

Business Operations and Partnerships Department

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TO: Councillors A. Convery (Chair); B. Cunningham (Vice Chair); C. Gilbert; A. Ireland; and S. Miller.

LICENSING COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Licensing Committee will be held on **Friday 1 April at 10.00am.**

The agenda of business is listed below.

Louise Pringle

L PRINGLE

DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS OPERATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Please note this is a virtual meeting.

- 1. Report apologies for absence.**
- 2. Declarations of Interest.**
- 3. Taxi Fares Review – Report by Chief Officer (Legal and Procurement) (copy attached, pages 3 - 6)**

For information on how to access the public part of the virtual meeting please email john.burke@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

A recording of the meeting will also be available following the meeting on the Council's YouTube Channel

<https://www.youtube.com/user/eastrenfrewshire/videos>

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EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL**LICENSING COMMITTEE****1 APRIL 2022****Report by Chief Officer (Legal & Procurement)****CIVIC GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 1982 – TAXI FARES REVIEW****PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. For the Committee to review taxi fares.

RECOMMENDATION

2. The Licensing Committee is asked to consider the representations received from taxi operators in East Renfrewshire on 4 March 2022 in relation to the proposed review of taxi fares.

BACKGROUND

3. The Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 (“the Act”) provides that the licensing authority must fix scales for the fares and other charges made in connection with the hire of a taxi or with the arrangement for its hire. This item was continued from 7th December and then considered on the 18th January 2022 when the Licensing Committee agreed to a Public Notice being advertised in the Barrhead News to form the consultation process. Following the publication of the Public Notice, responses were received from representatives of the taxi and private hire license trade with their views in relation to what they consider appropriate fees and charges. At its meeting of 15 March 2022, the Committee had considered representations made by East Renfrewshire taxi operators dated 30 January 2022, however, due to an administrative error, a further representation dated 4 March 2022 had not been attached to the papers. These are now attached for members’ consideration.

It is important to note that these are maximum fares and charges and it is always possible for a taxi operator to charge less if the licence holder wants to. Also, the tariff applies to taxis, not private hire cars.

REPORT

4. The setting of taxi fares is not an exact science but guidance given to Councils by the Traffic Commissioner states that Councils should attempt to calculate the changes and costs that taxi operators face. The current Best Practice Guidance issued by the Scottish Government refers to guidance issued by the Secretary of State in 1982 – “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.
5. The representation to Fare Proposal by a number of taxi operators dated 4 March 2022 is attached.

FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY

6. The carrying out of fare reviews is incorporated within the taxi licensing budget and recovered through application fees.

EQUALITIES IMPACT

7. A fare increase may persuade more licence holders to upgrade to wheelchair accessible vehicles.

CONSULTATION

8. The Licensing Section has consulted directly with every holder of a taxi vehicle licence and has consulted the trade/public through the Council website. The main public consultation was through the publication of a Public Notice in the Barrhead News and the response to this, dated 4 March 2022, is attached.

CONCLUSIONS

9. The Licensing Committee is, therefore, asked to consider the terms of this report together the response to the public consultation and review the fares for the hire of taxis in East Renfrewshire.
10. It should be noted that it is now a statutory requirement to review fares periodically.

RECOMMENDATIONS

11. The Licensing Committee is asked to consider the response to the consultation, dated 4 March 2022, and determine new scales for the hire of taxis in East Renfrewshire and all other charges in connection with the hire of a taxi or with the arrangements for its hire (whether at altered rates or the same rates).

Report Author

Report by: Chief Officer (Legal and Procurement), Gerry Mahon

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Licensing Committee Convenor: Angela Convery

KEY WORDS

Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982, Taxi Licence, licensing, taxi tariff, taxi fare review 2022.

04/03/2022

Representation to Fare Proposal

Dear Joe

In response to the latest fare proposal a number of us drivers and operators want to make some points regarding concerns regarding the fares..

First off all it took a good Google search to find out where the fares were advertised. I doubt much of the Public are going to find this and when it comes to many of the other local authorities there fare proposals appear to be advertised on the Daily Record.

It's been disappointing to see that nobody has bothered to listen to the Trade. On the very first proposal a number of Operators asked for both yardage and minimum waiting time to be altered. It was indeed reduced to 3/4 of a mile (1320 yards) and 4 minutes minimum waiting time. This was welcomed and long overdue compared to running a full mile with no increase to the fare. We had asked the fare sheet to be changed to Yardage as this is what all other Councils appear to do. There is 3 metermen who program the meters and these meters are programmed in yardage as this is how meters are set up. If it's Cygnus, Digitax or Viking meters there is no other way to program them. Going by 10th of a mile is only going to cause issues in the future. We also want to go away from 5 pences. The majority of local authorities fares go up in 10,20 or 30 pences increments. A lot of drivers don't carry any less than 10 pence due to the coin box they have.

It was myself who sent in a letter a month back with a counter fare proposal on behalf of other operators and other councils fare structures.

While we all want a Fare Rise our concern is the price on the fare sheet which I will mention on each Tariff.

Tariff 1- Fare starting at £4.25 will make it minimum £4.85 by 1 mile and £6.85 at 2 miles. As said we want away from 5 pence on all increments. The 2015 fare would see the fare at £3.68 by 1 mile and £5.48 at 2 miles. We would pricing ourselves out the game regarding any work from the ranks. If it's Thornliebank most of the Public there will just phone Thornliebank Radio Cars as it's a good bit cheaper. Going a mile and getting £4.40 would be probably be the most we could charge to be perfectly realistic. The waiting time would work out 40 pence a minute. At the moment it's considered a bit much but perhaps in a year or 18 months this could be reviewed again.

Tariff 2- Its disappointing to see that this would not commence until midnight. The Private Hire companies within East Renfrewshire have there night time fares increase earlier than this (Eastwood Mearns 6pm). Not sure if this is a mistake but the proposed fare would work out at £2.50 a mile and 50p a minute.

Tariff 3- Again disappointing to see again the night tariff not starting until midnight. The full weekend is considered unsociable hours so this tariff should not be brought in earlier. Again the Private Hire Companies (Eastwood Mearns & Thornliebank Cars) have there weekend tariffs start at 6pm with additional tariff again starting from 10pm both Friday and Saturday nights. Not sure if this a mistake but the proposed fare would work out at £3 a mile and 60p a minute.

Tariff 4- We are very disappointing that it appears we are not worth higher fare for working the evenings of Christmas Eve, Hogmanay and overnight from Boxing Day into the 27th. The current fare structure see's all of us get fare and a half from 6pm Christmas Eve and Hogmanay. In Scotland we only get 4/5 days of these higher fares which is a lot less compared to England where a full normal weekend is higher tariffs and all bank holidays are similar fares to the festive period. Why would any Taxi Driver in East Renfrewshire bother to work ranks or bother coming out at all to work for bare fare. Christmas Eve and Hogmanay see buses and trains finish early and only mode of Transport is Taxis. Complete disregard for Taxi Driver/Operators here. It's quite simple don't expect anybody to work for Bare Fare during the times that's been mentioned. East Kilbride Fares start at Fare and a Third from 6am both Christmas Eve and Hogmanay (Tariff 4) and additional third again for a fare leaving the Town. So that's the full day these Tariffs are on. Then they have an additional tariff from 10pm (Tariff 5) and again another additional tariff if it's a weekend during festive period (Tariff 6). With what is proposed it would work out at £4 a mile and 80 pence waiting time. While this may appear too much some drivers would be happy with this and this could be considered for the evenings over the festive period with a fare and a half considered for the early part of Christmas Eve and Hogmanay with Double Fare commencing from 10pm.

We want to Submit a realistic fare Proposal which will be below and reviewed again next year. A copy of this letter will go to Angela Convery and Unite the Union.

If there are any errors with the fare sheet it could result on the meter programmers not being able to program the meter to what should be expected. This is not where anybody wants to go.

Yours Sincerely

Phil Rudden TD045

3/4 of a mile = 1320 Yards
 1/10th of a mile = 176 Yards

Tariff 1.. 5.00 to 22.00

Not exceeding 1320 yards or 4 minutes **£3.80**
 For every 176 yards/35 seconds **£0.20**
(Average 2 miles £6.40)

Tariff 2.. 22.00 to 5.00 (Sunday to Thursday)

Not exceeding 1320 yards or 4 minutes **£4.80**
 For every 176 yards/35 seconds **£0.20**

Tariff 3.. 22.00 to 5.00 (Friday and Saturday)

Not exceeding 1320 yards or 4 minutes **£5.80**
 For every 176 yards/35 seconds **£0.20**

Tariff 4.. 18.00 to 22.00 (24th/31st December)
5.00 to 22.00 (25th/26th Dec/1st Jan)
5.00 (2nd Jan to 5.00 3rd Jan)

Not exceeding 1320 yards or 4 minutes **£6.00**
 For every 176 yards/35 seconds **£0.30**

Tariff 5.. 22.00 (24,25,26th Dec) to 5.00 (25/26/27 Dec)
22.00 (31st Dec & 1st Jan) to 5.00 (1st & 2nd Jan)

Not exceeding 1320 yards or 4 minutes **£7.60**
 For every 176 yards/35 seconds **£0.40**

Waiting Time. Every 35 seconds (34p a minute). **£0.20**
 Waiting Time Per Hour. **£20.50**
 Soiling Charge. **£60.00**

DRIVERS / OPERATORS

SHIRLEY PEDEN - TL001

CRAIG KYLG - TL048

DAVID FAIRBAIRN - TD289

JANETTE MCSORLEY - TD022

SADIG SHEARER - TL076

JOHN BROPHY - TL005

KEVIN RAMSAY - TD049/TL065

PHIL RUDDEN - TD045

ANDY DAVIGS - TD ~~030~~ 320

ROBERT SANDERSON - TL072

JOHN CULLEN - TL017

ALI GASHI - TL020

ALAN FRIGGLAND - TD028