

REVIEW OF NI TAXI POLICY & LEGISLATION PROPOSED TERMS OF REFERENCE & PROPOSED TIMESCALE FOR PHASE ONE

1. PURPOSE

This document sets out the proposed terms of reference for the review of Taxi policy and legislation in the North. It also details phase one of the review process which will initiate proposals for consultation and subsequently develop recommendations for change.

The recommendations will be presented to the Minister for Infrastructure for his consideration. Subject to the Minister's decision, phase two of the review process will involve detailed policy development and draft legislation, both primary and subordinate.

2. BACKGROUND

The Taxis (NI) Act 2008 (the Act) provides the legislative framework for current taxi policy in the North. The Act, which became law in April 2008, replaced previous taxi legislation including elements of the Transport Act 1967 and a number of Belfast City Council Bye Laws. The Act has been given full effect through a suite of subordinate regulations which were introduced between September 2012 and December 2015.

In line with the Minister's decision to review existing arrangements, officials have drawn up Terms of Reference which set out the proposed first phase of the review process. This will include engagement with the DFI Assembly Committee and a public consultation, once proposals have been identified and approved by the Minister. A newly established Taxi Forum will form an integral part of phase one, acting in an advisory capacity to the Minister as required.

3. TERMS OF REFERENCE

- To review existing taxi policy and legislation to determine if it remains fit for purpose.
- To make recommendations to the Minister on (options for) future policy and legislative amendments.
- To engage with the DFI Assembly Committee on proposed changes to taxi policy and legislation and subject to this process and Ministerial approval undertake a formal consultation.
- To engage with the Taxi Forum on the outcome of the formal consultation.

- To develop final recommendations for the Minister on policy and legislative amendments.
- To bring forward detailed policy and draft legislation to give effect to the Minister's decision on how to proceed.

4. PHASE ONE – TIMESCALE

The following is the phase one timescale:

- Commence stakeholder engagement, through the Taxi Forum and open meetings from October to December 2016 to obtain feedback on current taxi regulatory framework and suggestions for change.
- Consider outcome of stakeholder engagement January 2017 to February 2017 and, with input from the Taxi Forum, develop initial draft policy proposals for ministerial consideration.
- Engage with the DFI Assembly Committee (following ministerial approval) March to April 2017 to seek its views on proposed outline of formal consultation process.
- Following formal public consultation, conduct an analysis of responses and determine the way forward by July 2017, including any requirements for primary and subordinate legislation.