



Glasgow City Council

Licensing and Regulatory Committee

Report by Director of Legal and Administration

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Item 3

15th January 2025

**Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982
Taxi and Private Hire Car Provision**

Purpose of Report:

To ask Committee to consider whether to instruct a public consultation on the demand for taxi and private hire car services in the city and whether the Licensing Authority should continue to have policies limiting the number of such licensed vehicles.

Recommendations:

Members are asked to:-

- (i) note the terms of this report;
- (ii) consider instructing the Director of Legal and Administration to undertake a public consultation on the demand for taxi and private hire car services in the city and whether the Licensing Authority should continue to have policies limiting the number of such licensed vehicles and to report back on the findings.

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1 Background

- 1.1 In terms of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 (“the 1982 Act”), the council, as licensing authority for the City of Glasgow, has responsibility for the licensing and regulation of taxi and private hire car vehicles within its boundary.
- 1.2 Section 10 (3) of the 1982 Act provides that the licensing authority may refuse the grant of a taxi licence for the purpose of limiting the number of taxis in respect of which licences are granted by it, but only if it is satisfied that there is no significant demand for the services of taxis in its area which is unmet.
- 1.3 In relation to private hire cars, amendments to the 1982 Act came into effect in May 2017 with the introduction of new sections 10 (3A), (3B) and (3C). These new sections allowed the licensing authority for the first time to refuse to grant an application for a private hire car licence on the ground that it is satisfied that there already exists (or will exist if the licence is granted) an overprovision of private hire car services in the locality or localities in which the private hire car is to operate.
- 1.4 In considering whether there is, or would be, an overprovision of private hire cars in any locality, section 10 (3C) provides that the licensing authority must have regard to:-
 - (a) the number of private hire car licences operating in the locality, and
 - (b) the demand for private hire car services in the locality.
- 1.5 In pursuance of the power under section 10 (3) of the 1982 Act, the licensing authority had a longstanding policy that 1428 was the maximum number of taxi licences considered necessary to meet demand for the services of taxis in the city, but that nevertheless there would be no significant unmet demand for the services of taxis unless the number of such licences fell below 1418.
- 1.6 Following an independent review and report by Local Transport Projects Ltd in relation to the demand for both taxi and private hire car services in the city, the Committee determined at its meeting on [17 April 2019](#) that the number of taxi licences considered necessary to meet the demand for the services of taxis in the City of Glasgow should remain 1428, but nevertheless there would be no significant unmet demand for the services of taxis until the number of taxi licences fell below 1,278.
- 1.7 In relation to private hire cars, the committee determined at its meeting on 17 April 2019 that there was an overprovision of private hire car services in the city and was satisfied that that there would continue to be an overprovision of private hire car services until such time as the number of private hire car licences fell below 3195.
- 1.8 Following a further review and report by Local Transport Project Ltd in April 2023, and taking into account a reduction in the number of taxi licences since the previous review, the Committee determined at its meeting on [26 April 2023](#)

that there was a significant demand for the services of taxis in the city of Glasgow which was unmet and that this would remain the case until the number of taxi licences reached 1420.

- 1.9 In relation to private hire cars, at that same meeting on 26 April 2023 the Committee determined that there was, at that time, a demand for private hire car services and that there would be no overprovision of private hire car services until the number of private hire car licences reached 3450.
- 1.10 At a meeting on [28 February 2024](#) the Committee agreed that a full independent review of both the Limitation of Taxi Licences Policy and the Private Hire Car Licence Overprovision Policy would be undertaken in June 2025.

2 Current Position

- 2.1 There are currently 1238 taxi licences and 3450 private hire car licences in Glasgow.
- 2.2 Since the policies were last reviewed, concerns have continued to be raised regarding the availability of taxi and private hire cars in the city. Recent reports by the Progressive Partnership and Glasgow Caledonian University Moffat Centre, which were commissioned by the council, indicate that the late night city centre economy continues to face a number of post-covid challenges, including a decline in footfall, with both reports highlighting issues relating to a lack of late-night transport options including the availability of taxi and private hire cars acting as a deterrent to people coming into the city centre area later in the evening.
- 2.3 As members will be aware, the council has committed to responding to the findings of both of these reports in order to help endure a strong and sustainable future for the city centre and the late night economy. This includes ensuring that the public have confidence in the availability of safe and secure late night transport and it recognised that the city's licensed taxis and private hire cars play a vital role in allowing people to get into and out of the city centre safely, particularly late at night.
- 2.4 It is also recognised that the taxi and private hire car trade have undergone significant change over recent years, particularly in the period since Covid and with the growth in app-based technology.

3 Public Consultation Proposal

- 3.1 Against this background, Committee is asked to consider instructing the Director of Legal and Administration to carry out a full public consultation seeking views on whether the policies limiting the number of taxis and private hire cars in the city are still necessary and proportionate and whether they continue to be in the public interest.

- 3.2 It is proposed that this consultation would seek to capture views not only from the existing taxi and private hire car trade but also from the public generally and from those involved in the city's late night economy.
- 3.3 It is proposed that the consultation will be hosted on the council's consultation hub as well as being brought to the attention of taxi and private hire car booking offices, trade groups as well as various partners and organisations including Police Scotland, the Chamber of Commerce, NTiA Night Time Industries Association, Retailers Association, Glasgow City Centre BID Steering Group, Glasgow Tourism and Events Network and the Hoteliers Association.
- 3.4 The outcome of the consultation will be reported back to the committee and this will help inform members in determining whether they wish to maintain either or both the current policies and, if so, whether to proceed to carry out the review of demand that is due to commence in June this year in relation to the number limitations contained therein.

4 Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

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| <i>Financial:</i> | There are no immediate financial implications arising from the proposed consultation. |
| <i>Legal:</i> | The consultation will have regard to the requirements of sections 10(3) of the 1982 Act regarding taxis and sections 10(3A), (3B) (3C) of the 1982 Act regarding private hire cars. |
| <i>Personnel:</i> | None. |
| <i>Procurement:</i> | None. |

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| Council Strategic Plan: | Grand Challenge 4: Enable staff to deliver essential services in a sustainable, innovative and efficient way for our communities. Mission 2: Run an open, well governed council in partnership with all our communities. |
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Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

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| <i>Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2021-25? Please specify.</i> | An Equality Impact Assessment will be carried out and presented to Committee along with the report setting out the findings of the consultation. |
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What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?

N/A

Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage.

N/A

Climate Impacts:

Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify:

N/A

What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal?

N/A

Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target?

N/A

Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:

Are there any potential data protection impacts as a result of this report
Y/N

No

If Yes, please confirm that a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) has been carried out

N/A

5 Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- 5.1 Note the terms of this report; and
- 5.2 Consider instructing the Director of Legal and Administration to undertake a public consultation on the demand for taxi and private hire car services in the city and whether the Licensing Authority should continue to have policies limiting the number of such licensed vehicles and to report back on the findings.