

To: Regulatory Functions Board

On: 4th November 2015

Report by: Director of Finance and Resources

Heading: Taxi Licensing – Unmet Demand

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 demand for taxis under review.
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2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Board:-
 - 2.1.1 Agrees to continue to limit the number of taxis in Renfrewshire to 214; and
 - 2.1.2 Notes that a detailed external survey will be obtained and a further report submitted to Board thereafter.

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 17th June 2009, the Board considered a detailed report in relation to a survey carried out externally, by Halcrow, in relation to demand for taxi services in Renfrewshire. The Board agreed at that time to limit the number of taxis in Renfrewshire to 214 and to continue to monitor the position having regard to future improvement in the economy.
- 3.3 The Board, at subsequent meetings on 17th June 2010, 22nd June 2011, 8th May 2013 and 5th February 2014, further considered the position and agreed that the number of taxis should remain at 214.
- 3.4 During February and March 2015, the Civic Government Enforcement Officer carried out further rank observations at the main taxi ranks at Gilmour Street, Paisley, and Glasgow Airport to assess any significant unmet demand. The observations were undertaken at Gilmour Street and Glasgow Airport for thirty minute periods at a time. The Civic Government Enforcement officer's observations are detailed at Appendix 1, but no issues of unmet demand were identified at either of these ranks at that time.
- 3.5 In May and June 2015, officers received anecdotal evidence that there were insufficient numbers of hire cars working in Paisley Town Centre to meet demand. The comments received related to private hire cars as well as taxis, although the Council does not currently limit numbers of licensed private hire cars. The comments received suggested that taxis based at the Gilmour Street rank were also required to cover other journeys and that there were an insufficient number of both taxis and private hire vehicles working at peak times.
- 3.6 Following upon receipt of these comments, the Civic Government Enforcement officer carried out further observations in June and July, both at Glasgow Airport and Paisley Gilmour Street, including observations at Gilmour Street between 1130pm and midnight. She then carried out observations in August and September at the Paisley Gilmour Street rank between the hours of 10pm and 1am on Friday and Saturday evenings. The results of the Civic Government Enforcement Officer's observations, detailed at Appendix 1, are that there remains no change in the general position regarding significant unmet demand since the Board last considered the position in 2014, but that there appears to be a shortage of licensed vehicles in relation to journeys at peak times from Paisley Town Centre, particularly after midnight. It would appear that these issues arise at least in part from a lack of private hire vehicles working at these times. No issues have been identified in relation to significant unmet demand during any period at Glasgow Airport. Glasgow Airport Limited have confirmed that they have received no complaints in relation to the availability of taxis.
- 3.7 Given the last external survey was considered by the Board in 2009 and the issues identified in relation to peak times, officers will now proceed to obtain a further detailed external survey, which will be the subject of a further report to the Board in due course. The indicative cost of this survey, based on the costs of previous surveys, will be in the region of £25,000 and it is anticipated that

the survey will be completed in early Spring 2016. It is recommended that the Board agrees at this time to continue to limit the number of taxis operating in Renfrewshire to 214.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – The indicative cost of an external survey is detailed at Paragraph 3.7 of this report.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – Nil
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** – Nil
6. **Information Technology** – Nil
7. **Equality & Human Rights** –
The Recommendation contained within this report has 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 no change of existing arrangements are recommended. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.
8. **Health & Safety** – Nil
9. **Procurement** – Nil
10. **Risk** – Nil
11. **Privacy Impact** – Nil

List of Background Papers

-None

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APPENDIX 1

Timetable of Rank Observations 2015

Gilmour Street

Monday 9 February

0830-0900 18 passengers picked up, no waiting

Tuesday 10 February

1245-1315 16 Passengers picked up, no waiting

Thursday 12 March

2130-2200 26 passengers picked up, no waiting

Friday 26 June

1700- 1730 13 passengers picked up, no waiting

2000- 2030 10 passengers picked up, no waiting

2330-0000	14 passengers picked up, 11 waited 5 minutes, 3 waited 10 minutes
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Friday 24 July

1700-1730	12 passengers picked up, no waiting
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2000-2030	20 passengers picked up, no waiting
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2330-0000	7 passengers picked up, no waiting
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Saturday 22 August

2200- 0100

2200-2300	36 taxis picked up passengers, average 5 minutes waiting time
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2300-2330	26 taxis picked up passengers, average 5 minutes waiting
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2330- 0000	2 taxis picked up after 10 minutes wait 3 taxis picked up after 15 minutes wait 2 taxis picked up after 25 minutes wait
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0000-0030	26 people at rank 7 taxis picked up passengers after 10 minutes
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2 taxis picked up passengers after 20 minutes wait

7 taxis picked up passengers after 30 minutes wait

0030-0100

25 people at rank

3 taxis picked up passengers in 30 minutes observations

Friday 28th August

2200-0100

2200-2300

19 taxis picked up passengers no waiting time

2300-2330

13 taxis picked up passengers, average 5 minutes waiting time

6 taxis picked up passengers after 10 minutes wait

2330- 0000

10 taxis picked up passengers after 10 minutes wait

8 taxis picked up passengers after 20 minutes wait

1 taxi picked up passengers after 30 minutes wait

0000-0030

20 people at rank

6 taxis picked up passengers after 15 minutes

2 taxis picked up passengers after 20 minutes

0030-0100

30 people at rank

2 taxis picked up passengers in 30 minutes observations

Friday 4th September 2015

2200-0100

2200- 2300 34 taxis picked up passengers no waiting time

2300-2330 2 taxis picked up passengers after 10 minutes wait
11 taxis picked up passengers after 20 minutes wait

2330-0000 15 people at rank
3 taxis picked up passengers, 10 minutes waiting time
3 taxis picked up passengers, 20 minutes waiting time
1 taxi picked up passenger, 25 minutes waiting time
5 taxis picked up passengers, 30 minutes waiting time

0000-0030 25 people at rank
2 taxis picked up passengers after 10 minutes waiting time
3 taxis picked up passengers after 20 minutes waiting time

0030-0100 20 people at rank
3 taxis picked up passengers in 30 minutes observations

Glasgow Airport

Monday 9 February

0930-1000 40 passengers picked up, no waiting time

Tuesday 10 February

1200-1230 8 passengers picked up, no waiting time

Thursday 12 March

2230- 2300 6 passengers picked up, no waiting

Friday 26 June

1600-1630 21 passengers picked up, no waiting

1900-1930 24 passengers picked up, no waiting

2230-2300 37 passengers picked up, no waiting

Friday 24 July

1600-1630	18 passengers picked up, no waiting
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1900-1930	22 passengers picked up, no waiting
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2230-2300	47 passengers picked up, no waiting
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