

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Head of Legal, Administrative and Regulatory Services

Licensing Committee – 11 January 2011

Subject: Proposed relocation of taxi stance

1. Purpose

- 1.1** To consider a proposal to relocate the taxi stance and feeder rank which is currently situated in Alexander Street, Clydebank to a new location of Chalmers Street and Kilbowie Road.

2. Background

- 2.1** Clydebank Rebuilt propose to carry out public realm and landscaping works as well as making significant alterations to the traffic management arrangements in the Alexander Street/Hume Street area of Clydebank. These proposals were approved at the meeting of the Planning Committee on 3 August 2010.
- 2.2** Currently the taxi stance is located on the east side of Alexander Street south of Chalmers Street junction and accommodates 5 taxis. The feeder rank at the southern end of Alexander Street, 10m from the entrance to Chandlers Public House holds an additional 7 taxis.
- 2.3** Clydebank Rebuilt's proposals include the removal of the existing taxi stance and feeder rank and the appointment of a new taxi stance and feeder rank. The new taxi stance would be located from a point 36 metres to the south east of the extended west kerb line of Alexander Street, running south east along Chalmers Street from said point for a distance of 20 metres - to accommodate 4 taxis. The feeder rank would be located from a point 68 metres north of the extended north kerb line of Chalmers Street running north along Kilbowie Road from said point for a distance of 40 metres - to accommodate 8 taxis.
- 2.4** At a meeting of the Licensing Committee on 7 September 2010, Members authorised officers to consult the taxi trade regarding the proposed appointment and revocation of the taxi stances and to make the necessary arrangements to give notice of the proposed appointment and revocation of the taxi stances to the Chief Constable and also give public notice of the proposals.
- 2.5** In accordance with the relevant legislation, the proposed appointment of the new stance was the subject of a public notice which appeared in the 15 September, 2010 edition of the Clydebank Post. Any objections or representations concerning

the proposal were invited to be submitted within 28 days of the date of the Notice (13 October, 2010).

- 2.6** 134 letters of objection were received, 3 of which appeared to be duplicates. A petition objecting to the proposed relocation of the Alexander Street rank and feeder rank to Chalmers Street and Kilbowie Road was submitted bearing 393 signatures.
- 2.7** The letters of objection were all identical but signed by individual taxi operators and drivers with some additional comments added by some.
- 2.8** The nature of the objections as stated in the letters were as follows: -
- (i) Decrease in the number of taxi waiting positions available
 - (ii) Diminished number of spaces available.
 - (iii) Passengers boarding a taxi in Chalmers Street to a destination west of Kilbowie Road will have an increase in journey times and fares.
 - (iv) Passengers to a destination to North - faced with increased fares due to traffic congestion on Argyll Road.
 - (v) Increased congestion at Argyll Road/Livingstone Street junction as taxi service will be directed away from Kilbowie Road.
 - (vi) Many passengers will be encouraged to save on fares by boarding on Kilbowie Road which will discourage drivers from going into Chalmers Street. This will disadvantage the elderly and infirm or disabled who will find it difficult to obtain a taxi and face increased fares when they do.
 - (vii) Having a feeder rank on Kilbowie Road will encourage: -
 - (a) Queue jumping, particularly at night, when the Boulevard Hotel is the most popular destination and
 - (b) U-turns on Kilbowie Road at a hazardous junction which is opposite a road junction, immediately in front of a traffic controlled junction and an area of limited visibility to other vehicles travelling south over the canal bridge.

The petition bearing the 393 signatures did not state any reasons for objection.

- 2.9** At the time of writing the November Licensing Committee report, Strathclyde Police had intimated that the Chief Constable had no objections to the proposed relocation of the taxi stance. However, a subsequent letter dated 30 October 2010 received from Strathclyde Police raised issues of concern in respect of the relocation proposal. A further letter was submitted by Strathclyde Police dated 23 November 2010 clarifying their position in respect of the issues which they envisage would arise from the relocation of the taxi stance.
- 2.10** At a meeting of the Licensing Committee on 2 November 2010, Members agreed, on the request of Hugh Moore, Projects Manager, Clyde Rebuilt, to continue any decision on the proposal to the next meeting of the Licensing Committee. Members

instructed Officers to prepare a further report addressing the safety issues raised by the objectors and by Strathclyde Police with the objective of achieving a safe solution and suggested that it would be helpful if Clydebank Re-Built and Strathclyde Police discussed these matters with representatives of the taxi trade prior to the issue coming back to the next meeting of the Committee.

3 Main Issues

- 3.1** On 3 December 2010 a meeting took place with Hugh Moore (Projects Manager, Clyde Rebuilt), Raymond Walsh (Road Traffic Engineer), Robert Mackie (Senior Licensing Officer), Allan MacLeod, Kenneth McSheaffrey and Charles Murray (Clydebank Public Hire Association), David Radcliffe and Andrew Brodie, (Clydebank Taxis Operators Liaison Group) and Martyn Hambley (Clydebank Taxis Contact Centre Manager). Each party presented their views on the potential problems which they envisaged would arise from the implementation of the current proposal. The taxi trade representatives vigorously opposed the proposals in their current format.
- 3.2** A variety of alternative proposals were presented by the Clydebank Public Hire Association which were subject of further discussion.
- 3.3** The Senior Licensing officer was contacted by Hugh Moore on 8 December 2010 intimating Clyde Rebuilt's decision to withdraw their plans to relocate the taxi stance from its present location.
- 3.4** Given that the proposals to carry out public realm and landscaping works in the Alexander Street/Hume Street area of Clydebank were approved at the meeting of the Planning Committee on 3 August 2010, it is anticipated that an alternative location for the taxi stance and feeder rank will be identified and put to the Licensing Committee for authorisation of advertisement and consultation at a future date.

4. People Implications

- 4.1** There are no personnel issues.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1** There are no financial implications.

6. Risk Analysis

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

7. Equalities Impact

- 7.1** No significant issues were identified in a screening for potential impact of this report.

8 Conclusions and Recommendations

- 8.1 It is recommended that the withdrawal of the proposal to relocate the taxi stance and feeder rank which is currently situated in Alexander Street, Clydebank to a new location of Chalmers Street and Kilbowie Road be noted by the Committee.

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Head of Legal, Administrative and Regulatory Services

Date:

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Background Papers:

1. Minutes of Meetings of Planning Committee held on 3 August 2010.
2. Letter to Mr. Hugh Moore, Projects Manager, Clyde Rebuilt dated 19 October 2010.
3. Letter to Mr. Raymond Walsh, Engineer (Traffic), Roads, Transport and Environmental Services dated 19 October 2010.
4. Letter to Mr. Charles Murray, Chairman, Clydebank Public Hire Association dated 19 October 2010.
5. Letter from Chief Inspector Andrew Hutton, Strathclyde Police dated 30 October 2010.
6. Letter from Chief Inspector Andrew Hutton, Strathclyde Police dated 23 November 2010.
7. Letter to Mr. Hugh Moore, Projects Manager, Clyde Rebuilt dated 20 December 2010.
8. Letter to Mr. Raymond Walsh, Engineer (Traffic), Roads, Transport and Environmental Services dated 20 December 2010.

9. Letter to Mr. Brian Gourlay, Secretary, Clydebank Public Hire Association dated 20 December 2010.
10. Letter to Mr. Martyn Hambley, Contact Centre Manager, Clydebank Taxis dated 20 December 2010.

Wards Affected: Ward 6, Clydebank.