

COMMITTEE	Licensing Committee
DATE	18 April 2017
DIRECTOR	Richard Ellis
TITLE OF REPORT	Membership of the Taxi Consultation Group
REPORT NUMBER	GC/17/043
CHECKLIST COMPLETED	Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to consider a request by Aberdeen Taxis Ltd to join the Taxi Consultation Group (TCG).

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Licensing Committee agrees to review the remit, governance and membership of the TCG following the Scottish Local Government Elections in May 2017.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None at this stage. There may be revenue implications following the review of the governance of the TCG.

There are no capital implications for current and future years.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None at this stage.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

5.1 Remit

On 4 September 2012, the Licensing Committee agreed the TCG with the following remit:-

“A working group of the Licensing Committee to be known as the Taxi Consultation Group will be formed. It will consist of a maximum number of five elected members and eight representatives of the taxi trade of whom one will represent the airport operators and one will represent

licensed taxi booking offices. The Disability Advisory Group and Unite Union will also have one representative as a member of the Group. Additional attendees will include the Taxi Inspector, the Fleet Services Manager and a solicitor representing the licensing function. Other relevant representatives will be invited to attend meetings on an ad-hoc basis.

Taxi trade members must represent a specific and recognised interest group. It will be understood that the representatives will report to their members after meetings.

The Group will meet three times yearly. The Group will act without any powers but will discuss matters of relevance to the taxi trade at the discretion of the Convener and make recommendations to the Licensing Committee as appropriate.

“Matters of relevance” include all matters relevant to the taxi trade in Aberdeen that are within the remit of the Licensing Committee.”

5.2 Membership

Under paragraph 30(2) of the Council’s Standing Orders, the Licensing Committee has the power to appoint Consultative Groups without delegated powers consisting of its own members and such other persons as it thinks fit.

The current membership of the TGC is as follows:

Group/Organisation etc	Name of Representative
5 Elected Members	Councillors Boulton (Chairperson), Graham, MacGregor and Malone, John Reynolds, Depute Provost
Aberdeen Airport Drivers	Stewart Duncan (from 3/10/13)
Taxi Badge Holders Association	Vacant
Independent Drivers	Gordon Anderson
Unite Union	Tommy Campbell (Peter Campbell as substitute)
Aberdeen Rail Taxi Drivers Association	Bill Price
Aberdeen Taxi Group	Graeme McColl
Disability Advisory Group	Bryan McKenzie as substantive member, Mary Rasmussen as substitute
Licensed Taxi Offices	Larry Fettes

At a meeting of the TGC on held on 28 February 2017, the Group considered a request from Aberdeen Taxis Limited to join the TGC to enable them to represent their taxi and private hire car drivers.

At the meeting, Mr Peter Campbell (Unite the Union), Mr Bill Price (Railway Taxi Drivers) and Mr Stewart Duncan (Airport Drivers) advised that they had consulted with their drivers regarding the request and had received a unanimous response that the request should be declined.

Mr Graeme McColl, Aberdeen Taxi Group advised that he had not been able to consult with Members of the Aberdeen Taxi Group on the proposal prior to the TGC meeting; however he was of the opinion that his members would not be supportive of Aberdeen Taxis Ltd joining the Group. He also reminded the TGC that its membership had been reviewed and reduced by the Licensing Committee on 4 September 2012, following previous consultation with the Taxi Trade. Mr McColl suggested that if Aberdeen Taxis Ltd were invited to join the group the invitation to join should be opened out to all four of the private hire firms operating in the city.

It is recommended that the request to join be considered along with a full review of the remit, governance and membership of the TGC following the Scottish Local Government Elections in May 2017.

Reviewing the remit, governance and membership of the TGC, following the Scottish Local Government Elections in May 2017 would seem a reasonable time to conduct such a review as there is likely to be a change to the Elected Members represented on the Group. Any review should consider if the trade representatives that make up the Group adequately represents Private Hire drivers interests. The review should also consider if the Group should be renamed to Taxi and Private Hire Car Consultation Group.

6. IMPACT

Improving Customer Experience –
N/A

Improving Staff Experience –
N/A

Improving our use of Resources –
N/A

Corporate -

The TCG ensures dialogue and consultation with the taxi trade. This enables the Council to bring issues of relevance to the fore and allow discussion in a more informal way before remitting any decisions to the Licensing Committee. There is no direct impact but it could be argued that including a PH rep on the group would ensure all viewpoints within the trade are considered, thus ensuring staff and committee have the benefit of all available evidence before coming to any decision which should assist the customer experience ultimately.

Public –

There is no particular interest for the public in the work of this Group as it has no delegated powers from the parent Committee, although as potential passengers, the public may be interested in some issues which may be referred from this Group to the Committee.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

There is no risk associated with conducting a review of the remit, governance and membership of the TCG after the Scottish Government elections in May 2017. Reviewing the membership of the Group at regular intervals would be best practice to ensure that the Group continues to be representative of the Taxi and Private Hire trade. The last review was carried out in 2012 after the last Scottish Government Election. Continuing to carry out reviews in line with the Scottish elections would seem reasonable and proportionate.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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