

ANGUS COUNCIL

CIVIC LICENSING COMMITTEE – 23 FEBRUARY 2017

INSPECTION OF TAXIS AND PRIVATE HIRE CARS

REPORT BY HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this Report is to advise members of further developments regarding the testing of taxis and private hire vehicles in Angus.

1. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Committee:

- (i) notes that Tayside Contracts have advised that they are unable to undertake taxi and private hire car vehicle inspections in Angus,
- (ii) notes that arrangements with Dundee City Council to use their testing facilities for Angus vehicles has worked well and will continue,
- (iii) notes that agreement has been reached with Dundee City Council to offer MOTs at the same time as vehicle inspections at a cost of £11; and
- (iv) agrees that a consultation exercise will be undertaken with the trade to ascertain their views on the current service and the possibility of local garages being used to carry out vehicle inspections.

2. ALIGNMENT TO THE ANGUS COMMUNITY PLAN/SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT/COPORATE PLAN

This report contributes to the following local outcome(s) contained within the Angus Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement 2013-2016:

- (i) Angus is a good place to live in, work in and visit; and
- (ii) Our communities are safe, secure and vibrant.

3. BACKGROUND

Reference is made to report 268/15 considered by this Committee at its meeting on 6 August 2015. This report considered the situation at that time regarding the annual vehicle inspection of taxi and private hire cars in Angus. In respect of that report, the Committee agreed:

- (i) to note that Police Scotland had concluded their review of the testing station at Forfar and had closed the unit with effect from 1 April 2015;
- (ii) to approve the interim arrangements with Dundee City Council to use their testing facility, subject to a further review in 2016; and
- (iii) that quarterly meetings be held between relevant Officers of the Council and representatives of the Angus Taxi Association to discuss the issue of mutual interest.”

The first quarterly meeting with representatives of the Angus Taxi Association took place on 18 March 2016 and was attended by officers from Legal and Democratic Services, three representatives from Angus Taxi Association and Councillors Houston and Fairweather. The meeting was positive and productive. Angus Taxi Association advised that there were no

problems with the service provided by Dundee City Council (“DCC”) but that they still wished the Council to consider vehicle inspections being carried out locally by suitably qualified and resourced garages. In addition, they requested that the Council discuss with DCC the possibility of Angus vehicles being able to be MOT tested at the same time as the vehicle inspection. At the time, Dundee vehicles could be MOT tested at the same time as the vehicle inspection for the additional cost of £9 (which has now increased to £11). It should be noted that the maximum that can be charged for an MOT is around £58.

Following on from this meeting, approaches were made to DCC and agreement secured to offer Angus Vehicles MOT’s for the cost of £11. It is submitted that this is a valuable service improvement to the trade as it may result in a saving of up to £47 per annum per vehicle.

In addition to the above, approaches were made to Tayside Contracts to ascertain if they would be willing to undertake vehicle inspections of Angus vehicles at their new vehicle inspection facility in Arbroath. Tayside Contracts have recently advised that for technical and economic reasons their new workshop in Arbroath is not suitable because it was not designed with taxi testing in mind.

The above summarises the present position in respect of vehicle inspections. Having regard to the above, it is recommended that a consultation exercise is commenced with local taxi and private hire car operators to ascertain their views on the current service and the possibility of local garages being used to carry out vehicle inspections. The outcome of that consultation exercise will be reported to this Committee in due course.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The cost of vehicle inspections is included in the fees charged for the grant of taxi and private hire car vehicle licences. Accordingly, there are no financial implications arising from this Report.

NOTE: The background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) which were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report are:

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