

Title of Report: Taxis and Private Hire Cars, Review of Tariffs

Report by Alan Turpie, Legal Services Manager

Report for Decision

1 Recommendations

The Committee is asked to consider the amended tariff levels for taxis and private hire cars with fitted taxi meters as detailed in Appendix C and to determine if these tariffs be put out to public consultation.

2 Purpose of Report/Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to advise Members of the outcome of discussions with the Midlothian Taxi Operators Association ("MTOA") on proposed amendments to the maximum tariffs which may be charged and to seek authority to put these proposed tariffs out to public consultation.

Date 2 March 2022

Report Contact:

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3 Background/Main Body of Report

- 3.1** The Council, as licensing authority, is required under section 17 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 to review and fix the maximum scale of fees and other charges (“the tariff”) which may be used by taxis licensed to operate within Midlothian. The tariff will also apply to private hire cars with fitted taxi meters.
- 3.2** The initial requirement of the review is that the Council must “consult with persons or organisations appearing to them to be or to be representative of, the operators of taxis operating within their area.” Accordingly, officers have met with the MTOA as an organization representative of taxis operating within Midlothian. During these discussions the MTOA have advised that the tariff has not been increased since 2016 whilst operating costs have increased steadily over the same period with a particular escalation in the price of petrol and diesel in recent months.
- 3.3** There is a right of appeal to the Scottish Traffic Commissioner in respect of any decision the Committee makes regarding the tariff. This may be exercised by any taxi licence holder. Guidance issued by the Scottish Government is that the Committee should consider the costs of operating a taxi as well as the income available to operators when reviewing and setting the tariff. The Committee should also avoid restricting any increase based on concern about the impact on passengers.
- 3.4** The current tariff is attached as Appendix B to this report. The fee varies depending on time of day, distanced travelled and waiting time. There are particular tariffs for the Christmas and New Year period and additional fees for a range of items, including the cleaning of the taxi.
- 3.4** The proposed tariff is attached as Appendix C to the report. The principle changes include:
- The initial charge at tariff 1 is increased to £3.00
 - The initial charge at tariff 2 is increased to £3.80
 - Tariffs 3 and 4 have been merged to form a single tariff 3
 - The initial charge at tariff 3 is proposed at £4.50
 - The additional distance/waiting time charge has been increased to £0.25 per unit at tariffs 1 and 2 and £0.40 at tariff 3.
- 3.5** As stated above, the tariff sets out the maximum charges which licensed taxis may charge for journeys within Midlothian, it would remain open to the operator to charge a lower fee if they so wished.
- 3.6** Should the Committee be minded to consult on the proposed tariff, the tariff will 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 General Purposes Committee for consideration and, if appropriate, approval

4 Report Implications (Resource, Digital and Risk)

4.1 Resource

There are no resource implications arising from this report.

4.2 Digital

There are no digital implications arising from this report.

4.3 Risk

There are no risk implications arising from this report.

4.4 Ensuring Equalities (if required a separate IIA must be completed)

This report does not recommend any change to policy or practice and therefore does not require an Equalities Impact Assessment.

4.5 Additional Report Implications

See Appendix A

Appendices

Appendix A – Additional Report Implications

Appendix B – Existing Tariff

Appendix C – Proposed Tariff

APPENDIX A – Report Implications

A.1 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan

Not applicable

A.2 Key Drivers for Change

Key drivers addressed in this report:

- Holistic Working
- Hub and Spoke
- Modern
- Sustainable
- Transformational
- Preventative
- Asset-based
- Continuous Improvement
- One size fits one
- None of the above

A.3 Key Delivery Streams

Key delivery streams addressed in this report:

- One Council Working with you, for you
- Preventative and Sustainable
- Efficient and Modern
- Innovative and Ambitious
- None of the above

A.4 Delivering Best Value

The report does not directly impact on Delivering Best Value

A.5 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

The report does not directly relate to involving communities

A.6 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

The report does not directly impact on Midlothian Council's performance and outcomes

A.7 Adopting a Preventative Approach

Not applicable

A.8 Supporting Sustainable Development

Not applicable