

## REPORT TO LICENSING SUB COMMITTEE – 24 APRIL 2020

### CIVIC GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 1982 TAXI FARE REVIEW

#### **1 Reason for Report / Summary**

- 1.1 The licensing authority is required to review taxi fares every 18 months. This report seeks approval of the taxi fares review timetable and procedures.

#### **2 Recommendations**

The Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1 Consider the options for a new fare scale, listed at Appendix 1 to this report, and agree a proposal for the purposes of pre-consultation with the taxi trade, inclusive of the proposed revised wording for airport charges, as set out at Section 4.1 below.**
- 2.2 Acknowledge, that, due to the Covid-19 pandemic and corresponding impact on the ability to have physical public meetings this year, pre-consultation with the trade in relation to the fare scales will be done via electronic means through email, and the use of online forms for a period of two weeks instead of a physical public meeting.**
- 2.3 Delegate the formulation of the proposal to the Head of Legal and Governance, taking into account the majority of views of the trade through pre-consultation, for publication in the newspaper, in accordance with statutory requirements, following consultation by email with the Licensing-Sub-Committee.**

#### **3 Purpose and Decision-Making Route**

- 3.1 Under the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982, Aberdeenshire Council, as the licensing authority, controls taxi fares (but not private hire charges).
- 3.2 The licensing authority is required, in terms of the 1982 Act, to carry out a review of fares every 18 months. The fare scale currently in force became effective on 1 February, 2017.
- 3.3 This is the first report required to conduct the Taxi Fare Scales Review. Appendix 2 to this report provides a useful diagram on the process which will be followed.

#### **4 Discussion**

- 4.1 This fare scale has been developed over the years in consultation with the trade. One recurring issue which the trade regularly brings to the licensing team's attention is the increase in drop-off charges at Aberdeen Airport. It is proposed

to replace the existing fixed charge with the following flexible wording within the fixed fare scale, in order to allow the taxi trade to recover these costs in full:

*“Taxi drivers may add any charge incurred at Aberdeen Airport when either dropping off or picking up passengers. Drivers must make passengers aware in advance that extra charges may be added to the fare”*

- 4.2.1 The procedures and proposed timetable for review of taxi fares is contained within Appendix 2 to this report. As you will see from that Appendix, there are a number of stages to follow before a final determination is made.

The Sub-Committee has traditionally chosen to appoint the Chair and two members of the Sub-Committee to meet with the taxi trade to discuss fares, as an initial step in carrying out a review of fares. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the current restrictions which are in place, such as social distancing, this is not possible at present. It is therefore proposed that the views of the trade are sought through an online questionnaire, by email and by telephone. This will meet the statutory requirements. It is considered important to go ahead with this fare review at this time, both to meet the statutory deadline but also to support the trade.

- 4.2.2 In order to provide a starting point for discussion, various options for change have been developed and are outlined at Appendix 1. Members are invited to consider these options and agree which options should be the subject of pre-consultation with the trade prior to public consultation, in accordance with the process set out in Appendix 2. Members may wish to include some or all of the options in consultation with the trade. The aim of putting together options is to assist the trade in developing its own proposals. Initial consultation for the trade will last for 2 weeks (ending on 11 May, 2020),

- 4.2.3 As mentioned above, the views expressed by the trade would usually have been considered at the meeting with the trade, and the proposed fare scale would have been agreed at this stage. In order to ensure that this review is progressed in a timely manner, given the current situation, it is proposed that the Licensing Sub-Committee considers delegating authority to the Head of Legal and Governance to consider the representations received by the trade and to fix the proposed scale for public consultation, following prior email consultation with the Licensing Sub-Committee. This will mean that the review of the fare scale will not be delayed.

- 4.2.4 The Sub-Committee should note that, if the current situation continues, the implementation of the new fare scale may be delayed. All taxi meters will require to have a new chip installed, be sealed and recalibrated, and all taxi operators require paper copies of the new fare scale to be issued, to be displayed within their vehicles. Ongoing social isolation measures may mean that it is not possible for the taxi meters to be physically updated or fare scale cards to be issued. We will continue exploring all options in relation to implementation to ensure the new fare scale can be put into practice at the earliest possible date.

4.2.4 The proposals put forward in respect of the process have been made with a view to progressing the review as efficiently as possible without placing the Sub-Committee under further strain, given the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the holding of physical public meetings.

## 5 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk

5.1 The report helps deliver Council Priority 1– Support a strong, sustainable, diverse and successful economy.

5.2 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed.

Subject	Yes	No	N/A
Financial			X
Staffing			X
Equalities			X
Fairer Scotland Duty			X
Town Centre First			X
Sustainability			X
Children and Young People's Rights and Wellbeing			X

5.3 An equality impact assessment is not required because this report seeks the acceptance of a proposal which does not have a differential impact on any of the protected characteristics.

5.4 There are no staffing or financial implications arising from this report.

5.5 The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate Level:

- ACORP006 – Reputation Management - review of fares can lead to negative press for the Council. The review is a legislative requirement and the proposals include full consultation with the trade and public. [Corporate Risk Register](#)

## 6 Scheme of Governance

6.1 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.

6.2 The Sub-Committee is able to consider and take a decision on this item in terms of Section C – Business Services: 1 – Committee Functions: 1.1(a) of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance, which enables the Committee to decide on all policy issues and resource matters relating to the

Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 with implications across area boundaries.  
The Committee determined that the licensing function should be delegated to the  
Licensing Sub-Committee.

**Ritchie Johnson**  
**Director of Business Services**

Report prepared by Sheereen Razaq, Trainee Solicitor  
Date 17 March, 2020

**Appendix 1 – Options**  
**Appendix 2 – Process Flowchart**

## APPENDIX 1

### Current Fare Scale

	Standard	Late Night 1	Festive
The first 880 yards or part thereof	£2.60	£3.60	£3.90
Each additional 1/11 <sup>th</sup> of a part mile or part thereof	£0.20	£0.20	£0.20
Waiting – per 10 seconds	£0.10	£0.10	£0.10

### Fare Scale – Outlining Possible Options

#### A. No Change

	Standard	Late Night 1	Festive
The first 880 yards or part thereof	£2.60	£3.60	£3.90
Each additional 1/11 <sup>th</sup> of a part mile or part thereof	£0.20	£0.20	£0.20
Waiting – per 10 seconds	£0.10	£0.10	£0.10

#### Effect:

Length of Journey	Cost	Standard	Late Night 1	Festive
1 Mile		£3.80	£4.80	£5.10
2.5 Miles		£7.00	£8.00	£8.30
5 Miles		£12.60	£13.60	£13.90
7.5 Miles		£18.00	£19.00	£19.30
10 Miles		£23.60	£24.60	£24.90

#### B. 3% Increase

	Standard	Late Night 1	Festive
The first 880 yards or part thereof	£2.70	£3.70	£4.00
Each additional 1/11 <sup>th</sup> of a part mile or part thereof	£0.20	£0.20	£0.20
Waiting – per 10 seconds	£0.10	£0.10	£0.10

**Please Note:** The fares in the above table have been rounded to the nearest 5p.

#### Effect:

Length of Journey	Cost	Standard	Late Night 1	Festive
1 Mile		£3.90	£4.90	£5.20
2.5 Miles		£7.10	£8.10	£8.40
5 Miles		£12.70	£13.70	£14.00
7.5 Miles		£18.10	£19.10	£19.40
10 Miles		£23.70	£24.70	£25.00

#### C. 5% Increase

	Standard	Late Night 1	Festive
The first 880 yards or part thereof	£2.75	£3.80	£4.10
Each additional 1/11 <sup>th</sup> of a part mile or part thereof	£0.20	£0.20	£0.20
Waiting – per 10 seconds	£0.10	£0.10	£0.10

**Please Note:** The fares in the above table have been rounded to the nearest 5p.

**Effect:**

Length of Journey	Cost	Standard	Late Night 1	Festive
1 Mile		£3.95	£5.00	£5.30
2.5 Miles		£7.15	£8.20	£8.50
5 Miles		£12.75	£13.80	£14.10
7.5 Miles		£18.15	£19.20	£19.50
10 Miles		£23.75	£24.80	£25.10

**D. 8% Increase**

	Standard	Late Night 1	Festive
The first 880 yards or part thereof	£2.80	£3.90	£4.20
Each additional 1/11 <sup>th</sup> of a part mile or part thereof	£0.20	£0.20	£0.20
Waiting – per 10 seconds	£0.10	£0.10	£0.10

**Please Note:** The fares in the above table have been rounded to the nearest 5p.

**Effect:**

Length of Journey	Cost	Standard	Late Night 1	Festive
1 Mile		£4.00	£5.10	£5.40
2.5 Miles		£7.20	£8.30	£8.60
5 Miles		£12.80	£13.90	£14.20
7.5 Miles		£18.20	£19.30	£19.40
10 Miles		£23.80	£25.20	£25.30

**E. 10% Increase**

	Standard	Late Night 1	Festive
The first 880 yards or part thereof	£2.90	£4.00	£4.30
Each additional 1/11 <sup>th</sup> of a part mile or part thereof	£0.20	£0.20	£0.20
Waiting – per 10 seconds	£0.10	£0.10	£0.10

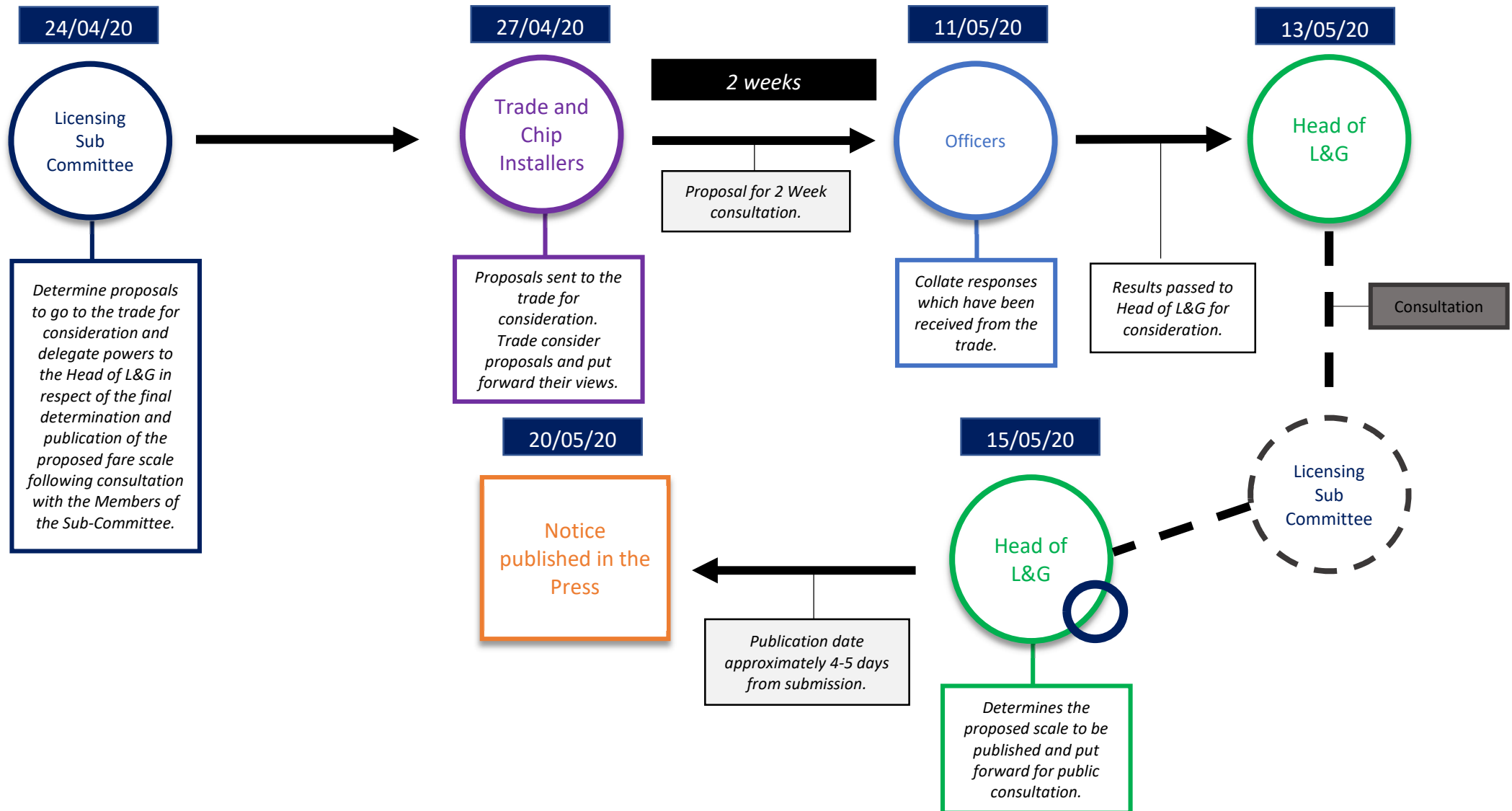
**Please Note:** The fares in the above table have been rounded to the nearest 5p.

**Effect:**

Length of Journey	Cost	Standard	Late Night 1	Festive
1 Mile		£4.10	£5.20	£5.50
2.5 Miles		£7.30	£8.40	£8.70
5 Miles		£12.90	£14.00	£14.30
7.5 Miles		£18.30	£19.40	£19.70
10 Miles		£23.90	£25.00	£25.30

APPENDIX 2

STAGE 1 – PROPOSED SCALE FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION



**STAGE 2 – FIXING THE FARE SCALE**

