

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE: Licensing

DATE: 17 September 2013

DIRECTOR: Gordon McIntosh

TITLE OF REPORT: Review of Night Time Ranks

REPORT NUMBER: EPI/13/164

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### 1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of the report is to update the Committee regarding the review of the night time ranks, in light of the information and recommendations in the Taxi Demand Survey by the Transport Research Institute, Taxi Studies Group Edinburgh Napier University.

### 2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Committee:

- a) notes the contents of this report and;
- b) instructs officers of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure and Legal and Democratic Services to continue progressing the changes outlined within this report.

### 3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

If the Committee agrees the above recommendations the main implementation costs are associated with delineating any extended rank(s) and reviewing / replacing signage. The cost can be met within existing budgets.

### 4.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Improved signage and increasing the capacity of the night time rank located beside St Nicholas Graveyard would support: a) the effective operation of the night time ranks; b) the Council and partner agencies' policy strategies to address the problem of antisocial and violent behaviour in the city centre; c) Council and partner agencies' spending to achieve and maintain these policy goals; and d) the city's safety record and reputation.

## 5.0 BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

- 5.1 The introduction of four night time taxi ranks, which operate between the hours of 00:00 to 05:00 every day of the week, along with supporting multi agency measures including improved street lighting, higher specification CCTV coverage and Transport Marshals has significantly improved public safety and the public perception of safety in the city centre at night time, which also has a positive impact for the night time economy.
- 5.2 The Taxi Demand Survey by the Transport Research Institute, Taxi Studies Group Edinburgh Napier University highlighted that the ranks serve the public well, as they can hire a taxi from them relatively easily, even at peak times. The survey evidence confirms that the night time ranks are currently operating efficiently and are meeting their primary purpose, which is to provide safe (centrally located) taxi ranks, for the general public visiting the in the city centre. The survey evidence also advises that the taxi trade benefits because of the greater safety at these ranks and the level of use by the public.
- 5.3 The taxi demand survey report suggested only minor amendments to the existing night time ranks, mainly in relation to signage. The recommendations were to review the existing signage for the night time ranks and closed side ranks to ensure a consistent signage strategy is implemented at all ranks.
- 5.4 An initial site survey has been carried out at the St Nicholas Graveyard night time rank and Back Wynd rank. Signage relocations/improvements have been identified at these locations and have been instructed to be implemented. Consultation will be carried out to ascertain the effectiveness of these changes before similar arrangements are implemented at all taxi ranks.
- 5.5 Discussions with taxi representatives and officers have highlighted a potential increase in length of the St Nicholas Graveyard night time rank from 45metres to 65metres to increase the capacity of the night time rank by approximately 50 percent. The legislative traffic regulation order process for this work has been delayed due to other work commitments but will be carried out as soon as resources become available.
- 5.6 Further to the recommendations within the Taxi Demand Survey the Weekend Partnership Taxi Rank Sub Committee met on several occasions to discuss possible improvements to the operation of the existing night time taxi ranks. Whilst options were identified and assessed by the Sub-Committee, it was agreed that the measures previously identified and currently being addressed were the most appropriate course of action at this time. The Sub-Committee has since been disbanded with the option to reform should new issues come to light.

## 6. IMPACT

Corporate – Various community safety and multi agency policies are supported by the night time taxi ranks.

Public - This report is likely to be of interest to the public, as it relates to taxi rank provision in the city centre at night time. It also has an impact in terms of the safety of the public whilst waiting at ranks.

Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment – An Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment was not required for this report.

## 7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

City of Aberdeen Taxi Demand Survey, by TRI (Transport Research Institute, Taxi Studies Group, Edinburgh Napier University)

## 8. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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