

Regulatory Committee

9.30am, Monday 2 November 2020

Present

Councillors Fullerton (Convener), Dixon (Vice-Convener), Doran (substituting for Councillor Arthur), Mitchell, Mowat, Rose, Neil Ross and Wilson.

1. Rolling Actions Log

The Regulatory Committee Rolling Actions Log for 2 November 2020 was submitted.

Decision

- 1) To agree to close the following actions:
 - Action 6 (6, 7, 8 & 11) – Internal Audit Findings – Timescales for Completion of Management Actions
 - Action 7 – Motion by Councillor Rae – Capping Private Hire Car Licences
 - Action 8 – Taxi Stance Appointment – St Andrew Square
 - Action 9 – Taxi Fares Review 2019-2020
 - Action 11 – Review of Taxi Fare Structure – Outcome of Consultation

- 2) To note the remaining outstanding actions.

(Reference – Rolling Actions Log, 2 November 2020, submitted)

2. Business Bulletin

The Regulatory Committee Business Bulletin for 2 November 2020 was submitted.

Decision

To note the Business Bulletin.

(Reference – Business Bulletin, 2 November 2020, submitted)

3. Coronavirus (COVID-19) Contingency Measures: Update Report

(a) Deputation – Unite Edinburgh Cab Branch

A written deputation was presented on behalf of the Unite Edinburgh Cab Branch in relation to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Contingency Measures: Update Report.

The deputation expressed concern regarding the decrease in renewals of taxi driver licences due to the price of vehicles as a result of the Age and Emissions Policy. Frustration was also expressed at what they perceived to be a lack of communication from the City of Edinburgh Council (CEC), particularly with regards to airport fees.

The deputation requested that a compliance checklist for testing vehicles be made available to taxi operators and garages to allow for a standardised form of testing that did not require vehicles to be tested at the CEC's Taxi Examination Centre. They also requested that existing drivers who had already completed training be exempt for three years to relieve financial pressures.

(b) Report by the Executive Director of Place

The decisions made and actions taken as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic during the period since the Regulatory Committee last met on 9 March 2020 were set out. The decisions which the committee would require to take going forward were also outlined.

Decision

- 1) To note the report.
- 2) To agree to extend the current temporary modification to the Age and Emissions policy for taxis and Private Hire Vehicles in respect of Euro 5 vehicles as set out in paragraph 4.40 of the report by the Executive Director of Place.
- 3) To note that the roll-out of refresher training for existing licensed drivers would be postponed due to the current public health emergency until April 2021 as detailed in paragraph 4.42 of the report.
- 4) To agree to the revised training programme to be delivered online for new taxi or Private Hire Car (PHC) drivers as set out in paragraphs 4.43 to 4.49 of the report.
- 5) To note the contents of the report which explained the concerns that the licensed Taxi and Private Hire trade had expressed regarding ongoing financial hardship throughout the pandemic as a result of the public health restriction.
- 6) To note that officers, after consultation with the Convenor, Vice-Convenor and group spokespersons, had agreed to an operational change to allow vehicles which were not compliant with the Age & Emissions policy to present their vehicles for testing to allow them to keep operating until such time as the policy position was reviewed or the applicant's Age and Emissions appeal application could be considered.
- 7) To note that the current Age and Emissions policy required all vehicles to be less than 10 years old generally when presented for test effective from 1 April 2020 and as a result an additional 270 vehicles had been expected to upgrade over between April 2020 and April 2021.
- 8) To note that the Low Emission Zone implementation dates had been extended by a period of 12 months due to the effect of the pandemic and would not take effect until 2023 at the earliest.

- 9) To therefore agree that the policy in relation to the age of vehicles be amended such that the requirement for all vehicles to be less than 10 years old generally when presented for test would now not take effect until 30 September 2021.
- 10) To agree to extend to 30 September 2021 the requirement that any Taxi or PHC including those from out with the fleet presented for licensing as a Taxi or PHC or as a replacement vehicle for an existing Taxi or PHC licence unless it was a Euro 6, and therefore only Euro 5 or above vehicles would be accepted.

(Reference – report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted)