

The background of the slide features a large, light blue outline of the Seal of the City of Anchorage. The seal is a shield-shaped emblem. At the top is a crown with four points, each adorned with a flower. The shield is divided into four quadrants. The top-left quadrant shows a sailing ship on wavy lines representing water. The top-right quadrant depicts a moose head facing left. The bottom-left quadrant shows a smaller sailing ship on wavy lines. The bottom-right quadrant features an eagle with its wings spread, perched on a branch. A banner at the bottom of the shield contains the text "ANNE FOR A".

Agenda Item 13

Review of Taxi Fare Scales and Other Charges

Falkirk Council

Title: Review of Taxi fare scales and other charges
Meeting: Executive
Date: 17 October 2023
Submitted By: Director of Transformation, Communities and Corporate Services

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to detail for consideration, the responses received to the taxi fare scales consultation recently undertaken.

2. Recommendation

2.1 Executive is asked to agree: -

- (1) to the proposed changes previously considered and to the**
- (2) revised festive tariff rate detailed in the report.**

3. Background

- 3.1 On 22 August 2023, the Executive agreed to changes in the current taxi fare scales and charges. A copy of the report is attached as Appendix 1 to the report. In accordance with the legislation, this decision was advertised in the local newspaper and subject to a 4-week consultation. In addition, and to maximise the scope of the consultation, it was also published on the Council's website, and all licensed operators were emailed with a copy of the report.
- 3.2 It was further agreed that should any representations be made then these should be considered by the October meeting of the Executive for a final decision.

4. Responses to the consultation

- 4.1 There were 7 trade responses received in relation to the proposed changes to the taxi fares and scales and they are attached as Appendix 2 to the report.
- 4.2 The original suggested changes were proposed by the Taxi Forum trade representatives. Following on from the decision of the Executive in August, the Taxi Forum trade representative who had proposed the introduction of a specific festive tariff, contacted the Licensing section to advise that the suggested rate was double time and not time and a half as detailed in the report.

- 4.3 This was checked and was a genuine oversight by the officer. Replacing public holidays with a slightly enhanced tariff (time and a half) over the festive period would not encourage a greater number of drivers to operate over the festive period. The intended double time is considered sufficiently attractive and may result in greater availability of taxis during a period when public transport can be limited.
- 4.4 A revised tariff table with details of the revised festive tariff is attached as appendix 3 to the report.

5. Consideration of the responses

- 5.1 Officers have carefully considered the comments received and would offer the following by way of a response.
- 5.2 The introduction of a festive tariff rate at double time will encourage greater numbers of drivers to operate during the festive period and provide a much-needed service to the public. It is noted however, that any increase may still not encourage some drivers who will not operate at this time, and this is noted in a comment received.
- 5.3 The soilage charge is a substantial increase on the current charge, however the new charge is intended to act as a deterrent and as a reasonable charge to a driver that may lose an entire shift if the taxi must stop operating until professionally valeted.

6. Implications

Financial

- 6.1 There is no direct financial impact on the Council.

Resources

- 6.2 There are no resource implications arising from the report.

Legal

- 6.3 The legal implication arising from the report recommendations is that the Council continues to fulfil its duty to fix taxi fare scales at regular intervals in terms of Section 17(2) of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982

Risk

- 6.4 None identified.

Equalities

- 6.5 An Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment has been undertaken and is attached as Appendix 4. The Assessment shows there will be limited impacts across all protected characteristics over the festive period, but this is mitigated to an extent by the removal of public holidays.
- 6.6 The Scottish Government's Taxi and Private Hire Car Licensing: Best Practice for Licensing Authorities guidance, issued April 2012 advises that authorities should pay regard to advice contained in the Scottish Development Department Circular 25/1986. It states that, "in fixing fares authorities will want to pay primary regard to the costs incurred by the trade, having regard to the capital costs (including interest payments) of the vehicles, the costs of maintaining and replacing them to the standard of the licensing authority, of employing drivers and the prevailing level of wages and costs in related road transport industries. The public interest is best served by ensuring the maintenance of an adequate taxi service by giving the trade a fair return rather than depressing fares for social reasons, however understandable".

Sustainability/Environmental Impact

- 6.7 There is no environmental impact arising from the contents of the report.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 It is proposed that the proposed increases to the taxi fare level and charges as agreed by the Executive with the adjusted Festive tariff rate are finalised.

Director of Transformation, Communities and Corporate Services

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Date: 6 October 2023

Appendices

1. Report to the Executive – 22 August 2023.
2. Table detailing responses
3. Revised Tariff table
4. EPIA

List of Background Papers:

No papers were relied on in the preparation of this report in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

Falkirk Council

Title: Review of Taxi Fare Scales and Other Charges
Meeting: Executive
Date: 22 August 2023
Submitted By: Director of Transformation, Communities & Corporate Services

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The report details the statutory requirement to review the taxi tariff and outlines the views of the Taxi Forum.
- 1.2 The review supports sustainable taxi and private hire provision in the council area and relates to the Council Plan Priority of supporting a thriving economy and green transition.

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Executive is asked to agree:-

- (1) to the proposed changes to the existing Taxi fares and scales and
- (2) to instruct the Chief Governance Officer to advertise the fare scales and charges to take effect from midnight on 1 December 2023 and;
 - (a) in the event of any written representations being received in respect of the published proposals, a further report will be submitted to the Executive to allow them to be considered and;
 - (b) If no written representations are received the proposals will be held as confirmed and formally notified to the consultees.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 imposes a duty on all Councils to fix, from time to time, the maximum charges for the hire of taxis. The last increase in the tariff was introduced in September 2022.
- 3.2 Before fixing any scales or undertaking such a review the Council must:
 - (i) consult with persons or organisations appearing to them to be, or be representative of, the operators of taxis operating within their area.

- (ii) give notice of their intention by advertisement in a newspaper in its area stating, (a) the general effect of the proposals and the date when they propose that its decision will take effect, and (b) that any person may lodge written representations with respect to the proposals within a period of one month after the date of the first publication of the notice, and
 - (iii) consider any such representations duly lodged.
- 3.3 Once a decision on fares and other charges is taken (even if the review decision is to leave them unchanged), notice of that decision must be served on those persons and organisations who have been consulted as part of the process.
- 3.4 Operators of taxis can appeal against licensing authorities' decisions on tariff reviews. Appeals are made direct to the Traffic Commissioner for Scotland and should be submitted within 14 days of the decision.
- 3.5 As mentioned in paragraph 3.1 the Council last increased the fares and charges at the meeting of the Executive on 23 June 2022. The new tariff came into effect on 1 September 2022.

Matters to be taken into account when undertaking a fare review

- 3.6 The Scottish Government's Taxi and Private Hire Car Licensing: Best Practice for Licensing Authorities guidance, issued April 2012 advises that authorities should pay particular regard to advice contained in the Scottish Development Department Circular 25/1986. It states that, "in fixing fares authorities will want to pay primary regard to the costs incurred by the trade, having regard to the capital costs (including interest payments) of the vehicles, the costs of maintaining and replacing them to the standard of the licensing authority, of employing drivers and the prevailing level of wages and costs in related road transport industries. The public interest is best served by ensuring the maintenance of an adequate taxi service by giving the trade a fair return rather than depressing fares for social reasons, however understandable".

4. Consultation

- 4.1 The members of the Taxi Forum were identified as persons who are representative of operators of taxis, and they were invited to make representations in respect of the taxi tariff at a meeting in June. The Forum trade members consist of the taxi businesses that account for approximately half of all taxi and private car operator licences. The Forum were not in favour of any increase in the taxi tariff currently. The Forum did however propose a change to the public holiday's aspect of the tariff. The Forum suggested that the existing public holidays should be removed except for Christmas and New Year which should be subject to a new rate of time and a half. The dates and times of the revised "festive" tariff being – "from 9pm on Christmas Eve to 6am on 27 December and 9pm on 31 December to 6am on 3 January". The Forum explained that it was becoming increasingly difficult to get drivers to operate during the festive period and they felt that the suggested changes would encourage drivers to operate and provide a much-needed service.

- 4.2 It was felt that the current public holiday dates outwith the festive period were not as relevant and a rationalisation of the tariff to include the festive tariff only would lead to easier programming of the calendar meters in taxis. Historically, the public holidays outwith Christmas and New Year fall on different dates each year and require the calendar meter to be updated accordingly. The public holidays that would be removed are Easter, May Day, Falkirk Trades Fair, and the Falkirk September holiday.
- 4.3 The Forum also proposed that the soiling charge be increased to £100. It was felt that the current charge of £40 did not cover the actual cost of a vehicle being valeted and potential loss of revenue arising from the time taken to clean the vehicle.
- 4.4 A brief analysis of local valeting services within the Falkirk area suggests that if a taxi was soiled, the cost of an interior deep clean would cost between £50 -£75. Such a service however is unavailable after 8pm. If a taxi required to be valeted during late evening/ early hours of the morning, the reality is that the taxi would be off the road. In such circumstances it would be reasonable to factor in potential lost revenue as well as the cost of the valeting.
- 4.5 The Forum also suggested that a £5 charge be introduced for larger capacity vehicles that have been engaged for more than 4 passengers or for items unsuitable for a standard vehicle, such as luggage/ golf clubs etc. This would not apply to wheelchair users. The justification offered by the Forum was that the larger vehicles are more expensive to operate, and the additional charge was merited.
- 4.6 Examples were provided whereby such vehicles were specifically pre-booked to carry under 5 passengers (and as a result does not trigger the additional person charge currently provided for in the tariff rate) and luggage/ etc. Such journeys were proving to be increasingly uneconomic as the vehicles are more expensive to operate in terms of fuel consumption. It was felt that the proposed new charge would to an extent, alleviate the current financial imbalance being experienced by operators of the larger vehicles.

5. Taxi Tariff

Structure of Taxi Tariff

- 5.1 As part of the review of taxi fares in 2022, the general tariff was increased as follows:
- Flag fall was increased by 50p to £3.00.
 - Engagement charge was increased by 20p to 50p.
 - For the first 880 yards the “distance charge” (i.e. the charge levied after the first 880 yards) was increased from 10p for every 90 yards travelled to 20p for every 171 yards. This had the effect of increasing the “running mile” cost from £1.96 per mile to £2.07 (5%).

- 5.2 The current fare table for taxis is attached as appendix 1 and a revised fare table should the changes be accepted, is attached as appendix 2.

6. Considerations

- 6.1 In considering the requested changes to the charges and composition of the tariff table, regard has been given to the outdated public holiday dates. Societal changes now mean that traditional public holidays hold less relevance with fewer people being on holiday. In contrast, Christmas and New Year continues to be a very popular holiday and it is reasonable for a review of the current tariff rate in this respect. An increase over the suggested “festive dates” as detailed in the report is not unreasonable and could lead to an increased taxi service over what tends to be a busy time for people visiting friends and family and often it is a time when there is a greater reliance on the taxi trade to provide transport given that bus services can be running on reduced levels.
- 6.2 The removal of all but Christmas and New Year public holidays from the tariff will also make the programming of the calendar meters more straightforward.
- 6.3 The current soilage charge of £40 does not reflect the potential cost both in terms of an interior valet and loss of revenue and a proposed charge of £100 is probably closer to the actual cost such an event would incur.
- 6.4 Larger taxis that can accommodate more than 4 passengers have been subject to bookings that can deny them additional revenue by virtue of 4 or fewer passengers with large luggage. Such vehicles are more expensive to operate, and the proposed new charge will offset the financial detriment currently suffered.
- 6.5 In summary, the proposed changes to the composition of the tariff and charges are considered reasonable.

7. Testing Station

- 7.1 If the changes to the taxi fares is agreed, the taxi meters will require to be recalibrated by operators. In line with previous practice, a charge would require to be made for undertaking the necessary calendar meter recalibration tests and that the appropriate fee would require to be set at £16 on a full cost recovery basis.

8. Implications

Financial

- 8.1 There is no direct financial impact on the Council.

Resources

- 8.2 There are no resource implications arising from the report.

Legal

- 8.3 The legal implication arising from the report recommendations is that the Council continues to fulfil its duty to fix taxi fare scales at regular intervals in terms of section 17(2) of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982.

Risk

- 8.4 None identified.

Equalities

- 8.5 Initial work on the EPIA for this proposed changes does not reveal any adverse consequences for any protected characteristic. As the proposal is subject to consultation the EPIA will be completed following consideration of any consultation responses.

Sustainability/Environmental Impact

- 8.6 There is no environmental impact arising from the contents of the report.

9. Conclusions

- 9.1 Considering the benefits of rationalising the public holiday dates and the justifications provided by the Taxi Forum for this and the other charges it is proposed that the tariff be changed and reflect only a festive period, an increase in the soiling charge and the introduction of a new charge for larger vehicles in certain circumstances.

pp. Director of Transformation, Communities & Corporate Services

Author – Bryan Douglas, Licensing Co-ordinator 01324 501262

Date: 2 August 2023


Appendices

Appendix 1 – Current Taxi Tariff

Appendix 2 – Proposed Taxi Tariff

List of Background Papers:

No papers were relied on in the preparation of this report in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

Falkirk Council Taxi Tariff		Effective from 01 September 2022
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TARIFF 1: GENERAL	
FOR THE FIRST 880 YARDS OR 293.3 SECONDS , OR A COMBINATION OF TIME AND DISTANCE THERE IS A CHARGE OF:	£3.00
FOR EVERY ADDITIONAL 171 YARDS OR 57 SECONDS , OR A COMBINATION OF TIME AND DISTANCE THERE IS A CHARGE OF:	20p

TARIFF 2: UNSOCIAL HOURS (Tariff 1 + 25%)	
JOURNEYS BEGINNING BETWEEN 9PM AND 6AM	£3.75
PUBLIC HOLIDAYS (AS LISTED BELOW)	

CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR			
Date	From/To	Tariff	plus
25 Dec	6 AM – 9 PM	1	25%
26 Dec	6 AM – 9 PM	1	25%
01 Jan	6 AM – 9 PM	1	25%
02 Jan	6 AM – 9 PM	1	25%
24 Dec	9 PM – 6 AM (25th Dec)	1	50%
25 Dec	9 PM – 6 AM (26 th Dec)	1	50%
31 Dec	9 PM – 6 AM (1st Jan)	1	50%
01 Jan	9 PM – 6 AM (2 nd Jan)	1	50%

ADDITIONAL CHARGES	
(A) WHERE A TAXI HAS BEEN BOOKED IN ADVANCE AN ENGAGEMENT CHARGE CAN BE MADE. THAT CHARGE IS:	50p
(B) WHERE THERE ARE MORE THAN 4 PASSENGERS AN ADDITIONAL CHARGE FOR EACH ADDITIONAL PASSENGER CAN BE MADE. THAT CHARGE IS:	50p
(C) WHERE A PASSENGER'S BEHAVIOUR RESULTS IN A VEHICLE NEEDING TO BE CLEANED, THE DRIVER WILL BE ENTITLED TO CHARGE A CLEANING FEE. THAT CHARGE IS:	£40

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS
GOOD FRIDAY & EASTER MONDAY
MAY HOLIDAY MONDAY,
FALKIRK FAIR MONDAY
SEPTEMBER HOLIDAY MONDAY

THESE FARES ARE THE MAXIMUM THAT CAN BE CHARGED IN THE FALKIRK COUNCIL AREA.

Falkirk Council Taxi Tariff



Effective from 01 December 2023

TARIFF 1: GENERAL	
FOR THE FIRST 880 YARDS OR 293.3 SECONDS , OR A COMBINATION OF TIME AND DISTANCE THERE IS A CHARGE OF:	£3.00
FOR EVERY ADDITIONAL 171 YARDS OR 57 SECONDS , OR A COMBINATION OF TIME AND DISTANCE THERE IS A CHARGE OF:	20p

TARIFF 2: UNSOCIAL HOURS (Tariff 1 + 25%)	
JOURNEYS BEGINNING BETWEEN 9PM AND 6AM	£3.75

TARIFF 3: CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR (Tariff 1 +50%)	
FROM 9PM CHRISTMAS EVE TO 6AM ON 27 DECEMBER AND 9PM ON 31 DECEMBER TO 6AM ON 3 JANUARY.	£4.50

ADDITIONAL CHARGES	
(A) WHERE A TAXI HAS BEEN BOOKED IN ADVANCE AN ENGAGEMENT CHARGE CAN BE MADE. THAT CHARGE IS:	50p
(B) WHERE A MULTI-PURPOSE VEHICLE (MPV) HAS BEEN ENGAGED IN A HIRE FOR MORE THAN 4 PASSENGERS OR FOR ITEMS UNSUITABLE FOR A STANDARD VEHICLE (NOT INCLUDING WHEELCHAIR PASSENGERS) A CHARGE CAN BE MADE. THAT CHARGE IS:	£5
(C) WHERE A PASSENGER'S BEHAVIOUR RESULTS IN A VEHICLE NEEDING TO BE CLEANED, THE DRIVER WILL BE ENTITLED TO CHARGE A CLEANING FEE. THAT CHARGE IS:	£100

THESE FARES ARE THE MAXIMUM THAT CAN BE CHARGED IN THE FALKIRK COUNCIL AREA.

Responses to proposed changes to Taxi Tariff

Trade Comment

1. Shocking decision, this will not work. If this is what the forum has decided, then maybe they should be talking to the real taxi drivers. Said for years to attract drivers is , yes forgot bank Holidays, except for the festive season. Should be, and let's think about we as, taxi drivers are bound by council rules, how many council workers , work for single time at weekends, but you expect the taxi drivers to do (unsuitable hours) ive proposed on several occasions, the following Friday 2100hrs through to 0600hrs Monday morning...

AGAIN, drove taxis for years and never ones have I heard or seen this in the minutes after bringing it up on several occasions to your so called representatives of the real drivers . What's being proposed will not work.

2. Regarding the email on tariff changes I see nothing wrong with the present system. You want to abolish bank holidays which will put drivers of working these dates as they will prefer to spend time with families and for the short lived increase in business over the festive period these changes will have no affect other than to reduce the drives income over the year and will put no more drivers on over that period and the work drying up after the festive period leaving the drivers with less work as for the increase in soiling charge its difficult enough trying to get the charge out of customers as it stands and with no backing from local police and authorities only to be told it's a civil matter

3. Good morning in my opinion the fares should remain as they are if you take away tariff 2 on bank holidays drivers are less likely to work because it is generally quieter on those days and tariff 2 is an incentive to come out to work, I personally will not work a holiday Monday for tariff 1 Christmas tariffs are ok as they are. Thank you.

4. I am totally against changing tariffs as I can't see it helping in any way. The problem we have is a shortage in taxis and drivers. We are all having a hard time with food and bill's going up in price and that is why we are not as busy customer can't afford taxis as much as they did before. Increasing anything at the moment will just worsen the situation. As it did with the last increase. Losing bank holidays tariffs will just stop driver's coming out to work. I personally think all taxi drivers should have their say on this issue.

5. In my view the public holidays should stay where they are, Public holidays are generally quieter so the tariff 2 makes up for any lost revenue. As for Xmas and new year a higher tariff won't make any more drivers come out and work as we all want to spend time with family like everyone else does at this time of year.
Thanks

6. Thank you for contacting me with an update relating to the Taxi fare and Charges(Taxi Tariff) reviews. I agree with The Forum's suggestions and support the recommendations. Although I had reservations about an increase in the soil charge increasing from £40.00 to £100.00, especially in relation to young children who can fall sick in the car and then the parents forced fork out a £100 fine. I think its too steep for this group of society. I would suggest a possible fine review in relation to parents and children. May be a middle point fine or something in the range (£60-£70). Bare in mind, if such an accident happens and a single mother who is struggling with a cost of living crisis will either not be able to pay the huge fine or if they are able to, possibly use the last amount of money they have to pay such a huge fine, this could lead to a severe punishment of the innocent child there after. Protecting the vulnerable in society should be paramount to us all. Furthermore, drivers will have a lot of fine payment refusals and when these cases are reported to the police ,the police tend class them as a civil matter, hence drivers will lose out. However, after reading through the Agenda item 9 proposals and reasoning behind the increase ,especially in relation to those from a drinking night out ,I think its a fair increase as loss of earnings on the drivers can have a huge impact, especially when the soiling happens over the weekend

7. Good afternoon, After reading through the Forums consultation with Falkirk Council on the reviews of taxi fares. I am totally against 'doing away' with the bank holiday tariffs. As for raising the soiling charge from £40 to £100, I don't think this will do any good either, the chances of getting £40 far less getting £100 of a customer for a soiling charge is very low.

I think dependant drivers have an agenda here, if you work through one of the big taxi companies in the Falkirk Council area, they have a system that you don't require a meter, the meter is part of the app they use, (although the council, wants the meter to be connected by Bluetooth to the app) Where independent drivers would have to update their meters, at a cost!

If this passes, will Falkirk Council still require drivers that work through a taxi company, will the meter STILL have to be connected to the app through Bluetooth ???

Falkirk Council Taxi Tariff



Effective from 01 December 2023

TARIFF 1: GENERAL	
FOR THE FIRST 880 YARDS OR 293.3 SECONDS , OR A COMBINATION OF TIME AND DISTANCE THERE IS A CHARGE OF:	£3.00
FOR EVERY ADDITIONAL 171 YARDS OR 57 SECONDS , OR A COMBINATION OF TIME AND DISTANCE THERE IS A CHARGE OF:	20p

TARIFF 2: UNSOCIAL HOURS (Tariff 1 + 25%)	
JOURNEYS BEGINNING BETWEEN 9PM AND 6AM	£3.75

TARIFF 3: CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR (Tariff 1 +100%)	
FROM 9PM CHRISTMAS EVE TO 6AM ON 27 DECEMBER AND 9PM ON 31 DECEMBER TO 6AM ON 3 JANUARY.	£6.00

ADDITIONAL CHARGES	
(A) WHERE A TAXI HAS BEEN BOOKED IN ADVANCE AN ENGAGEMENT CHARGE CAN BE MADE. THAT CHARGE IS:	50p
(B) WHERE A MULTI-PURPOSE VEHICLE (MPV) HAS BEEN ENGAGED IN A HIRE FOR MORE THAN 4 PASSENGERS OR FOR ITEMS UNSUITABLE FOR A STANDARD VEHICLE (NOT INCLUDING WHEELCHAIR PASSENGERS) A CHARGE CAN BE MADE. THAT CHARGE IS:	£5
(C) WHERE A PASSENGER'S BEHAVIOUR RESULTS IN A VEHICLE NEEDING TO BE CLEANED, THE DRIVER WILL BE ENTITLED TO CHARGE A CLEANING FEE. THAT CHARGE IS:	£100

THESE FARES ARE THE MAXIMUM THAT CAN BE CHARGED IN THE FALKIRK COUNCIL AREA.

Equality & Poverty Impact Assessment 00603 (Version 1)

SECTION ONE: ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Service & Division:	Corporate & Housing Services Governance	Lead Officer Name:	Brian Pirie
		Team:	Demoratic
		Tel:	01324 506110
		Email:	brian.pirie@falkirk.gov.uk
Proposal:	To alter the current taxi fare scales	Reference No:	

What is the Proposal?	Budget & Other Financial Decision	Policy (New or Change)	HR Policy & Practice	Change to Service Delivery / Service Design
	No	Yes	No	No

Who does the Proposal affect?	Service Users	Members of the Public	Employees	Job Applicants
	Yes	Yes	No	No

Other, please specify:	Once agreed there will be further engagement with the Taxi Forum.
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Identify the main aims and projected outcome of this proposal (please add date of each update):

04/10/2023	Remove public holidays from the taxi tariff, except for the Christmas and New Year period.
04/10/2023	Increase the tariff for the Christmas and New Year period.
04/10/2023	Increase the soilage charge from £40 to £100. and to introduce a charge of £5 for multipurpose vehicles.
04/10/2023	Introduce a discretionary charge of £5 for multipurpose vehicles, e.g. wheelchair passengers, or more than four passengers.

SECTION TWO: FINANCIAL INFORMATION

For budget changes ONLY please include information below:			Benchmark, e.g. Scottish Average
Current spend on this service (£'0000s)	Total:		
Reduction to this service budget (£'0000s)	Per Annum:		
Increase to this service budget (£'000s)	Per Annum:		
If this is a change to a charge or concession please complete.	Current Annual Income Total:		
	Expected Annual Income Total:		
If this is a budget decision, when will the saving be achieved?	Start Date:		
	End Date (if any):		

SECTION THREE: EVIDENCE	Please include any evidence or relevant information that has influenced the decisions contained in this EPIA. (This could include demographic profiles; audits; research; health needs assessments; national guidance or legislative requirements and how this relates to the protected characteristic groups.)
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A - Quantitative Evidence	This is evidence which is numerical and should include the number people who use the service and the number of people from the protected characteristic groups who might be affected by changes to the service.
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The suggested changes were proposed by the taxi trade based upon their costs and using their own evidence of usage and costs.

B - Qualitative Evidence	This is data which describes the effect or impact of a change on a group of people, e.g. some information provided as part of performance reporting.
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Social - case studies; personal / group feedback / other

The proposals were discussed with the Taxi Forum who are representative of the taxi trade and also comprises of the chair of FADAP (local disability group). In addition the proposals were subject to a statutory consultation with the trade and public. The proposals were also agreed by the Executive subject to the responses from statutory consultation.

Best Judgement:	
Has best judgement been used in place of data/research/evidence?	Yes
Who provided the best judgement and what was this based on?	The changes were based on recommendations from the taxi trade.
What gaps in data / information were identified?	
Is further research necessary?	No
If NO, please state why.	This was subject to a full consultation with the trade and public.

SECTION FOUR: ENGAGEMENT**Engagement with individuals or organisations affected by the policy or proposal must take place**

Has the proposal / policy / project been subject to engagement or consultation with service users taking into account their protected characteristics and socio-economic status?	Yes	
If YES, please state who was engagement with.	Taxi Forum - representatives of the taxi trade and including a representative of people with disabilities. This was followed by a statutory consultation with the trade and public. No changes were proposed following this exercise.	
If NO engagement has been conducted, please state why.		
How was the engagement carried out?	What were the results from the engagement? Please list...	
Focus Group	Yes	The taxi forum was consulted and recommended the proposals.
Survey	Yes	A statutory consultation was carried out with the trade and public.
Display / Exhibitions	No	
User Panels	No	
Public Event	No	
Other: please specify		
Has the proposal / policy/ project been reviewed / changed as a result of the engagement?	No	
Have the results of the engagement been fed back to the consultees?	No	
Is further engagement recommended?	Yes	

SECTION FIVE: ASSESSING THE IMPACT

Equality Protected Characteristics: What will the impact of implementing this proposal be on people who share characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010 or are likely to be affected by the proposal / policy / project? This section allows you to consider other impacts, e.g. poverty, health inequalities, community justice, carers etc.

Protected Characteristic	Neutral Impact	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Please provide evidence of the impact on this protected characteristic.
Age			✓	There will be an increase in charges over the festive period for all users.
Disability			✓	There will be an increase in charges over the festive period for all users.
Sex			✓	There will be an increase in charges over the festive period for all users.
Ethnicity			✓	There will be an increase in charges over the festive period for all users.
Religion / Belief / non-Belief			✓	There will be an increase in charges over the festive period for all users.
Sexual Orientation			✓	There will be an increase in charges over the festive period for all users.
Transgender			✓	There will be an increase in charges over the festive period for all users.
Pregnancy / Maternity			✓	There will be an increase in charges over the festive period for all users.
Marriage / Civil Partnership			✓	There will be an increase in charges over the festive period for all users.
Poverty			✓	There will be an increase in charges over the festive period for all users.
Care Experienced			✓	There will be an increase in charges over the festive period for all users.
Other, health, community justice, carers etc.			✓	There will be an increase in charges over the festive period for all users.
Risk (Identify other risks associated with this change)	There is a risk that people who rely on taxis may feel they are too expensive and not use them (for example to attend medical appointments). However the increases will encourage more taxis to operate and be available for vulnerable people, for example at closing time over the festive period.			

Public Sector Equality Duty: Scottish Public Authorities must have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance quality of opportunity and foster good relations. Scottish specific duties include:

	Evidence of Due Regard
Eliminate Unlawful Discrimination (harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct):	The increases will encourage more taxis to operate and be available for vulnerable people, for example at closing time over the festive period.
Advance Equality of Opportunity:	Encourage participation in public life.
Foster Good Relations (promoting understanding and reducing prejudice):	

SECTION SIX: PARTNERS / OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Which sectors are likely to have an interest in or be affected by the proposal / policy / project?		Describe the interest / affect.
Business	Yes	Taxi trade - the increases will help the trade meet costs and remain in business and encourage drivers to operate over the festive period which will result in more taxis being available for those who need them - including vulnerable people.
Councils	No	
Education Sector	No	
Fire	No	
NHS	No	
Integration Joint Board	No	
Police	No	
Third Sector	No	
Other(s): please list and describe the nature of the relationship / impact.		

SECTION SEVEN: ACTION PLANNING

Mitigating Actions: If you have identified impacts on protected characteristic groups in Section 5 please summarise these in the table below detailing the actions you are taking to mitigate or support this impact. If you are not taking any action to support or mitigate the impact you should complete the No Mitigating Actions section below instead.

Identified Impact	To Who	Action(s)	Lead Officer	Evaluation and Review Date	Strategic Reference to Corporate Plan / Service Plan / Quality Outcomes

No Mitigating Actions

Please explain why you do not need to take any action to mitigate or support the impact of your proposals.

The Scottish Government's Taxi and Private Hire Car Licensing: Best Practice for Licensing Authorities guidance, issued April 2012 advises that authorities will want to pay primary regard to the costs incurred by the trade, having regard to the capital costs (including interest payments) of the vehicles, the costs of maintaining and replacing them to the standard of the licensing authority, of employing drivers and the prevailing level of wages and costs in related road transport industries. The public interest is best served by ensuring the maintenance of an adequate taxi service by giving the trade a fair return rather than depressing fares for social reasons, however understandable.

Service users may be eligible for a taxi card which enables the user to offset the cost of a journey.

Are actions being reported to Members?

Yes

If yes when and how ?

Executive 17 October 2023.

SECTION EIGHT: ASSESSMENT OUTCOME

Only one of following statements best matches your assessment of this proposal / policy / project. Please select one and provide your reasons.

No major change required	No	
The proposal has to be adjusted to reduce impact on protected characteristic groups	No	
Continue with the proposal but it is not possible to remove all the risk to protected characteristic groups	Yes	The changes will have an overall minimal impact if assessed over the calendar year given that a number of public holidays will be removed (during which taxi fares are higher than non public holiday periods). The increase will impact over the limited festive period and will serve the wider public good in terms of maintaining a robust taxi trade and ensure sufficient taxis on the road to serve the public, including vulnerable people. Uptake of the taxi card may mitigate costs to an extent.
Stop the proposal as it is potentially in breach of equality legislation	No	

SECTION NINE: LEAD OFFICER SIGN OFF

Lead Officer:

Signature:		Date:	04/10/2023
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SECTION TEN: EPIA TASK GROUP ONLY

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF EPIA:		Has the EPIA demonstrated the use of data, appropriate engagement, identified mitigating actions as well as ownership and appropriate review of actions to confidently demonstrate compliance with the general and public sector equality duties?	Yes
ASSESSMENT FINDINGS		The proposals were developed and proposed by the Taxi Forum in line with Scottish Government Guidance. Following consideration by the executive there was a statutory consultation exercise with the taxi trade and public.	
If YES, use this box to highlight evidence in support of the assessment of the EPIA			
If NO, use this box to highlight actions needed to improve the EPIA			
Where adverse impact on diverse communities has been identified and it is intended to continue with the proposal / policy / project, has justification for continuing <u>without making changes been made</u>?		Yes	If YES, please describe: The impacts will be limited and mainly during the Festive season. Increased charges during other public holidays have been removed. Additionally the provision of a full taxi fleet will have positive impacts for example in public safety. The use of a taxicard, can in some cases, mitigate increased fares.

LEVEL OF IMPACT: The EPIA Task Group has agreed the following level of impact on the protected characteristic groups highlighted within the EPIA		
LEVEL		COMMENTS
HIGH	Yes / No	
MEDIUM	Yes / No	
LOW	Yes	As stated above - The impacts will be limited and mainly during the Festive season. Increased charges during other public holidays have been removed. Additionally the provision of a full taxi fleet will have positive impacts for example in public safety. The use of a taxicard, can in some cases, mitigate increased fares.

SECTION ELEVEN: CHIEF OFFICER SIGN OFF

Director / Head of Service:			
Signature:		Date:	05/10/2023