

REPORT TO	ON
Licensing and Public Safety Committee	10 March 2020



TITLE	REPORT OF
Proposal of annual Licensing of vehicles	Shared Services Lead-Legal/Deputy Monitoring Officer

Is this report confidential?	No
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PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. This report advises members of the outcome of the consultation exercise carried out between the 13th January 2020 and the 24th February 2020 for the proposal that all vehicle plates are issued for a 12 monthly duration as oppose to the existing issuing of 6 monthly plates.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. Members are requested to note the contents of the report and particularly the responses of the consultation
3. Members are requested to formally approve or reject the proposal following the consultation outcome
4. Should Members approve the proposal, the amendments to the Taxi Policy will have to be referred to and approved by Full Council

CORPORATE OUTCOMES

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

Excellence, Investment and Financial Sustainability	x
Health, Wellbeing and Safety	
Place, Homes and Environment	x

Projects relating to People in the Corporate Plan:

Our People and Communities	
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BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

6. On the 12 November 2019, the Licensing and Public Safety Committee received a report detailing the proposal that all vehicle plates should be issued for a 12 monthly duration as oppose to the existing issuing of 6 monthly plates.

Members considered the proposed change to our Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy and authorised officers to undertake a six-week period of consultation.

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

7. In light of the Corporate Plan 2019 – 2023, the key aim of the report presented before the Committee on the 12 November 2019 was to assist with this strategy. The Licensing team believe that by issuing a 12 monthly plate as opposed to a 6 monthly plate we are proactively reducing our carbon footprint. The demand to produce plates will reduce, meaning the amount of poly-carbonated plastic we require will decrease.

This would also alleviate the need for a full application every 6 months., Licence Holders would benefit from less time spent off the road avoiding potential lengthy waiting times in Gateway.

For the Council to be satisfied that the vehicles it licences are safe and fit for purpose, Drivers would still be expected to provide the 6 monthly roadworthiness certificates. Administrative procedures will be put in place by Licensing Officers to make certain that 6 monthly roadworthiness is completed by Drivers.

The change in procedure would also allow Licensing Officers to spend less time completing administrative tasks and enable Licensing Officers to free up more time for enforcement activity, improving the proactive capability of enforcement.

All changes required in our Taxi Licensing Policy can be found attached as the original report that was presented to the Licensing & Public Safety Committee on 12 November 2019. This is attached as Background Document 1

CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT AND OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION

8. On 8 January 2020, a letter was sent to all licensed Private Hire and Hackney Carriage drivers and Operators currently licensed with the authority, advising them of the period of consultation and telling them how to access a copy of the proposed changes and make comments. The consultation documents were also uploaded onto our website for consideration and comment.

The 6-week period of consultation closed on 24th February 2020.

Overall the Trade were in favour of the proposed change. A resounding 98.44% agreed to move from 6 monthly plates to annual grants.

The majority of the stakeholders agreed that the change was a productive and a positive step forward to help reduce plastic waste. One suggested this should have been implemented years ago.

60 of the 61 that responded agreed to the proposed change.

Question	Yes	No	Responses
<p>Q. In light of the Corporate Plan 2019 – 2023 part of the Council’s vision and priorities are to focus on ensuring South Ribble develops and delivers a strategy to eliminate single use plastics. Whilst complete elimination is not possible at this time this move will see a 50% reduction in the purchase and subsequent distribution of plastic plates. In order to assist with this strategy, we believe that by issuing a 12 monthly plate as opposed to a 6 monthly plate we are proactively reducing our carbon footprint. The demand to produce plates will reduce, meaning the amount of poly-carbonated plastic we require will decrease. Overall, are you in favour of the proposal to introduce a change to the current policy?</p>	60	1	<p>A sensible move.</p> <p>You could use recyclable metal plates.</p> <p>No, the current plates contain the dates visible to the public, when the license expires. A scheme should be set up to recycle the plates or move to a plate manufacture that offers recycled plastic plates. A surcharge should be added to the license fee, which is returnable up on return to the council of expired plated, intended for recycling.</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>I’ve never understood why they have to be retested every 6 months all vehicles over three years old have a MOT valid for 12 months why not taxis?</p> <p>We the trade been asking for this be re-implemented for years. finally, sensibility is coming back. 32. Reduction in plastic is a positive step.</p> <p>This saving does seem to make sense.</p> <p>Vehicles should still be Tested every 6 months to maintain Standards and safety</p>

<p>Q. This would also alleviate the need for a full application every 6 months, Licence Holders would benefit from less time spent off the road avoiding potential lengthy waiting times in Gateway. It should be noted that the trade have always intimated that they would prefer a 12 monthly plate for the above reasons. Overall, are you in favour with the above proposal?</p>	60	1	<p>Again, a sensible move.</p> <p>I am in favour of the above providing it will not change the amount of robust scrutiny companies and drivers face</p> <p>No - 6 month checks reduce the time frame of the possibility of vehicles operating uninsured.</p> <p>As Above.</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>It reduces down time and costs. As long as 6 monthly roadworthiness certificates are still required.</p>
<p>Q. Do you have any other comments or suggestions about taxi and private hire services in the Borough of South Ribble?</p>			<p>The software used for processing applications is very outdated, it's really not user friendly.</p> <p>Council will need to be alert to the possibility that companies may use this extension as a way to cut costs.</p>

In light of this, the Committee is now requested to consider the change to our policy and to agree to forward to Full Council to formally agree to the changes.

AIR QUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9. There are no direct Air Quality implications to this report.

COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

10. There will be no impact on income to the Council because the charges will remain the same. The costs for buying in the plates would decrease in future because less stock will be required. This would be taken into account when calculating the licensing fees.

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

11. If Members decide to approve the proposed changes then this will have to be referred to Full Council for consideration and approval.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

<p>► Risk</p> <p>► Equality & Diversity</p> <p><i>Add any other implications which you consider particularly relevant</i></p>	<p>There are no risk identified</p> <p>There are no equality or diversity issues</p>
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All inapplicable risks should be deleted before submission. Do not include 'N/A'.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Document 1 – Original Report presented to the Licensing & Public Safety Committee on the 12 November 2019.

APPENDICES

There are no appendices attached to this report

LT Member's Name: Dave Whelan
Job Title: Interim Monitoring Officer

Report Author:	Telephone:	Date:
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