taxi in South Edinburgh'
- 'Too few taxis available for hospital staff when no buses'
- 'Black cabs in Edinburgh are a disgrace in time taken to arrive, their extortionate fares and grumpy drivers'
- 'Huge queue and overpriced'

Those who weren't satisfied were asked if they were prepared to pay more to reduce the level of delay – the majority (89%) were not. Of the people who were willing to pay more, the highest amount was £2.50.

5.3 Summary

Through the analysis above, some key summaries have been made:

- Of the respondents, 73% have used a taxi in Edinburgh within the last 3 months;
- 86% were satisfied with the promptness of their taxi;
- Obtaining a taxi via the telephone was both the most common way of ordering one (34%) and provided the highest satisfaction in relation to promptness of arrival (94%);
- 56% of the responders were satisfied with the cost and 44% were not;
- Slightly higher satisfaction levels for cost when hiring a taxi during the night (59%) when compared to the day (56. %) or evening (55%);
- Some 56% believe that taxi fares are too high;
- 70% were aware that taxi fares increased post 6pm;
- Some 54% stated that if the fares were to increase between midnight and 5am they would still use taxis;
- The majority are not prepared to pay any more to reduce the length of time that they have to wait for a taxi; and
- 34% used taxis over the festive period, of the 19% who weren't satisfied with the length of time they had to wait only 4 people were prepared to pay more to reduce the level of delay

6. Consultation – Stakeholder

6.1 Introduction

In addition to the trade and public consultation a consultation letter was emailed to a range of stakeholders across Edinburgh. The following groups/organisations were contacted:

- Disability Organisations;
- Business representatives;
- Transport and travel providers;
- Local interest groups including health and education;
- Tourism representatives.

6.2 Stakeholder Responses

Only one stakeholder response was received:

Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living (LCIL)

LCIL consulted with some members of their disabled persons peer support group. Comments were around the fare structure being not very easy to understand, as there are multiple points under charges and four different tariffs. A service user who is visually impaired and used a screen reader told she would not have been able to access this document as it used text boxes to outline the tariffs and fares and her screen reader would not have been able to read the document.

The use of taxi's would increase if the taxi fares were cheaper. Some of the disabled people consulted with told LCIL that taxi's are the only public transport they can access and at times the cost can be prohibitive, despite some funding schemes that allow subsidised fares. Furthermore, people feel safer using taxi's in the current climate due to Covid so would prefer a taxi over using a bus.

LCIL were told by a disabled person who uses Access to Work that the tariffs place limitations on their choice, as Access to Work always go for the cheapest. LCIL were also told that getting quotes can be very difficult.

7. Fare Revision

7.1 Background and overall proposed increases

In May 2013, the Regulatory Committee took the decision to use CPI² as a means of calculating fare increases – this was based on a consultation with the trade. This was applied in July 2014, January 2018, and August 2019 when the index was 108.3. As of July 2021 the index was 111.4. This results in an increase of 2.9%.

7.2 Impact of fare increases

To review the effect of the proposed increase Figure 7.1 sets out the resultant cost of a 2 mile, 3 mile and 5 mile fare at Tariff 1, 2 3 and 4.

Figure 7.1 Proposed fares for 2, 3- and 5-mile journeys

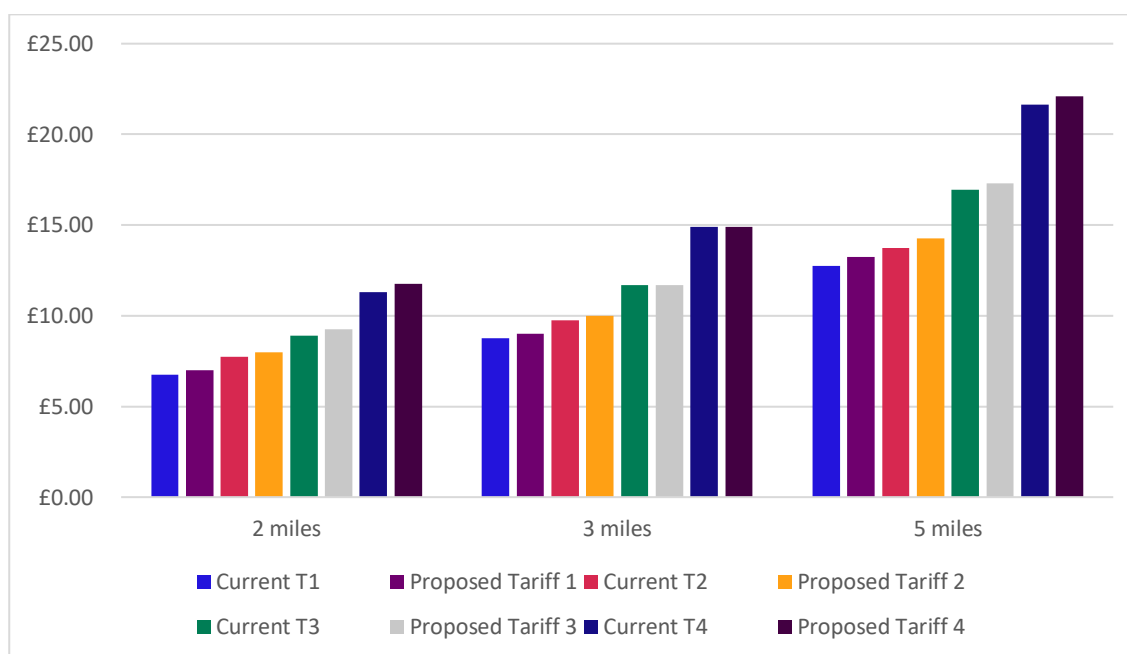


Figure 7.2 compares the figures for a 2-mile journey to comparable cities on a daytime tariff. The average cost of the 2-mile fare across the cities is £5.94. Presently at £6.75 Edinburgh is above this average. Adopting the 2.9% increase puts Edinburgh to the most expensive comparable authority.

² The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is the official measure of inflation of consumer prices on the UK. The CPI calculates the average price increase as a percentage for a basket of 700 goods and services. The basket of goods and services chosen is intended to reflect changes in society's buying habits. The purchase of vehicles – new and second hand, taxi fares, and the operation of personal transport equipment are all included in the index.

Figure 7.2 Impact of options on a 2-mile fare - daytime

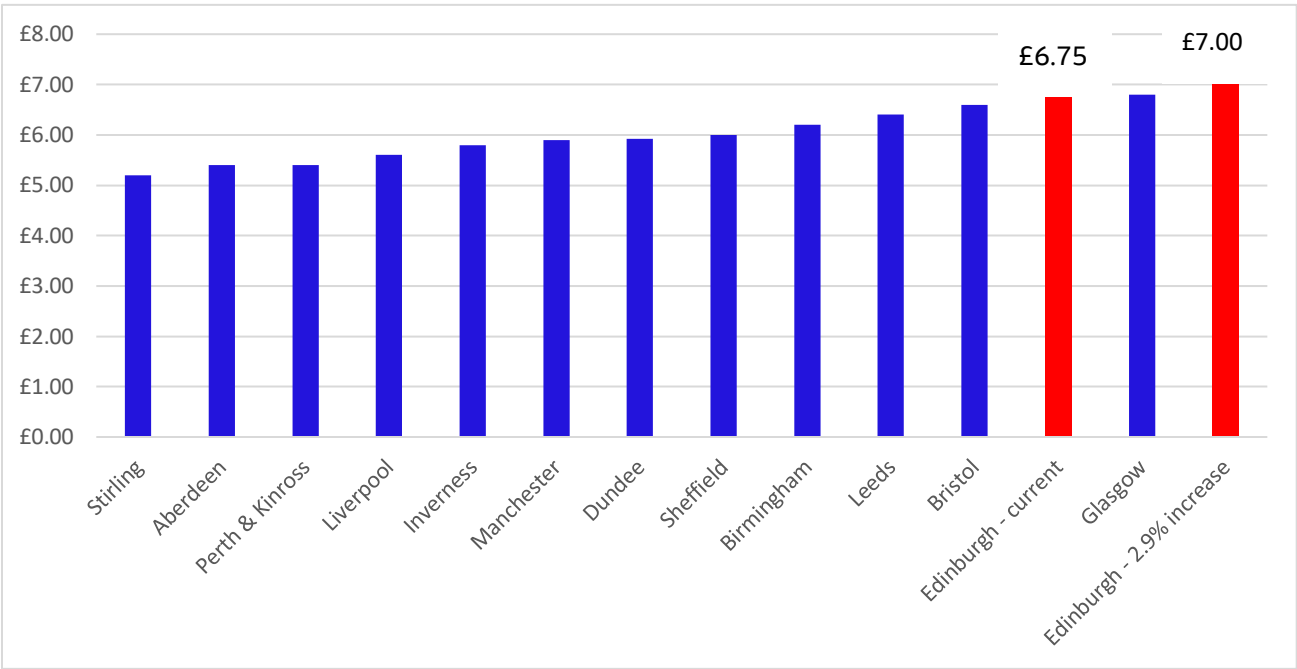


Figure 7.2 compares the figures for a 5-mile journey to comparable cities. The average cost of the 5-mile fare across the cities is £11.41. Presently at £12.75 Edinburgh is above this average. Adopting the 2.9% increase puts Edinburgh to the second most expensive behind Glasgow.

Figure 7.2 Impact of options on a 5-mile fare

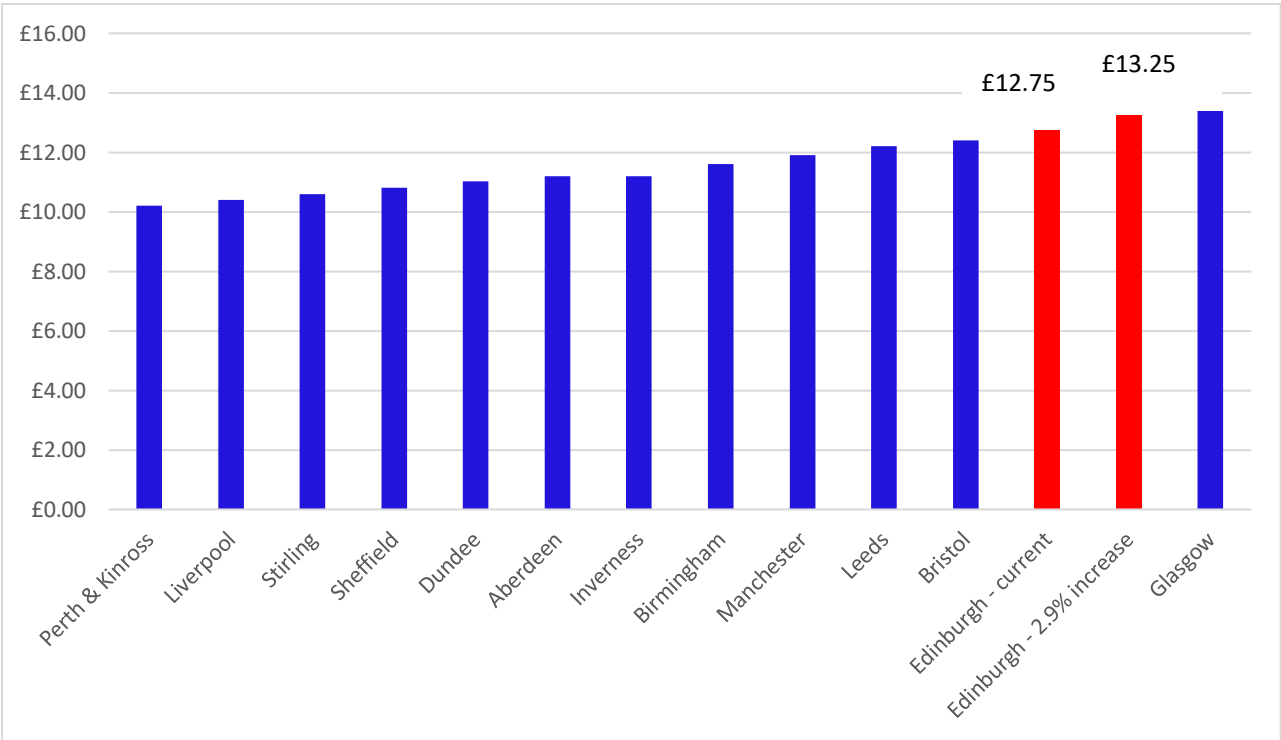
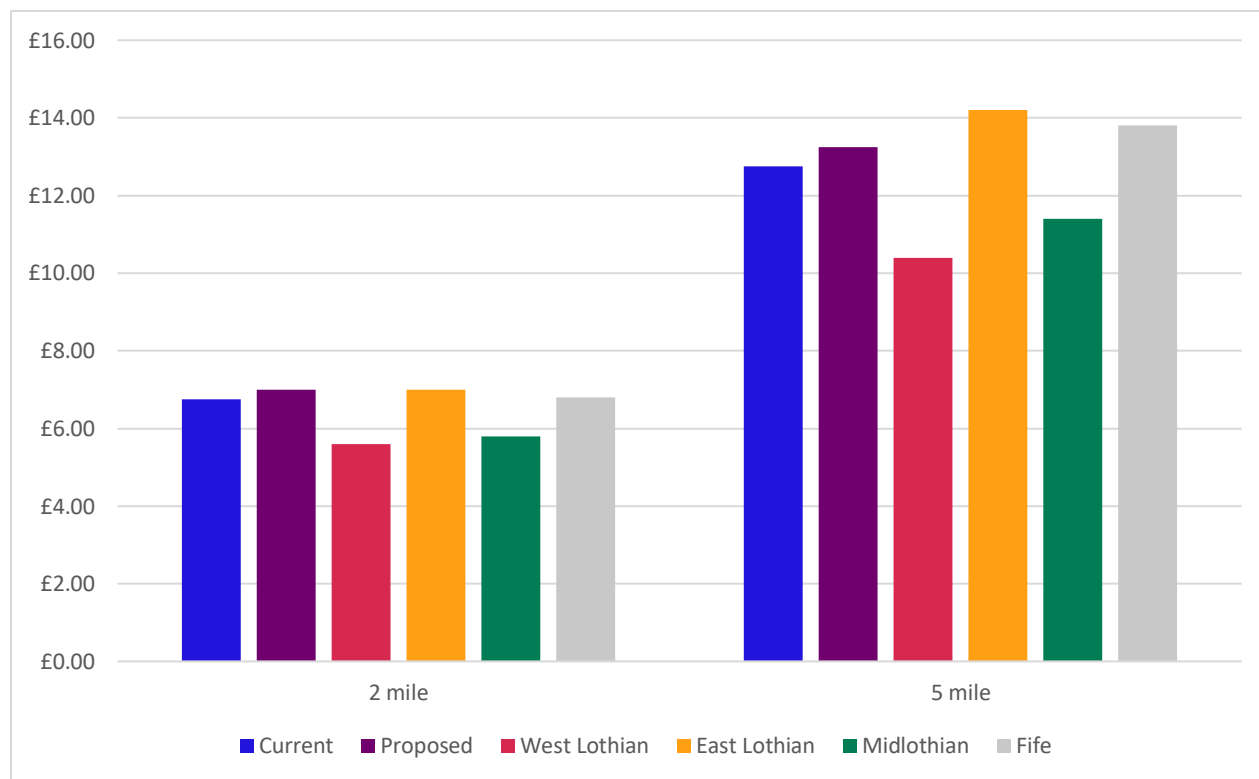


Figure 7.3 compares Edinburgh with neighbouring authorities. It shows that for a 5-mile journey fares in East Lothian and Fife will still be more expensive should Edinburgh introduce the 2.9% increase.

Figure 7.3 Impact of options on a 2 and 5 mile fare – neighbouring authorities



7.3 Amended Festive Tariff

The current festive tariffs (T3 and T4) are day dependent which can be confusing for the customer. If Christmas falls over a weekend the fare is greater than if it falls on a weekday. This can cause confusion to customers as they may not understand why the fare is significantly higher should they travel when Christmas Day falls on a Saturday or Sunday. Trade representatives all wish to see the tariff amended so that T4 should be applied to Christmas Day and New Year's Day (25th and 1st) irrespective of day of the week. All attendees wished to retain T4 during night times on Christmas and New Year's Eve

8. Conclusions

8.1 General

This study has been conducted by Jacobs on behalf of City of Edinburgh Council (CEC). The overall objective was to carry out a review of the taxi fare tariff in Edinburgh including a review of the current fare tariff and advising on any changes. In May 2013 the Regulatory Committee took the decision to use CPI as a means of calculating fare increases. Using CPI the increase applicable is 2.9%. Appendix 2 details the proposed farecard for this scenario. However, consultation with the trade identified that since the last review the running costs associated with operating a taxi have significantly increased.

Discussions with the trade have been undertaken and the trade have expressed their preference for the tariff to be increased in line with CPI.

There was limited response to the stakeholder consultation. The one organisation that did respond stated that the fare card was confusing for those with visual impairments and that the fares were considered expensive.

The public consultation undertaken highlighted that although passengers report high levels of satisfaction with the length of delay encountered when obtaining a taxi (86%), there are much lower levels of satisfaction with the cost of the journeys (56%).

8.2 Recommendations

Having undertaken the fares review Jacobs have proposed a number of changes. Our recommendations cover:

- General Increase;
- Festive Tariff
- Extras

8.3 General Increase

Edinburgh currently sits 50th of 365 authorities for taxi fares. In November 2019 when the previous report was produced, Edinburgh was at position 96. It is clear that Edinburgh currently has above average fares.

However, given the vehicle age policy requirements and the introduction of the LEZ, taxi drivers in Edinburgh need to invest heavily in newer more environmentally friendly vehicles. A fare increase will allow them to generate more income to allow them to invest in the vehicle fleet. However, given the results of the public consultation, the increase needs to be set at such a level that won't prohibit people from travelling in a taxi.

Our recommendation would be in line with those requested by the trade – 2.9% across all tariffs. The impact of this is set out in Tables 8.1 and 8.2

Table 8.1 Tariff 1

	2 mile	% increase from current	3 mile	% increase from current	5 mile	% increase from current
Current T1	£6.75	-	£8.75	-	£12.75	-
Proposed T1	£7.00	3.7	£9.00	2.9%	£13.25	3.9

Table 8.2 Tariff 2

	2 mile	% increase from current	3 mile	% increase from current	5 mile	% increase from current
Current T2	£7.75	-	£9.75	-	£13.75	-
Proposed T2	£8.00	3.2	£10.00	2.6	£14.25	3.6

8.4 Festive Tariff

The current fare tariff is confusing. The fare varies according to which day of the week, Christmas falls. Our recommendation is to amend the tariff to be simpler and more transparent. We suggest the tariff is amended so that T4 should be applied to Christmas Day and New Year's Day (25th and 1st) irrespective of day of the week and that T4 is retained during night times on Christmas and New Year's Eve.

8.5 Extra charges

The trade has requested that the additional passenger charge should be increased from 30p to 40p but only when there are greater than 3 passengers. We feel that this is a fair request.

**THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL
CIVIC GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 1982
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 & Sunday - ALL DAY Monday – Friday between 6pm to 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 163m up until 1933m and thereafter each additional 190m Each additional 35 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		

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 £1 extra for this. (2) If the passenger states he is disabled, the £1 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 £1 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 Section, The City of Edinburgh Council, 249 High Street, Edinburgh EH1 1YJ, and should include the vehicle's licence number and time and date of the incident.