

COMMITTEE	Licensing
DATE	12 May 2015
DIRECTOR	Angela Scott (Interim Director of Corporate Governance)
TITLE OF REPORT	Taxi Fare Review – Outcome of Consultation
REPORT NUMBER	CG/15/52
CHECKLIST COMPLETED	Yes

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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The Council as the licensing authority for taxis is required to review and fix scales for fares and other charges.

As is required by the legislation the licensing authority consulted trade representatives when it commenced the review of fares before reporting to the Licensing Committee at its meeting held on 17 March 2015.

At that meeting the Licensing Committee proposed not to alter the existing scales and surcharges and thereby fix these at the same level. It did however agree to implement a new surcharge for non-airport zoned taxis dropping off at the inner forecourt of the airport.

In line with statutory requirements, the proposal has been advertised in a local newspaper inviting persons to make representations, which the Committee must consider when fixing the scales. This report is to inform the Committee of any representations received before it comes to its decision regarding the scales and surcharges.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee

1. Confirms its decision to fix fares and surcharges at their current levels and to add a £1 surcharge for non-airport zoned taxis dropping off at the inner forecourt of the airport as advertised in a local newspaper;
2. Approves the fare card attached at appendix 1; and
3. Agrees that the tariff will take effect from 17 June 2015 provided no appeal is lodged with the Traffic Commissioner.

### 3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The staff involvement in a fare review and meter recalibration will be contained within the approved 2015/16 Taxi Licensing Budget

### 4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

In setting fares, the Licensing Committee must take account of relevant costs and comparisons to ensure that the taxi trade receives a fair return to enable it to continue to meet the public's requirement for its services.

### 5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

As is required in terms of section 17 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982, an advert was published in a newspaper circulating locally, namely the Evening Express. Members of the public were invited to submit representations in writing by Monday 27 April 2015.

The period for submitting representations has now passed and none has been received.

Members will recall that they proposed a new surcharge to reflect the fee of £1 introduced by Aberdeen Airport to drop off passengers at the inner airport forecourt. This is a new cost which at present drivers are unable to pass on to customers. Adding a surcharge to the fare card will enable them to do so.

As instructed at the meeting on 17 March 2015 officers will engage with trade representatives and taximeter providers to explore ways in which the tariff charges can be restructured. The intention is to develop a simpler arrangement which would be easier for the customer to understand and would be simple to operate. Officers will report back to a future meeting on the outcome of such discussions.

If the Committee agrees, the proposed fares and surcharges will take effect on 17 June 2015. This will allow officers to complete the statutory procedures.

### 6. IMPACT

Corporate – Reviewing the fare formula supports the corporate aim to be transparent in how taxi fares are set. Fares need to be set at a level that will provide a fair return to the trade. A lack of taxis could have an adverse impact on the local economy and be detrimental to the City's reputation as a destination for business and tourism.

Public – the report will be of interest to both the taxi trade and members of the public. The review is proposing no change other than an additional surcharge to take account of the airport's decision to

charge for vehicles entering the inner forecourt area to the tariff, therefore the proposal has a neutral impact on groups with protected characteristics and an impact assessment is therefore not required.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Corporate – Fares need to be set at a level which will provide a fair return to the trade. This in turn will help to ensure there is provision of adequate taxi services for residents and visitors alike. A lack of taxis could have an adverse impact on the local economy and be detrimental to the City's reputation as a destination for business and tourism. This fits with the Local Transport Strategy, which recognises the important gap in the transport network that taxis and private hire cars can fill.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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