



## Renfrewshire Council

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**To: Regulatory Functions Board**

**On: 1 November 2017**

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**Report by: Director of Finance and Resources**

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**Heading: Taxi Licensing: Unmet Demand**

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**1. Summary**

- 1.1 A licensing authority may refuse to grant taxi licences in order to limit the number of taxis licensed in their area. In order to do so, the licensing authority must be satisfied that there is no significant demand for the services of taxis in their area which is unmet.
- 1.2 The Council currently has a policy of limiting the number of taxis within Renfrewshire and keeps the demand for taxis under review. The purpose of this report is to advise the Board of recent observations by the Civic Government Enforcement Officer in relation to demand for taxis.

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**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Board note the contents of this report and continue to keep the numbers limit under review.

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**3. Background**

- 3.1 Section 10(3) of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 ("the Act") empowers the Council as licensing authority to refuse to grant new taxi licences in order to limit the number of taxis in its area providing it is satisfied that there is no significant demand for taxi services in its area which is unmet.

- 3.2 On 26 May 2016, the Board considered a detailed report, carried out externally by Vector Transport Consultancy, in relation to demand for taxi services in Renfrewshire. The Board agreed at that time to increase the limit in relation to the number of taxis in Renfrewshire to 235. The Board also agreed that the number of taxis in Renfrewshire be reviewed in January 2017.
- 3.3 As at January 2017, officers were aware that the new licences allocated by the Board were not yet operating. A number of the new licences had not been granted until late 2016 and were issued subject to a condition that a suitable taxi be acquired by 1 December 2016. The Council also received intimation in or around December 2016 that drivers were being sought to drive newly licensed vehicles, who would require to apply for taxi driver's licences. Officers thereafter arranged to carry out observations in April 2017.
- 3.4 In April and August 2017, the Civic Government Enforcement Officer carried out rank observations at Gilmour Street, Paisley, and at Glasgow Airport to assess whether there was any significant unmet demand. Surveys were undertaken at Gilmour Street and Glasgow Airport for thirty minute periods as detailed in the Civic Government Enforcement Officer's report, which is attached as Appendix 1 to this report. This report sets out the Civic Government Enforcement Officer's detailed findings.
- 3.5 Officers will continue to carry out observations at the taxi ranks and bring further reports to the Board.

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### Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** - none.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – none
3. **Community Planning – Safer and Stronger** – meeting the public demand for taxis will contribute to a safer and stronger community
4. **Legal** – The grant of a taxi licence may be refused by a licensing authority for the purpose of limiting the number of taxis in respect of which licences are granted by them if, but only if, they are satisfied that there is no significant demand for the services of taxis in their area which is unmet.
5. **Property/Assets** – none
6. **Information Technology** -
7. **Equality & Human Rights** -

- (a) The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report, as the report relates to a review of the taxi numbers limitation policy and seeks no change to the existing position.

- 8. **Health & Safety** - none.
  - 9. **Procurement** - none.
  - 10. **Risk** - none
  - 11. **Privacy Impact** - none.
  - 12. **Cosla Policy Position** – none
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#### **List of Background Papers**

(a) None

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**Report on Unmet Demand for Taxis**

**by Gillian McIntosh, Civic Government Enforcement Officer**

**Summary**

Surveys have been undertaken at the main taxi stances, in Paisley and at Glasgow Airport. These surveys were conducted on Thursday 27 April, Friday 28 April, Thursday 17 August and Friday 18 August 2017. This report documents the findings of the surveys.

**Methodology**

Surveys were undertaken at Gilmour Street and Glasgow Airport for 30 minute periods, commencing at the times shown below. The surveys included observations during the day and into the early hours.

**Findings**

**Gilmour Street, Paisley**

Surveys were conducted at the taxi rank on

Thursday 27 April at 1400

Thursday 17 August at 1430 hours

Friday 28 April at 2230 hours and 0030 hours

Friday 18 August at 2230 hours and 0030 hours

The surveys lasted 30 minutes.

During the survey conducted on Thursday 27 April, 9 taxis picked up passengers and no waiting times were incurred.

During the survey carried out on Thursday 17 August, 7 taxis picked up passengers and no waiting times were incurred.

During the survey conducted on Friday 28 April at 2230 hours, 19 taxis picked up passengers and no waiting times were incurred. Later on that date, during the survey conducted at 0030 hours, 27 taxis picked up passengers with no waiting times, 6 people then waited 10 minutes before being picked up, then a further 10 taxis picked up passengers with no waiting time incurred. At 0100 hours, the conclusion of the observations, 3 passengers were waiting at the rank.

During the survey conducted on Friday 18 August at 2230 hours, **17** taxis picked up passengers and no waiting times were incurred. Later on that date, during the survey conducted at 0030 hours, **10** taxis picked up passengers with no waiting time and no passengers remained at the rank at 0100, the conclusion of the observations.

#### Glasgow Airport

Surveys were conducted at the taxi rank on

Thursday 27 April at 1100

Thursday 17 August at 1500

Friday 28 April at 2130 and 2330

Friday 18 August at 2130 and 2330

The surveys lasted 30 minutes.

During the survey conducted on Thursday 27 April at 1100 hours, **44** taxis picked up passengers and no waiting times were incurred.

During the survey conducted on Thursday 17 August at 1500 hours, **32** taxis picked up passengers and no waiting times were incurred.

During the surveys conducted on Friday 28 April at 2130 hours, **32** taxis picked up passengers and, at 2330 hours, **26** taxis picked up passengers. No waiting times were incurred during either period.

During the survey conducted on Friday 18 August at 2130 hours, **21** taxis picked up passengers, with approximate 5 minutes waiting time. During the survey conducted at 2330 hours, **17** taxis picked up passengers with approximate 5 minutes waiting time.

#### Johnstone, Renfrew

It should be noted that the taxi ranks at Houston Square, Johnstone, and High Street Renfrew are not utilized by the trade.

#### Other Information

One complaint has been received regarding taxi availability. This was received in April 2017, prior to the observations carried out on 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> April. The person referred to having to wait 45 minutes at the Gilmour Street taxi rank on a Saturday night after 1am.

There have been no further complaints.

## Conclusion

The surveys indicate that general demand is currently being met at the taxi ranks in Renfrewshire.

A timetable of rank observations is noted below.

### Timetable of Rank Observations 2017

#### Gilmour Street

##### Thursday 27 April

1400-1430

9 taxis picked up passengers, no waiting times

##### Friday 28 April 2017

2230- 2300

On arrival at rank, 8 taxis waiting

19 taxis picked up passengers in 30 minute period

No waiting times incurred

Average 6 taxis at rank at all times

0030-0100

On arrival at rank, 12 taxis waiting

27 taxis picked up passengers, no waiting time

6 people waited 10 minutes, then collected

10 taxis picked up passengers, no waiting time

3 persons waiting at rank at conclusion of observations

##### Thursday 17 August

1400-1430

7 taxis picked up passengers, no waiting times

Friday 18 August

2230-2300

On arrival at rank, 5 taxis waiting

17 taxis picked up passengers in 30 minute period

No waiting times incurred

No fewer than 4 taxis at rank at all times, 8 at most

0030-0130

On arrival at rank, no taxis or passengers

1 taxi arrived immediately, 4 taxis at 0045

4 taxis picked up passengers by 0100, 5 taxis remaining at rank

Further 6 taxis picked up passengers in next 30 mins

No waiting times incurred

2 taxis at rank at conclusion of observations

Glasgow Airport

Thursday 27 April 2017

1100- 1130

44 taxis picked up passengers- no waiting time

Friday 28 April

2130-2200

32 taxis picked up passengers, no waiting time

2330-0000

26 taxis picked up passengers, no waiting time

Thursday 17 August

1500-1530

32 taxis picked up passengers- no waiting time

Friday 18 August

2130-2200

21 taxis picked up passengers- approx 5 minutes waiting time

2330-0000

17 taxis picked up passengers- approx 5 minutes waiting time

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