

The background of the slide features a large, light blue watermark of the City of Vancouver's coat of arms. The crest includes a crown with four maple leaves, a shield divided into four quadrants (top-left: a ship, top-right: a beaver, bottom-left: a ship, bottom-right: a beaver), and a banner at the bottom with the motto "A NE FOR A".

Agenda Item

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Taxi and Private Hire Car Operator Licence Conditions

Falkirk Council

Subject: Taxi and Private Hire Car Operator Licence conditions
Meeting: Civic Licensing Committee
Date: 8 February 2017
Author: Chief Governance Officer

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report provides Members with details of the current licence conditions for both taxi and private hire car operators and seeks approval of minor changes to these conditions.

2. Recommendation

Members are requested to:-

- (1) note the contents of the report**
- (2) approve the revised licence conditions for taxi operators**
- (3) approve the revised licence conditions for private hire car operators**

3. Background

- 3.1 Taxi and private hire car operator licenceholders are issued with a schedule of licence conditions. The conditions are reviewed from time to time and adjustments have been made accordingly.
- 3.2 In 2013, the private hire car operator licence conditions were expanded to include a new condition requiring all licenceholders to display a new “pre-booked only” sign on their vehicles. This sign was to be supplied by the licensing authority and permanently affixed to the vehicle doors.
- 3.3 Since this condition was introduced the Civic Licensing Committee has considered requests from licenceholders to be exempted from this requirement. In each case this request has been granted and the licenceholder has been able to display moveable magnetic signs supplied by the licensing authority. The costs for the production of the signs have been met by the licenceholder.
- 3.4 At the meeting of the Civic Licensing Committee on 11 January 2017, Members considered three separate applications by private hire car operators to vary conditions 8 and 14 of their licence to allow various signs on their private hire cars to be of a magnetic type that are removable.

3.5 The licence conditions that the licenceholders wished to be exempted from were:-

8. The holder of a Private Hire Car Licence must ensure that the private hire car clearly displays the undernoted stencilled signs issued by the Licensing Authority on both the driver and front passenger door of the vehicle:-

**“PRIVATE HIRE – ADVANCE BOOKINGS ONLY
NOT PRE-BOOKED – NOT INSURED”**

14. The holder of a Private Hire Car Licence shall ensure that the sticker supplied by the Licensing Authority detailing the licenceholder's name and vehicle number shall be displayed on the nearside of the private hire car.

3.6 Members agreed to the three requests and asked officers to consider revising the licence conditions schedule to reflect an option for licenceholders/ new applicant's to have moveable magnetic signs in respect of both conditions. It should be noted that condition 14 above applies also to taxi operators.

4. Considerations

4.1 At present the licence conditions do not offer the opportunity for the signs detailed above to be anything other than permanently affixed. Any approach by an operator to depart from this condition has resulted in reports being prepared for the Members to consider. There are costs associated with report preparation and Committee time. These costs could be eliminated if the option to have moveable magnetic signs were included as a licence condition.

4.2 The precedent has been set by previous Committee decisions allowing operators to use moveable magnetic signs when the licensed vehicle is not being used for that purpose, and whilst each case is dealt with on its own merits, it is likely that future requests would be allowed also.

4.3 The inclusion of the option to have a moveable magnetic sign that would be paid for by the licenceholder/ applicant is a progressive development that will be welcomed by those within the trade whose licensed vehicle is used also as a family car. It is suggested that should Members favour the introduction of this option, then the condition is supplemented with the following additional narrative that has to date been included in those requests allowed by Members:-

“If the holder has magnetic moveable signs issued by the licensing authority then he/she is excused the duty to display the signs when the vehicle is not undertaking private hire car activities. The signs must be kept within the vehicle at all these other times.”

5. Implications

Financial and Resources

- 5.1 The option to have moveable magnetic signs may prove popular and would result in additional materials and officer time being required to produce the signs. The combined costs would be recovered by a specific fee payable by the licence holder/ applicant. The fee for the signs would be £15 for the two signs set out in licence condition No. 8 and £7.50 for the sign set out in licence condition No. 14. The fees would be subject to annual review.

Legal

- 5.2 There are no legal implications arising from the revisions to the licence conditions.

Risk

- 5.3 None.

Equalities

- 5.4 None.

Sustainability/ Environmental Impact

- 5.5 None.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1 The suggested changes to the taxi and private hire car operator licence licences tidies up the existing conditions schedule and will remove the need for those wishing to be exempted from the current signs requirement to appear before Members at Committee. This will result in associated financial savings to the Council.

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Chief Governance Officer

Date: 30 January 2017

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LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Licence conditions for Taxi Operators

Appendix 2 – Licence conditions for Private Hire Car Operators