ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: Licensing

DATE: 23 November 2011

DIRECTOR: Stewart Carruth

TITLE OF REPORT: Variation of Zoning Condition on Airport Zoned Taxi Licences

REPORT NUMBER: CG/11/137

1.   PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to follow up on the Committee's instructions made at its meeting on 1 June 2011.

2.   RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee vary condition 2 of The Conditions Applicable to Taxi Licences (Airport Zone) in the following terms:

"This licence is valid within Aberdeen Airport only (except between the hours of 00:00 on Saturday night and 05:00 on Sunday morning, during which time it is valid throughout the licensed area)".

3.   FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

4.   OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None.

5.   BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

General Background

At its meeting on 24 February 2010, the Committee decided to suspend the zoning condition attached to airport zoned taxi licences for a trial period. The effect of the trial period was to allow airport zoned taxis to operate in the city zone between the hours of midnight and 5am on a Saturday night into a Sunday morning.

The reason for the trial was to see if it assisted in clearing long queues of passengers at peak times.

At its meeting on 11 November 2010 the Committee resolved to extend the trial further to acquire the following additional information:

a. data on (i) the number of hires at the night-time ranks by airport zoned taxis during the period and (ii) the waiting times at those ranks; and
b. the views of the Police and the Transport Marshals as to whether there had been an improvement in the service to the public over the period when airport zoned taxis have been allowed to pick up in the city.

Implementation of Committee's instruction of 1 June 2011

The additional information was submitted in a further report to the Committee at its meeting on 1 June 2011.

At that meeting the Committee decided, as follows:

a) to make the situation permanent by varying the condition to enable airport zoned taxis to continue to operate in the city zone between midnight and 5am on Saturday nights/Sunday mornings.

   The condition to be varied is condition 2 of the Conditions Applicable to Taxi Licences (Airport Zone), which states: "This licence is valid within Aberdeen Airport only."

   The proposed variation is to amend the condition, as follows: This licence is valid within Aberdeen Airport only (except between the hours of 00:00 on Saturday night and 05:00 on Sunday morning, during which time it is valid throughout the licensed area).

   The 'licensed area' is currently defined in the conditions as "The City of Aberdeen".

   In order to implement the statutory procedures pursuant to the Committee's request, all airport operators were consulted. No responses have been received.

b) to request that Transport Marshals undertake a further survey to gather data in terms of the waiting times and the number of hires by airport zoned and other taxi drivers at all ranks at various intervals throughout the evening and night during August or September 2011.

   The Transport Marshals undertook the survey between September and October (see appendix 1).

   The information is considered sufficient because the reason for the Committee's request was to have evidence of the operation of the night time ranks during term time whilst the student population was

in residence in the city. The information provided by the Transport Marshals in the previous report was gathered during a period outwith term time and is included at appendix 2 for completeness.

Appendix 1- data showing the number of hires by airport drivers at each of the night-time ranks and the waiting times at those ranks. These data were gathered over 5 weekends in September/October 2011.

Rank 1 is situated adjacent to 86-106 Union Street (North side), which is east of Union Street's junction with The Back Wynd and across the road from BHS.

Rank 2 is situated adjacent to 333-349 Union Street (South side), which is west of Union Street's junction with Bon-Accord Street directly outside Soul Café Bar.

Rank 3 is situated adjacent to 258-262 Union Street (North side), which is east of Union Street's junction with Summer Street (by Pizza Express) and located directly outside Gilcomston South Church.

The reference to 'air. taxis' in the bottom column is to the number of hires by airport taxis at each rank between midnight and 4am. 'Total taxis' refers to the total number of hires by all taxis at a rank. 'ppl' means the number of people and 'wait time' means the number of minutes it took for those people to obtain a taxi. Where the symbol < is used it means marginally less than the time given in minutes.

Appendix 2- data showing the number of hires by airport drivers at each of the night-time ranks and the waiting times at those ranks. These data were gathered over two weekends in April 2011.

6.   IMPACT

Corporate – If the Committee adopts the recommendation it may assist in the Council's Safer Aberdeen policy by encouraging quicker dispersal of members of the public from the city centre in the early hours of Sunday mornings.

Public - This is of interest to members of the public who take taxis home from the city centre in the early hours of Sunday mornings. If the recommendation is adopted it may increase the safety of passengers and reduce their frustration whilst queuing for taxis as there will be more taxis available.

It is not considered that an Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment is required, as it appears that there is nothing in the report that discriminates or disadvantages in terms of the equality strands.

7.   BACKGROUND PAPERS

        None.

9.   REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

        Paul Connolly
        Solicitor
        Litigation and Licensing Team

        Email: pconnolly@aberdeencity.gov.uk
        Tel: 01224 522357

4 September 2011

	Rank 1		Rank2		Rank3	
	ppl	wait time				
00.00	0	0	0	0	0	0
00.30	58	4	5	1	5	1
01.00	67	6.5	10	1	10	3
01.30	97	14	22	5	18	4
02.00	65	16	10	2	17	3
02.30	94	14	15	4	12	3
03.00	73	21	44	12	32	7
03.30	146	25.5	38	15	42	13
04.00	93	10	10	2	15	5
air. taxis	3		6		15	
Total taxis	624		413		455	

11 September 2011

	Rank 1		Rank2		Rank3	
	ppl	wait time				
00.00	0	0	0	0	0	0
00.30	0	0	0	0	0	0
01.00	32	8	2	1	3	2
01.30	103	15.6	22	7	29	5
02.00	86	9	4	1	0	0
02.30	74	17	8	6	0	0
03.00	94	15	14	3	12	2
03.30	115	23	18	3	25	5
04.00	27	10	0	0	0	0
air. taxis	4		6		9	
Total taxis	747		381		414	

18 September 2011

	Rank 1		Rank2		Rank3	
	ppl	wait time				
00.00	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A
00.30	24	2	0	0	N/A	N/A
01.00	87	13	20	6	N/A	N/A
01.30	121	15	41	10	N/A	N/A
02.00	145	18	17	8	N/A	N/A
02.30	153	18	21	7	N/A	N/A
03.00	165	20	15	10	N/A	N/A
03.30	138	15	50	15	N/A	N/A
04.00	73	10	30	10	N/A	N/A
total taxis	620		356			
air. taxis	6		4			

25 September 2011

	Rank 1		Rank2		Rank3	
	ppl	wait time				
00.00	0	0	0	0	0	0
00.30	60	5	5	1	4	1
01.00	68	6.5	10	1	10	3
01.30	99	15	20	5	20	4
02.00	65	16	10	2	17	3
02.30	94	14	15	4	12	3
03.00	73	21	44	12	32	7
03.30	150	30	40	18	42	12
04.00	93	10	10	2	15	5
air. taxis	5		6		15	
Total taxis	707		160		167	

9 October 2011

	Rank 1		Rank2		Rank3	
	ppl	wait time				
00.00	0	0	0	0	0	0
00.30	24	2	5	1	0	0
01.00	87	13	10	1	3	2
01.30	121	15	22	5	29	5
02.00	145	18	10	2	0	0
02.30	153	18	15	4	0	0
03.00	165	20	44	12	12	2
03.30	138	15	38	15	25	5
04.00	73	10	10	2	0	0
air. taxis	6		6		10	
total taxis	912		160		79	

2nd April 2011

	Rank 1			Rank2			Rank3	
	ppl	wait time		ppl	wait time		ppl	wait time
00.00	10	<1min		0	0		0	<1min
00.30	23	5		5	<1min		0	<1min
01.00	30	15		10	1		0	<1min
01.30	51	11		17	5		0	<1min
02.00	71	18		10	2		0	<1min
02.30	65	12		0	0		0	<1min
03.00	53	9		5	<1min		0	<1min
03.30	105	22		30	8		30	5
04.00	60	8		10	2		0	<1min
air. taxis	6			2			16	

9th April 2011

	Rank 1			Rank2			Rank3	
	ppl	wait time		ppl	wait time		ppl	wait time
00.00	0	0		0	0		10	<2min
00.30	43	6		9	2		11	<2min
01.00	49	4		26	7		10	<5min
01.30	61	5		12	5		5	<1min
02.00	53	12		17	6		4	<1min
02.30	49	5		4	<1min		0	<1min
03.00	45	12		5	<1min		25	<10min
03.30	134	26		39	16		40	<13min
04.00	82	11		10	2		0	<1min
air. taxis	9			3			6	