

**FALKIRK COUNCIL**

**Subject: CIVIC LICENSING ENFORCEMENT – AUGUST 2014**  
**Meeting: CIVIC LICENSING COMMITTEE**  
**Date: 1 October 2014**  
**Author: CHIEF GOVERNANCE OFFICER**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Licensing Enforcement Officer undertook various aspects of enforcement in August 2014. Details of these are outlined in the following sections of the report.

**2. TAXI/ PRIVATE HIRE CAR CHECKS**

- 2.1 The Licensing Enforcement Officer routinely carries out spot checks of taxis and private hire car vehicles to ensure compliance with licence conditions.

- 2.2 The checks take place at various taxi ranks and other places within the district. The checks consist of a range of items including the following:-

- Id badge/ Taxi-Private Hire Licence
- DVLA driving licence
- Plates displayed
- Tariff Sheet
- Fire Extinguisher
- First Aid Kit
- Taximeter seal
- No commercial adverts displayed on the vehicle
- No smoking signs displayed
- Taxi roof sign
- Condition of vehicle

- 2.3 In August 2014, 31 taxis and 4 private hire cars were inspected by the Licensing Enforcement Officer. The majority of these checks were found to be in order with the exception of the following matters:-

Taxi Operator 445 – The taximeter was obscured from the passengers' sight.  
This is a breach of taxi licence condition number 30.

Taxi Operator 451 – The taximeter seal was missing due to the operator adjusting the meter. The taximeter was also 4 minutes slow. The operator name sticker was also missing from the vehicle due to a recent repair.

These are breaches of taxi licence conditions number 31, 32 and 13.

The operators were written to and requested to attend the licensing offices and provide evidence that the matters detailed had been attended to. They have now fully complied.

### **3. CIVIC LICENSING ENFORCEMENT CHECKS**

3.1 During August 2014, the Licensing Enforcement Officer undertook 20 civic licensing compliance checks/enquiries.

3.2 The compliance checks/enquiries involved the following civic activities:-

- Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO's) – a check of a licensed HMO was carried out along with the Fire and Rescue Service. Minor Fire safety issues were highlighted to the landlord which has now been attended to.
- Second Hand Dealers – eight routine checks of licensed premises were carried out to ensure that the licence holder details were correct, that the licence was being displayed properly and that the register of sales was being kept up to date. All were in order. One enquiry was carried out with a new business and an application form posted out and since received. One further enquiry was also carried out following information received from the internal audit section. However, it was established that a licence was not required.
- Late Hours Catering – three routine checks of licensed premises were carried out to ensure that the licence holder details were correct and that the licence was being displayed properly. There were no issues at any of the premises.
- Booking Office – one enquiry was made in relation to a complaint received about a taxi driver. A check was made of the booking records to establish the identity of the driver concerned.
- Street Trader – one enquiry was made with the operator of a mobile fish and chip van and an application form submitted.
- Metal Dealer – one enquiry made with a jewellery shop and an application form submitted regarding trading in gold and precious metals.
- Window Cleaner – two licensed window cleaners were checked. One other person checked and found to be operating without a licence. They have since made application for a licence.

3.3 These checks consist of a range of items including the following:-

- Licence type
- Licence holder details
- Day to day manager details (if applicable)
- Id badge/ Licence
- Register check (if applicable)
- Vehicle details (if applicable)
- Occupants details

- 3.4 In addition to the above, the Licensing Enforcement Officer carried out 5 knowledge tests involving 7 candidates. 6 site notice checks were also carried out.

#### **4. CIVIC LICENSING COMPLAINTS**

- 4.1 A letter of complaint was received from a female motorist alleging she had been unable to access her car which was parked in a disabled parking bay due to a taxi parking partly in her bay. The taxi driver was traced and interviewed and claimed that on that day he had been informed of the death of his mother at her home in Majorca and that he had been in such a hurry to make travel arrangements that he had parked the taxi in what he thought was the first space available. He accepted that he should not have parked as he did and wished to pass on his apologies to the complainer. He was reminded that he should ensure that he parks in a proper manner in future. He was also written to regarding this matter. The complainant was advised of the outcome and satisfied at the course of action undertaken.
- 4.2 A letter of complaint was received from a male alleging that a taxi driver operating a wheelchair accessible taxi at the Newmarket Street, Falkirk, taxi rank had refused to take a hire claiming that the equipment for getting a wheelchair on board was not working. The driver was traced and interviewed and a report will be prepared for Members consideration at the next meeting of the Civic Licensing Committee. The complainant has been advised of the course of action undertaken so far.

#### **5. RECOMMENDATION**

- 5.1 It is recommended that Members note the contents of this report.

.....  
**Chief Governance Officer**  
**Date: 22 September 2014**

**Contact Officer: Bryan Douglas, Licensing Co-ordinator (telephone 501262)**

#### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None