

Sirs,

I refer to the notice placed in the local newspaper regarding proposals to amend the Taxi Fare Tariffs – Clydebank Zone.

As invited I wish to make representations on those amendments for and on behalf of several Taxi operators who like myself were not consulted prior to the proposals. Please be aware that unlike previous reviews until the advert was brought to our attention, we were almost entirely unaware of the review being undertaken.

In general terms, unlike the Dumbarton Fare chart and despite repeated representations there has been a failure to make small incremental increases in previous reviews since 2009.

Clydebank Taxi trade earnings have fallen considerably behind Dumbarton during this period and the recent significant increases in all costs have exacerbated the drop in relative take home earnings.

It is asked that the Council now consider addressing the most pressing requirements of this failure.

1. The proposal for basic tariff increase.

Referring to the Council minutes there is no analysis or study of costs provided nor any indication of the basis which the proposed increases are made. Neither does the submission by a taxi trade representative. No costings nor detail to support what appears to be a finger in the air stab at it.

On a nominal 2-mile journey, about average within Clydebank zone the proposal is an increase of approx. 50p or 9 %.

And that is without factoring in the 'round up' factor in tips and gratuities e.g. "Take £7 driver" for a £5.20 fare does not become necessarily become "take £7.50". An increase in fares often means a decrease in gratuity and no increase in net earnings.

Meantime fuel has increased 50% in 12 months. 30% last review October 2022.



Source [Weekly road fuel prices - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

Already out of date as prices go over £2.00 per/l this week.

Tyres, parts etc. have all increased at least 30%.

The proposed increase after cost leaves drivers with a considerable net loss before consideration drivers needs due the well-documented cost of living crisis.

Drivers have home fuel and other bills to contend with. And are as entitled to seek increased earnings as any other worker.

The proposal, high flagfall and low running mile unlike the more balanced and considered Dumbarton tariff, burdens the public with higher charges on shorter journeys. Longer journeys with potential for increased waiting time (see below) become net losses to drivers.

Bringing the flagfall into line with Dumbarton to ½ mile would make it easier for both drivers and public to understand. And lessen the burden on short journey passengers.

In conclusion the proposal falls well short of an increase in driver net take home earnings. And is increasingly burdensome on passengers taking short journeys. Unfair and discouraging their use of taxis.

A proposed increase of 30p on flagfall (1/2 mile) with an increase of 20p on the running mile would better serve drivers and the public.

2. Elements other than Flag Fall and Running Mile.

We again bring to the Council attention several elements of the fare chart where Clydebank drivers are disadvantaged compared to those in Dumbarton.

Christmas and New Year Tariff.

The Clydebank Zone Tariffs drop down at 12:00 midnight whereas Dumbarton tariffs continue until 6:00am.

When public demand is increasing as licensed premises etc are closing, Clydebank fares decrease.

This matter was addressed in Dumbarton area a few years ago and should be relatively simple to address. And without opposition as the public just want to get home and not find a shortage of taxis because drivers have gone home.

Please bring the Christmas and New Year timescale in line with Dumbarton.

Fares for Waiting

No increase since before 2008 in Clydebank. Steady increments over the last 12 years in Dumbarton. The latest implemented on 26th May 2022 and now sets **Dumbarton at double the Clydebank tariff.**

It is difficult to find any difference between a Clydebank driver and a Dumbarton driver on waiting time. Each pays the same licence fees. Drivers in both areas should have the same take home earnings.

Example:

Clydebank average 'weigh in' at £180/ wk. Based on 40-hour week is a cost of £4.50/hr.
Current tariff at 10p per 30 secs or £12 /hr gross.

£7.50 per hour gross whether it is midday or midnight.

From this the driver must set aside Holiday pay, Sickness Pay, Pensions etc.

Unlike otherwise self-employed persons this rate is **set by West Dunbartonshire Council.** And is currently set well below the national minimum wage and WDC policy of living wage.

Please bring waiting time in line and to the same level as Dumbarton.

Hires between Dumbarton and Clydebank

Drivers can negotiate a rate from Drumchapel/Yoker and beyond but must use the meter into Dumbarton.

£15 for a hire 2 miles beyond the Clydebank zone in one direction but £15 for 7 miles in the other.

A Dumbarton driver carrying 5 passengers charges over £20 for the same 7 mile journey.

Add the A82 traffic issues and its just not worth a Clydebank drivers risk.

Clydebank drivers may and will likely choose not to leave their licensed area for Dumbarton unless it is very quiet and business is slow. For the public wishing to return home especially at peak times this is not to their liking.

Unless Clydebank drivers can do these journeys at the same rates as Dumbarton drivers they should at least be allowed to negotiate the fare.

