

Edinburgh taxi fares set to rise next year



It is a well-known fact that taxi fares here in the capital are higher than in the west of Scotland, and it looks likely that they are to rise further if the council adopts its officers' recommendations next week. But the fare structure is to be simplified particularly over the Christmas period.

General fares are set to rise in line with inflation by 2.1%.

It used to be the case that there was a rise at the end of December, but the advisers to Edinburgh Council, the firm Halcrow felt this was too complicated and have proposed a new simpler system to come into effect next year.

The survey into the taxi fare system cost the council £17,000 which included a survey of 500 residents, two meetings with the taxi trade, and consultation with Police Scotland, council officers and other groups. This is not an additional cost, but contained within the sum already set aside for it.

The proposal is that between 24 – 27 December and 31 December to 2 January fares will increase with a starting fare of £3.60 which is £1.50 higher than the normal daytime fare at other times of the year.

The proposed new fare table is reproduced for you below. If agreed this will come into effect in January 2015. Until then the existing fare table continues to apply with a starting fare of £2.10 under the lowest tariff which rises by 25p after each additional 188metres travelled or 40 seconds of waiting time.

The council last looked at fares in the summer of 2013, and

must examine them again now as it has a duty to review fares every 18 months. If any taxi driver is disgruntled about the proposed rise they have a right of appeal against the decision by raising the matter with the Scottish Traffic Commissioner.

In addition to the fare increases proposed for next year the council are also likely to approve the installation of cameras in taxis which it is thought will protect passengers and drivers, although the original demand came from taxi drivers.

It will be for the taxi drivers to deal with data protection issues, and the plan is for cameras to record only what happens inside the taxi and not to record anything in the streets outside. It is specifically provided within the proposals that any images must not be used on social media outlets.

Research showed that 62.2% of the public are happy with daytime fares, although not just as many are content with the night time fares. What do you think? Are taxi fares here in the capital too high?

<http://www.theedinburghreporter.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/New-taxi-fares-Dec-2014.pdf>