

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

LOCAL GOVERNMENT LICENSING PANEL 31 OCTOBER 2001

TAXI OPERATORS LICENCES – SOUTH ZONE

Report by Director of Community Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To invite the Panel to consider the maximum number of Taxi Operators Licences available in the South Zone.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Prior to the re-organisation of local government in April 1996, the former Cumnock and Doon Valley District Council, following consultation with representatives of the taxi operators in that area, agreed to restrict the number of Taxi Operators Licences to a maximum of 18.
- 2.2 Due to an administrative error by that authority, an additional taxi operator's licence was granted, taking the number available to 19. The additional licensed taxi has been operated in the South Zone for approximately 6 years.
- 2.3 Two taxi operator's licences, valid for the South Zone, expired on 31 July 2001, despite reminders and application forms having been sent to the licence holders

3. DISCUSSION

- 3.1 Section 10(3) of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982, enables a licensing authority to refuse an application to grant a taxi licence if, in their opinion it would have an adverse effect on the general availability to the public in their area of the services of taxis or the cost of providing these services. On the basis of the provisions of Section 10(3) and discussions with the local taxi trade representatives at that time, the former Cumnock and Doon Valley District Council restricted the maximum number of taxi licences in that area to 18.
- 3.2 Taxi Operators Licences EA/T 97 and EA/T 102, held by Alexander White and James Lanes respectively, were originally granted by the former District Council and subsequently renewed by East Ayrshire Council. No applications for renewal having been received, both licences expired on 31 July 2001.

3.3 The expiry of two licences, reducing the fleet in the South Zone to 17 vehicles, provides an opportunity for the licensing authority to review the maximum number of licensed taxis in that zone. Members should consider whether or not the agreed limit of 18 licensed taxis remains sufficient to meet the demand in the area.

3.4 A copy of this report has been forwarded to East Ayrshire Taxi Trade Council for comment and any response will be tabled at the meeting.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Nil.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.2 In terms of Section 10(3), the grant of a taxi licence may be refused for the purpose of limiting the numbers of taxis if, but only if the licensing authority are satisfied that there is no significant demand for taxis

5.3 In the early 1990's, following consultation with representatives of the taxi operators in that area, the former Cumnock and Doon Valley District Council agreed to limit the number of Taxi Operators Licences to 18.

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Nil.

7. CONCLUSIONS

7.1 The former Cumnock and Doon Valley District Council agreed to limit the number of Taxi Operators Licences to 18.

7.2 Due to an administrative error by that authority, an additional taxi operator's licence was issued.

7.3 Two taxi operators licences, valid for the South Zone, expired on 31 July 2001.

7.4 This is the first opportunity that has become available to consider if the maximum number of taxi operators licences agreed by the former authority remains sufficient to meet demand.

7.5 Following the expiry of the two taxi operators licences, a number of applications for the grant of licences have been received and form the subject of a separate report to be considered by the Panel.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 It is recommended that the Panel consider the contents of this report and agree to:

- (i) reduce the number of taxi operators licences available in the South Zone to the previously agreed maximum of 18, allowing one licence to be granted; or
- (ii) formally agree the maximum number of taxi operators licences available in the South Zone to be 19, as has been the situation for some 6 years, allowing two licences to be granted; or
- (iii) determine some other maximum number of taxi operator's licences, which they consider would be sufficient to meet the demand for taxi services in the South Zone.

William Stafford
Director of Community Services

9 October 2001

WS/GS

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Licensing File Nos. EA/T 97 and EA/T 102.

Any person wishing to inspect of the background papers listed above should telephone 01563 576111 and ask for Mr John Crawford, Head of Protective Services or email at john.crawford@east-ayrshire.gov.uk.

AGENDA