

REPORT TO	ON
Licensing and Public Safety Committee	10 March 2020



TITLE	REPORT OF
Private Hire Vehicle Livery - Consultation Feedback	Shared Services Lead – Legal & Deputy Monitoring Officer

Is this report confidential?	No
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PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. Taking into account the outcome of the consultation exercise undertaken throughout January/February 2020 (summarised in section 7 below), this report invites members to recommend the formal adoption of the new proposed private hire signage and corporate signage policy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. Note the content of the report
3. Consider the consultation responses and decide whether to accept or reject the draft proposals
4. If members are minded to accept the changes to the Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Vehicle Licensing Policy then forward this report to the next meeting of the Council with a recommendation for formal adoption of the new uniformed private hire signage and corporate signage policy.

CORPORATE OUTCOMES

5. The report relates to the following corporate priorities: *(tick all those applicable)*:

Excellence, Investment and Financial Sustainability	
Health, Wellbeing and Safety	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Place, Homes and Environment	

Projects relating to People in the Corporate Plan:

Our People and Communities	
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BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

On 12th November 2019, members of the Licensing and Public Safety Committee received a report from officers highlighting two issues found with the current private hire signage and corporate signage on SRBC licenced private hire vehicles.

Officers feel currently the public may find it hard to distinguish the difference between a Hackney carriage and a Private Hire vehicle. Currently both Hackney Carriage vehicles and Private Hire vehicles are not limited to where they can place company signage and logos.

Members were advised at the meeting of the Licensing and Public Safety Committee that the primary need for private hire vehicle council issued signage is to prevent/discourage touting and highlight to the public that should they enter a private hire vehicle without pre-booking they would not be insured for the journey.

Only hackney carriage vehicles can be hailed down at the side of the road or accept a booking that has not been pre booked (within its own licensed area).

Members were advised that officers feel that the current private hire vehicle stickers are too small and display very little information, they do not tell the public that the vehicle is not insured unless pre booked. Currently there is no defined position for the stickers to be placed on vehicles, this has led to an inconsistent approach to the location of the signs which can be found on windows, rear quarter panels or the doors.

Consistency relating to the positioning is an important part of recognising the vehicle as Private Hire Vehicle and not a hackney Carriage Vehicle. Members are referred to background document 2 titled - Examples of Current Private Hire Vehicle Signage.

Section 48 of Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 states that;

“ (1) Subject to the provisions of this part of the act, a district council may on the receipt of an application from the proprietor of any vehicle for the grant in respect of such vehicle of a Licence to use the vehicle as a private hire vehicle, grant in respect thereof a vehicle Licence:

Provided that a district council shall not grant such a Licence unless they are satisfied

(a) That the vehicle is

(ii) Not of such design and appearance as to lead any person to believe that the vehicle is a hackney carriage

At the hearing on 12th November 2019 members agreed that the changes to policy regarding the new private hire signage should be subject to a consultation exercise, and results presented at a future meeting.

This report presents the outcomes of the consultation exercise carried out and invites members to consider the proposed changes to the taxi licensing policy with regards the private hire signage and corporate signage attached to private hire vehicles.

PROPOSALS (e.g. RATIONALE, DETAIL, FINANCIAL, PROCUREMENT)

The proposal is to change the wording within the Private Hire Vehicle Conditions within the council's Taxi Licensing policy to adopt the proposed changes and to adopt the revised Private hire policy wording shown below.

The new proposed signage will be of an increased size. The current signage measurements are 25cm x 10cm. The new proposed signage will measure 30cm x 20cm. This making the signage much more visible and prominent on the vehicle. The signs will still be made up of a self-adhesive sticker as previously required.

The current private hire condition states as follows: -

22)

A sign indicating the name and/or address and/or telephone number of the proprietor of the vehicle, such sign to be of a type and design to be approved by the Council in writing prior to application to the vehicle.

c) There shall be externally and directly affixed to a nearside and offside door a sign issued by the councils licensing unit relating to the use of the vehicle.

The new Proposed Private Hire Vehicle Condition

22)

a) A sign indicating the name and/or address and/or telephone number of the proprietor of the vehicle may be attached to the front nearside and offside door only. Such sign to be no more than a size of 50cm x 50cm. The type and design to be approved by the Council in writing prior to application to the vehicle.

c) There shall be externally and directly affixed centrally to the rear nearside and offside door only a sign issued and approved by the council's licensing department relating to the use of the vehicle.

Members are asked to consider the feedback given from the consultation exercise shown below in part 7 of this report and agree to the proposed changes to the policy relating to signage attached to Private Hire vehicles.

In order to implement the recommendation, set out in the report, it is proposed that the changes would need to be forwarded to the next meeting of full council with a recommendation for formal adoption.

CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT AND OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION

8. . Feedback from Consultation exercise 13th January 2020 – 24th February 2020

- The consultation period was agreed as 6 weeks between 13th January 2020 to 24th February 2020
- Advisory letters were sent to all drivers and operators.
- Online feedback forms were created on the council website to record feedback.

The following responses summarised below have been received following the consultation exercise.

Question	Yes	No	Comments
It is proposed that the current private hire signage be improved to	64	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be permanently stuck to the vehicle (see Preston CC signage for phv's.

<p>be more visible, increased in size, include important messages such as the “vehicle not being insured unless it has been pre booked” and for the sign to be fitted in a fixed position such as the rear doors. Overall, are you in favour of the proposal to introduce a change to the current policy?</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I would ban the use of Magnetic signs. I would like to see a system like used in Blackpool, where a permanent fixed sticker, denoting the type of vehicle, license number, operator and contact details of the council for complaints or praise. • I think important messages such not insured unless pre-booked is important. • This signage should always be clear and obvious. • signage should be clearer and in consistent place on all vehicle ie Centrally ,6" Lower than window on all opening doors (including Drivers)
<p>The lack of a specification on the siting with regards to the current private hire signage means that drivers fit the stickers at varying locations such as rear wings, rear doors, front doors or even rear windows. The relatively small size of the current signage coupled with the lack of uniformity with regards to its location has led to general view that the vehicle is not easily identifiable as a private hire vehicle. Overall, are you in favour with the proposal to make Private Hire Vehicles easily identifiable?</p>	<p>64</p>	<p>0</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A permanently affixed (not using magnetic plates) sign in a designated position on phv's is favourable. • A standard uniform policy/specification is essential • As you list above, many PH vehicles signage is not clear, and drivers / operators try to hide the signage, so as to give the impression that the vehicle can be instantly hired. Signs applied by the council or an approved sign maker in one standard position is recommended. No magnetic or removable signs allowed. • The placement should be done (or overseen) by a licensing officer to ensure its correct placement, also I firmly believe it should be a self-adhesive • sticker rather than a magnetic sign in order to avoid driver removing them. The placement should also be prominent and in the same general area • on every vehicle (where possible). • Easily identifiable and all vehicles should have guide lines as to where private hire signs should be fitted,

			<p>obviously this will vary from vehicle to vehicle, make and model.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People should be informed regarding the vehicle they are about to use. • Passenger safety (insured for journey)
<p>The change in policy seeks also to limit company logos and images to the front doors of the vehicle, again due to the lack of prescriptive guidelines on how much company information can be placed on vehicles this has led to a huge disparity in the visible appearance of private hire vehicles. Are you in favour in limiting company signage to the front doors of private hire vehicles?63</p>	63	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Again of maximum size (suggest A3 max), pre-determined position, permanently affixed (see Preston CC signage for phv's) • Safety and/or regulatory information should take precedent <p>Yes, very much so. The current Avacab signage looks "ungainly" and the proliferation of telephone numbers may confuse customers. All liveries to be approved by council licensing committee. Use of reflective stickers around door handles, to aid recognition by persons with poor sight.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I agree wholeheartedly with this policy. Full liveried vehicles should not be permitted, especially when the companies logo includes the words Taxi/Cab etc etc; this can and often does cause confusion to the general public as to the true purpose of the vehicle i.e believing a PHV is a vehicle that can be hailed. • All private hire vehicles should as far as possible look the same. • Not sure. A company should be allowed advertising on its own vehicles as long as it does not misinform or detract from the "private hire" signage. • At Avacab we have a very recognisable brand but all of our company cars are hackneys. • easier for passenger
<p>The proposed sign and layout of the new signage is attached to the Private Hire Livery Report. Do you have any suggestions on how this could be improved?</p>	5	59	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicle license number to be added and also council contact details for compliments or complaints. • Manchester City council have very clear identifiers; in addition, the company identifier is displayed on the front wing and rear quarter. Very clear

			<p>and uniformed throughout the entire fleet of PHV's.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am sure everyone will have a differing view on this. Maybe a vote between the companies most effected would suffice. • should be larger and better colours will help all including partially sighted.
<p>The proposal to limit company logos/business names is discussed in the report. The starting point has been set as 50cm by 50cm, within this space an Operator may use pictorial logos, phone numbers and business names. We are seeking to avoid a private hire vehicle being covered in company logos and phone numbers. Do you have any observations on whether this space provided for company information is sufficient?</p>	6	58	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A3 is an acceptable size and this is a generous standard. • As long as the company name and loco and phone number is used, i have no issues with the above. All liveries to be approved by committee before • being attached to vehicle. • The size is perfectly adequate, although I suggest including the vehicle license number. Also, in regards to company logo's; not allowing the use of • certain words that may be in the company name as these may confuse the public in to believing the vehicle is a public hire vehicle i.e Taxi/Cab etc etc. • Its dependent on the vehicle make and model but I would have thought bigger 60cm by 60cm • I agree that the private hire notice should be uniform in size, location and appearance but restricting the size of the company images on the front doors etc doesn't seem to achieve anything. • depends on size of vehicle
<p>Do you have any other comments or suggestions about taxi and private hire services in the Borough of South Ribble?</p>	N/A	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No magnetic signs to be used under any circumstances. Only American stretch limos to be allowed a plain exterior view. • In relation to signage; I have witnessed Private Hire vehicles not displaying ANY signage relating to pre-booking, this is no doubt due to the use of magnetic signage, the

			<p>above policy should enforce the use of self adhesive identifiers. Also I have seen a number of Hackney Carriage vehicles operating in the borough without roof lights.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I would welcome a system that prevents what we call flying. so if a driver attempts radio or phone a job in the operators are aware its e-legal and they can potentially be prosecuted as helping out an e-legal ply for hire. also that private hire vehicles metres are frozen unless they have a booked job on the screen from the company on what are xda module type devices similar to many phones today. I also feel every vehicle should have its tariff card clearly displayed inside the vehicle so customer can see at all times. • Better checks on vehicle and driver dress code? could be good eg NO vests or short shorts.
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COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

9. *There are no budgetary implications as the cost of the new signs can be funded from the existing budget for licensing materials.*

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

1.10. *If Members are minded to accept the changes to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing Policy, it will require approval by Full Council.*

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

<p>► Risk</p> <p>► Equality & Diversity</p> <p><i>Add any other implications which you consider particularly relevant</i></p> <p>All inapplicable risks should be deleted before submission. Do not include 'N/A'.</p>	<p><i>It is important that members of the public are able to identify the difference between a Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle for insurance purposes.</i></p> <p><i>There are no equality or diversity issues.</i></p>
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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Document 1 is accessible using the below link and can be found at agenda item 30

APPENDICES

There are no appendices to this report

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Chris Ward, Licensing Officer	01772 625330	02/03/2020