

23/02/2021

For the attention of Councillor John Reynolds,

**Ref: Taxi Policy Consultation – A review of all taxi and private hire policies and conditions**

Dear Councillor Reynolds,

I am writing to you on behalf of Aberdeen International Airport (AIAL) regarding the review of the Taxi Policy Consultation. Specifically, the part of the proposal which seeks to change policy and abolish the current taxi zones and have one license area for Aberdeen City Council (page 13 of Appendix 1 of the proposal document). AIAL has concerns regarding the change of policy because of the impact on the Airport Zone (referred to as the Green Zone) and wishes for the policy to remain unchanged.

AIAL has responded to the consultation but I wanted to follow up on this directly.

The reasons behind our objection in the consultation are outlined below:

**SAFETY AND SECURITY**

- Our main concern is the policy change will compromise our high levels of site-specific safety and security measures. Our risk-based management system, known as SEMS, outlines measures to have all known suppliers accessing the inner forecourt including the taxi fleet. It is key for the airport to retain the dedicated fleet on this basis.
- Although the airport would still be able to control those who access the inner forecourt (main airport terminal taxi rank) via the ANPR system in place, we would not be able to physically control the access at the heliports which our Heliport stakeholders may also wish to object to.
- In addition to controlling access, each airport driver signs up to airport-specific Terms and Conditions - in addition to those that are part of obtaining a local taxi license. This includes the Airport's security procedures such as reporting unattended luggage and vehicles and awareness of suspicious passengers. If all other taxis were to access the airport, it would be insisted they would need to also sign up to these terms and conditions along with the existing fleet. This would cause additional work and costs from AIAL's perspective.

**SERVICE**

- The policy change will ultimately compromise customer service levels at AIAL for all passengers arriving into Aberdeen via the airport terminal and heliports. Being the gateway to the city and Shire, the Airport is the first impression to visitors, and we want this to be positive.
- Important service levels are identified as customer waiting times and availability of vehicles in line with customer demand (in line with the flight schedule) and it is key we maintain these high levels of customer satisfaction as outlined in the Airport's Customer Service Charter.

- The Green zone was originally implemented due to the demand for arriving passengers being completely different from those in any other areas of the city. Our data indicates 25% of all arrival passengers take a taxi and not having a dedicated fleet will have a detrimental impact on waiting times for arriving passengers.
- Having a dedicated fleet with a roster system allows us to protect the service levels for passengers arriving at Aberdeen Airport, a policy change would undermine the work done to this point to ensure the demand for taxis is met.
- As an example, during normal operational times, there can be up to 500 passengers arriving within 30 minutes of each other in the evenings (up to 2200hs.) We must ensure there are a sufficient number of vehicles available at these times.

### **IMPACT ON DRIVERS**

- It is not clear how this change would be of any benefit to any drivers. It could damage the sustainability of the current Yellow Plate City Vehicles due to the potential dilution of the current city work.
- This proposal would see the Airport fleet change to a new status as 'Yellow Plates', and this would mean that the current airport drivers could work freely in any area of the City. Although this may be welcomed by some drivers, it would certainly hurt the Airport service levels as already mentioned.

In conclusion, I would have to formally object to this proposal at this time for the following reasons-

- It will compromise the high levels of site-specific safety and security measures
- It will compromise Customer Service levels at AIAL for all arriving passengers at the terminal and heliports.
- It will damage the sustainability of the current City Vehicles
- There is no evidence to support that it would be of any benefit to any drivers on either Green or Yellow plates.

I would be pleased to discuss these matters with yourself or the committee at your convenience and look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Beveridge  
Operations Director  
Aberdeen International Airport