
ANNUAL TAXI FARES REVIEW 2017/18

Report by Service Director Regulatory Services

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

30 January 2018

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report advises Members of the recent public consultation undertaken in connection with the statutory review of the current scale of charges for taxi fares.**
- 1.2 The Council as licensing authority is required in terms of Section 17 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 ("the Act") to review the scales for fares and other charges in connection with the hire of a taxi at intervals not exceeding 18 months of the last review.
- 1.3 A report on the consultation with the taxi trade was presented to the Councils Executive on 17 October 2017
- 1.4 Following the Executives decision to keep taxi fares at their current rates the Act requires the council to then undertake a public consultation on taxi rates.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 I recommend that the Executive Committee decides:**
 - (a) That taxi fare rates should remain unaltered in line with the outcome of the Council's established formula;**
 - (b) Now that all consultations are complete Taxi Operators are written to in accordance with the Act and informed of the Councils decision.**

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Scottish Borders Council, as Licensing Authority is required under Section 17 of the Act to review and then fix scales for fares and other charges at intervals of not exceeding 18 months from the date the last scales came into effect. The current scales came into effect on 10 October 2016.
- 3.2 At the Council's Executive meeting on 17 October 2017 a paper was presented that reported on the consultation with the taxi trade and it was agreed that taxi fares will remain unaltered in 2018 and a further review of taxi fares would be undertaken within 18 months as required by the Act.
- 3.3 Following the Executives decision to keep taxi fares at their current rates the Act requires the council to then undertake a public consultation on taxi rates. Item 4.9 of the Executive report of 17 October 2017 and item 4.1 below explains the background to this.

4 TAXI FARES; OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION WITH THE PUBLIC

- 4.1 As part of the review the Council is obliged to consult with persons or organisations appearing to it to be, or to be representative of, the operators of taxis operating within its area. Following that consultation the Council is required to review the existing scales, and thereafter propose new scales (whether at altered rates or the same rates). The proposed scales, their effect, and the date upon which it is proposed they come into effect must then be published in a newspaper and representations invited from the public in writing by a stated deadline. The Council must then consider any representations received.
- 4.2 In accordance with the usual guidance the public consultation ran for 4 weeks. It commenced on 25 October 2017 and ended on 24 November 2017.
- 4.3 The consultation was advertised in local newspapers and also appeared in some on-line versions of the local press. The council also advertised the consultation on its website and its social media outlets.
- 4.4 A total of 6 people responded to the consultation. Their responses can be viewed in APPENDIX 1.
- 4.5 Of the 6 people who responded 2 were taxi operators whose views have been previously captured and were included in the report of 17 October 2017. Despite having seen these previously, their views are included in the appendix.
- 4.6 Of the 6 responses:
 - 1 was a suggestion around a new fare structure and
 - 2 were in favour of keeping taxi fares at current rates and
 - 3 were in favour in an increase to current rates.

5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial

There are no costs to the Council, other than officer time in the reviews, attached to any of the recommendations contained in this report.

5.2 Risk and Mitigations

The Council does have a statutory duty to consider reviewing taxi fares within 18 months of the previous review and therefore may risk a legal

challenge and reputational damage if it does not comply with this requirement, thus this report and its recommendations for risk mitigation.

5.3 **Equalities**

An Equality Impact Assessment has been conducted and no negative impacts have become apparent. Indeed maintaining the licence fee will lead to a positive impact for the whole community as access should remain status quo.

5.4 Equalities will need reviewed for impact if any increase recommended.

5.5 **Acting Sustainably**

The Council has a statutory responsibility to review taxi fares within 18 months of the previous review.

5.6 **Carbon Management**

Taxis are a carbon consuming service. However this fact must be balanced against the level of provision particularly in rural areas where mainstream local bus services cannot or do not operate.

5.7 **Rural Proofing**

Not applicable as this is not a new policy.

5.8 **Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation**

No changes to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation are required as a result of the recommendations in this report.

6 **CONSULTATION**

6.1 The Chief Financial Officer, the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Chief Officer HR and the Clerk to the Council have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

Approved by

Brian Frater

Service Director Regulatory Services

Signature

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Background Papers: None

Previous Minute Reference: Executive Committee 17th October 2017

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