

## **WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **Report by the Head of Legal, Administrative and Regulatory Services**

#### **Licensing Committee – 7 September 2010**

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**Subject: Types of Vehicle operating as Taxis within the Clydebank Zone**

#### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1** A representation from a Clydebank taxi operator, Mr. Andrew Barclay, has been submitted asking members to consider allowing taxis operating within the Clydebank zone of West Dunbartonshire to be extended to allow saloon cars.

#### **2. Background**

- 2.1** At the meeting of the Licensing Committee on 1 June 2010 it was agreed to continue the request from Mr. Barclay in order that the views of the Clydebank Public Hire Association be gauged.
- 2.2** The decision to enforce a 100% wheelchair accessible fleet within Clydebank was taken by the former Clydebank District Council and has been in force since October 1996.
- 2.3** The decision was taken in order to increase the availability of wheelchair accessible taxis to the public.

#### **3. Main Issues**

- 3.1** The impact of allowing a mixed fleet to operate within the Clydebank zone would end the anomaly of having a 100% wheelchair accessible fleet in the Clydebank zone as compared to the mixed fleet which currently operates within the Dumbarton zone.
- 3.2** The long-term effect of allowing saloon cars to operate as taxis within the Clydebank zone may lead to a similar situation to that of the Dumbarton zone where there is a small number of wheelchair accessible vehicles in proportion to the size of the fleet.
- 3.3** The Department of Transport published a Best Practice Guidance for Taxis and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing on 2 March 2010 where it states:-

It is suggested that local licensing authorities should give very careful consideration to a policy which automatically rules out particular types of vehicle or prescribes only one type or a small number of types of vehicle.

**4. Personnel Issues**

- 4.1 There are no personnel issues.

**5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1 There are no financial implications.

**6. Risk Assessment**

- 6.1 There is no increased risk to the Council associated with the contents of this report.

**7. Equalities Impact**

- 7.1 There would be no alteration to the number of taxis available to the public in the Clydebank zone however there would be a reduction in the number of wheelchair accessible vehicles available.

**8. Recommendations**

- 8.1 Members are asked to consider the request from Mr. Barclay with regard to allowing saloon cars to operate within the Clydebank zone of West Dunbartonshire Council. Mr. Barclay has been invited to express his view in this regard.
- 8.2 Members are also asked to consider the view of the Clydebank Public Hire Association who are almost unanimously opposed to the proposition, a representative of which, has been invited to attend to express their views.
- 8.3 If members form a preliminary view that saloon cars should be allowed to operate within the Clydebank zone no decision can be made until an Impact Assessment is carried out.
- 8.4 In the event that members decide to allow saloon cars to operate within the Clydebank zone then they should be subject to the same age limits and testing frequency as those currently operating in the Dumbarton zone.

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Head of Legal, Administrative and Regulatory Services

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**Background Papers:**

1. Letter from Mr. Andrew Barclay, 33 Glebe Gardens, Bonhill, Alexandria, G83 9NZ - dated 20 April 2010.
2. Letter to Mr. Andrew Barclay dated 18 May 2010.
3. Letter to Patrick Gilmartin, Chairman of the Clydebank Public Hire Association dated 1 June 2010.
4. Letter from Patrick Gilmartin, Chairman of the Clydebank Public Hire Association dated 25 July 2010.
5. Letter to Mr. Andrew Barclay dated 24 August 2010.
6. Letter to Mr. Patrick Gilmartin dated 24 August 2010.

**Appendices:** N/A.

**Wards Affected:** N/A.

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