

CLACKMANNANSHIRE COUNCIL

Report to Regulatory Committee

Date of Meeting: 30 September, 2023

Subject: Taxi Plates - Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAV)

Report by: Civic Licensing Standards Officer

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to set out proposals for the allocation of a number of taxi plates that have been freed up by retirement of licence holders or surrender of existing licences.
- 1.2. The report accordingly seeks Committee approval for the allocation of 4 available taxi plates to applicants who have or who has provided the Council with satisfactory evidence that they will introduce a Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle into the current fleet of licensed vehicles.

2.0 Recommendations

That Committee:

- 2.1. Agrees the allocation of the available 4 taxi vehicle plates to applicants who intend to licence a suitable wheelchair accessible vehicle (WAV) in terms of paragraph 3.8; and
- 2.2. Agrees that when there are less than 8 WAV Taxis licensed in the area that new taxi operators licences will only be granted to wheelchair accessible vehicles in order to maintain at least 15% taxi fleet as accessible.

3.0 Considerations

3.1 Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles

- 3.2. Local licensing authorities as well as taxi and private hire car drivers are required, by law, to meet certain accessibility related duties in order to ensure disabled people can access taxi services with the same freedom, choice, dignity and ease as others.
- 3.3. Disabled people make twice as many journeys by taxi and private hire car compared to non-disabled people and rely on these services for essential journeys more than most. With one fifth of Scotland's population identifying

themselves as disabled, which represents almost one million people, it is essential that licensing authorities and drivers adhere to their accessibility duties and where possible, go beyond the minimum requirements.

- 3.4. In 2016 Transport Scotland engaged with disabled people, their representatives and transport providers to identify and discuss barriers to accessible travel. The exercise resulted in the creation of the Accessible Travel Framework which runs until 2026.
- 3.5. The Framework identifies 48 key issues and suggested solutions, which were impacting disabled peoples access to travel. Nine of these issues relate directly to the taxi industry: One of these recommendations suggests using taxi licensing to ensure 20% of taxis at any one time are accessible to wheelchair users in each local authority area.
- 3.6. Currently there are 4 licensed taxis in Clackmannanshire that are wheelchair accessible vehicles. This represents only 7.27% of the currently available taxi operators licences.
- 3.7. There are currently 4 of 55 taxi operator licences (Plates) available for allocation to new operators and vehicles.
- 3.8. If all 4 of these licences are restricted and only made available to operators applying to put a WAV Taxi on the road, then when allocated to new vehicles entering the taxi licensing regime it would result in a total of 14.54% of available licences, still short of the recommended 20%, but a much more compliant situation.
- 3.9. When allocated, flag these licences as plates that will only ever be issued to wheelchair accessible vehicles by applying local licensing conditions in the terms detailed at appendix A.

4.0 Conclusion

- 4.1. Currently the percentage of licenced taxis in Clackmannanshire, that are wheelchair accessible, falls below the recommended 20% of fleet and none of the existing operators offer a wheelchair accessible service on a Sunday. This situation results in complaints and enquiries from wheelchair users unable to access transport that they rely onto maintain a reasonable standard of living.
- 4.2. Adopting the recommendations in paragraph 2.1 and 2.2 would go along way to resolving the situation now and into the future.

5.0 Sustainability Implications

- 5.1. None

6.0 Resource Implications

- 6.1. *Financial Details*

6.2. The full financial implications of the recommendations are set out in the report. This includes a reference to full life cycle costs where appropriate. Yes

6.3. Finance have been consulted and have agreed the financial implications as set out in the report. Yes

6.4. *Staffing*

7.0 Exempt Reports

7.1. Is this report exempt? Yes (please detail the reasons for exemption below) No

8.0 Declarations

The recommendations contained within this report support or implement our Corporate Priorities and Council Policies.

(1) Our Priorities (Please double click on the check box)

Clackmannanshire will be attractive to businesses & people and ensure fair opportunities for all
Our families; children and young people will have the best possible start in life
Women and girls will be confident and aspirational, and achieve their full potential
Our communities will be resilient and empowered so that they can thrive and flourish

(2) Council Policies (Please detail)

9.0 Equalities Impact

9.1. Have you undertaken the required equalities impact assessment to ensure that no groups are adversely affected by the recommendations?
Yes No

10.0 Legality

10.1. It has been confirmed that in adopting the recommendations contained in this report, the Council is acting within its legal powers. Yes

11.0 Appendices

11.1. Please list any appendices attached to this report. If there are no appendices please state "none".

None.

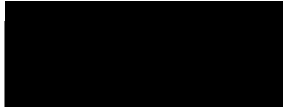
12.0 Background Papers

12.1. [Accessible Travel Framework Document](#)

Author(s)

NAME	DESIGNATION	TEL NO / EXTENSION
Paul Fair	Civic Licensing Standards Officer	2091

Approved by

NAME	DESIGNATION	SIGNATURE
Lee Robertson	Senior Manager Legal & Governance and Monitoring Officer	

Appendix A

Proposed Local Licensing Conditions – WAV Taxis

1. This Licence No **(T xxx WAV)** has been allocated only for use attached to a suitable wheelchair accessible vehicle. (WAV).
2. Any temporary replacement vehicle that will be in use in connection with this licence for more than 14 days must be a suitable Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle.
3. The driver of this vehicle must complete a suitable disability awareness course which includes training in relation to the loading and unloading and secure transport of wheelchair users.

