

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Chief Officer – Regulatory & Regeneration

Licensing Committee – 27 April 2022

**Subject: Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982
Review of Taxi Fares and Charges
Clydebank Taxi Licensing Zone**

1. Purpose

- 1.1** To report to the Committee on the review of fares and charges applicable to taxis operating within the Clydebank Taxi Licensing Zone.

2. Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended:-

- (a) that the current level of fares and charges applicable to the Clydebank Taxi Licensing Zone be amended as follows:-

increase the flagfall on all tariffs by 30p;

increase the running mile by 10p on all tariffs;

Alter the wording under Tariff 3 to read:-

(between 9.00pm and 6.00am a 50p extra charge applies)

increase maximum soiling fee from £60 to £100

- (b) that officers arrange for the advertisement of the fares and charges agreed by the Committee; and

- (c) that authority be delegated to the Chief Officer – Regulatory & Regeneration, in consultation with the Chair of the Licensing Committee, to conclude the review without the requirement for the Committee to consider a further report on the matter provided no objections or representations are received in relation to the proposal.

3. Background

- 3.1** In terms of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act, 1982, Licensing Authorities must fix scales for taxi fares and related charges within 18 months from the date on which the scales came into effect.

- 3.2** The fares and charges which are applicable to taxis operating within the Clydebank Taxi Licensing Zone have been in effect since 10 December 2021 and these are detailed at Appendix 1.

- 3.3** At a Special Meeting of the Licensing Committee held on 30 March 2022,

Members decided to change the existing policy in relation to taxi fare reviews by removing the requirement to consult with each individual taxi operator but instead seek the views of the Clydebank Taxi Operators Group for future taxi fare reviews in the Clydebank zone.

- 3.4** On 31 March 2022 a submission was received from Mr. Kenneth McSheaffrey, Secretary of the Clydebank Taxi Operators Group, proposing amendments to the existing fare chart. Mr. McSheaffrey cited a downturn in revenue, rising fuel costs, higher insurance premiums and increasing costs for parts and labour as ongoing concerns for the taxi trade and these were the reasons for the request to increase the fares in such a relatively short timescale from the previous fare review.

4. Main Issues

- 4.1** Having referred to the AA website which provides an average cost of fuel on a monthly basis for Scotland, it shows that in March 2022 the average cost of unleaded fuel was 162.8p per litre and 172.4p per litre for diesel. At the time when the last fare chart became effective in December 2021, the average cost of fuel in Scotland was 145.4p for unleaded petrol and 149.5 p for diesel. This represents an increase of 12% for unleaded fuel and 15.3% for diesel based on the difference in price when comparing the figures between December 2021 and March 2022.
- 4.2** It would be prudent to mention the current situation with international events at the time of writing this report and the knock on effect this may have on fuel prices as a consequence.
- 4.3** Taxi licence holders will incur other vehicle costs including tyres, service and MOT, labour and replacement parts, road tax, insurance, capital costs, vehicle depreciation and licence fees.
- 4.4** The last fare review for the Clydebank zone concluded in December 2021. The effect of this particular review saw the charge on the flagfall for each tariff rise by 30p.
- 4.5** At the meeting of the Licensing Committee held on 16 March 2022, Members decided to increase the maximum soiling fee within the fares and charges applicable to the Dumbarton & Vale of Leven zone and decided to increase the fee to a maximum of £100. In the interests of consistency it is recommended by Officers that the same level of fee be applicable in the Clydebank zone.
- 4.6** In terms of Section 17 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982, before fixing any scales or carrying out any review the Licensing Authority are required to consult with persons or organisations appearing to be representative of operators of taxis within the area. For the purposes of this fare review the organisation is recognised as the Clydebank Taxi Operators Group.
- 4.7** Before fixing any scales or carrying out any review, in addition to consulting with persons or organisations appearing to be representative of operators of taxis within the area, the Licensing Authority is required:

- (a) to publish the proposed scales in a newspaper circulating in the area setting out the proposed scales, explaining the effect of the proposed scales and proposing a date on which the proposed scales are to come into effect;
- (b) to invite representations from any persons with respect to the proposals within a period of one month from the date of publication of the notice; and
- (c) to consider any such representations which have been duly lodged before a decision is taken on the matter.

4.8 It should be noted that if representations or objections to the proposals are received, a further report on the matter will require to be considered by the Committee. In addition, there is provision within the legislation for taxi operators within the area to appeal to the Traffic Commissioner against any decision of the licensing authority on the review of scales.

4.9 Should no objections or representations be received in relation to the proposals, in order to expedite matters, it is suggested that authority be delegated to the Chief Officer - Regulatory and Regeneration in consultation with the Chair of the Licensing Committee to conclude the review without the requirement for the Committee to consider a further report.

5. People Implications

5.1 There are no personnel issues for the Council arising from this report.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 There are no financial implications for the Council arising from this report.

7. Risk Analysis

7.1 There is no increased risk to the Council associated with the contents of this report.

8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

8.1 No impact assessment is required because this report does not involve any change to policies or services or financial decisions.

9. Consultation

The submission received from the Clydebank Taxi Operators Group was in response to consultation with their members at a recent meeting of their organisation.

Chief Officer – Regulatory and Regeneration

Date 6 April 2022

Person to Contact:

Robert Mackie,
Senior Officer (Licensing Services),
Licensing Team,
Municipal Buildings,
College Street,
Dumbarton,
G82 1NR.

Tel. No. (Direct line) 01389 738742.
robert.mackie@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

Appendices

1. Current Fare Chart for Clydebank Taxi Licensing Zone.
2. Email from Mr. Kenneth McSheaffrey, Secretary of Clydebank Taxi Operator's Group dated 31 March 2022
3. Proposed Fare Chart for Clydebank Taxi Licensing Zone.