

Regulatory Committee

9.30am, Monday 8 March 2021

Present

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

1. Minutes

Decision

To approve the minute of the Regulatory Committee of 18 January 2021 as a correct record.

2. Rolling Actions Log

The Regulatory Committee Rolling Actions Log for March 2021 was submitted.

Decision

- 1) To agree to close the following actions:
 - Action 3 (4 & 5) – Internal Audit Findings – Timescales for Completion of Management Actions
- 2) To note the remaining outstanding actions.

(Reference – Rolling Actions Log of 8 March 2021, submitted)

3. Business Bulletin

The Regulatory Committee Business Bulletin for March 2021 was submitted.

Decision

- 1) To note the Business Bulletin.
- 2) To agree to update the Business Bulletin to reflect the current membership, replacing Councillor Howie with Councillor Mowat.

(Reference – Business Bulletin of 8 March 2021, submitted)

4. Taxi Testing – Impact of COVID-19 Restrictions

Actions were set out which had been taken to comply with the Council's statutory duty to ensure that taxis and private hire cars (PHCs) remained safe, roadworthy and fit for purpose during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown period. A proposal was set out to ensure that license holders did not incur fees twice in the same 12 month period.

Decision

- 1) To note the measures taken to ensure that the licensed fleet had been inspected following the temporary closure of the taxi examination centre (TEC) during the lockdown between March and July 2020.
- 2) To note and agree that measures should be taken to prevent periods of peak demand at the TEC between August and January on an annual basis.
- 3) To agree to offer a limited deferral of fees for vehicle operators who would otherwise be required to make two payments for renewal of their licences in a period of less than 12 months (as set out in paragraph 4.9 of the report).

(References – Regulatory Committee of 2 November 2020 (item 3); report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted)

5. Demand for Taxis: Six Monthly Update

An interim updated was provided on demand for taxis in the city. The most recent analysis of demand was outlined, carried out by Vector Transport Consultancy in February and March 2020 and then in November 2020. Comparisons were provided in order to allow the Committee to consider the position both before and after Covid-19 restrictions were put in place.

Decision

- 1) To note the attached reports from Vector Transport Consultancy (Appendix 2);
- 2) To note that on 16 March 2018 the Regulatory Committee agreed to maintain the limitation policy and to fix the number of available licences at 1,316.
- 3) To agree to maintain the limit of 1,316 on the number of taxis licensed in the city.
- 4) To agree to use this research as the basis for determining demand in any future applications for a taxi licence until the next taxi stance survey was completed.

(References – Regulatory Committee of 21 October 2019 (item 7); Regulatory Committee 16 March 2018 (item 7); report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted)

6. Houses in Multiple Occupation – Derogation from Conditions

An update was provided on the current situation with respect to House in Multiple Accommodation (HMO) licence holders who would normally be required to produce safety certification for HMO properties as part of their licence renewal application. A temporary variation to address concerns raised by license holders was proposed.

Decision

- 1) To note the report.
- 2) To agree that for HMOs, renewal application applicants could submit a temporary variation request with their application, as set out in paragraphs 4.9 to 4.12 of the report.

- 3) To agree that the Licensing Service would grant a HMO renewal licence on the basis of a temporary variation for a maximum period of three years, subject to all other application requirements being met and no objections having been received.

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