

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Planning and Development	Licensing and Public Safety Committee	Tuesday, 7 December 2021

Vehicle Age Policy and Licensing of Hackney Carriage Vehicles

Is this report confidential?	No
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Purpose of the Report

1. To consider an amendment to the existing vehicle age policy.

Recommendations

2. To consider the evidence submitted within the report.
3. Agree that the licensing section undertake a period of consultation with the relevant stakeholders in respect of the proposed options.
4. To agree to receive a report on the outcome of the consultation exercise at a future meeting.
5. To consider what effect changing the vehicle age policy would have on the council's air quality commitments.

Corporate priorities

6. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

An exemplary council	Thriving communities
A fair local economy that works for everyone	Good homes, green spaces, healthy places

Background to the report

7. At the Taxi Trade Forum held in October 2017, trade representatives raised several issues including the view that it was undesirable to have a policy of differential age limits for saloon vehicles and wheelchair accessible vehicles. They asked whether it would be possible for the Council to bring these age limits into closer alignment.

8. As a result of that enquiry, a working group of committee members was be set up, with a view to considering the issue in detail and reporting back to the Licensing & Public Safety Committee at a later date.
9. The working group met on the first time on the 1st February 2018 to discuss the topic of the age policy.
10. Here the group discussed and reviewed the evidence provided by officers on the current age differential of vehicles licensed by this authority and other local authorities. They considered whether an alternative age policy would be more appropriate in reflecting the needs of a modern licenced fleet. The advantages/disadvantages were discussed at length.
11. Following the working group, it was recommended that we go out to consult on this topic with the Trade and Stake Holders.
12. The Licensing & Public Safety Committee agreed to a consultation exercise, with a view to the outcome of this exercise being reported to a future meeting of the Committee for a formal decision.
13. The first Consultation exercise was carried out between 1st May 2018 and closed on the 28th May 2018. The findings were presented to Committee in July 2018.
14. Here it was proposed that the changes required within the Taxi Licensing Policy should be forwarded to the meeting of full council on 26th September 2018 with a recommendation for formal adoption.

Full Council Outcome

15. The Council considered the report and the Chair of Licensing explained that a working group of the General Licensing Committee had recommended for the current differentiated age policy to be abandoned and replaced by a standardised age policy.
16. Air pollution concerns subsequently raised by Environmental Health had led to a difference of opinion between Members, on how to progress this issue.
17. Overall the Council supported the recommendation made by the General Licensing Committee to extend the vehicle age policy for private hire and hackney carriage vehicles to 6 years (on first registration) and 12 years (maximum age on renewal) However, it was refused.
18. Following this licensing officers revaluated the options to take into account the air quality commitments of the council. In November 2019 a further report was presented to Licensing & Public Safety Committee. The new proposal included 5 options.
19. Members agreed that another consultation exercise, to consider all wider issues. This Consultation ran 6th Jan 2020 – 17th Feb 2020. Our findings during this consultation where inconclusive. At this point Officers decided to reevaluate and go with a different option.

Current Position - Vehicle Ages

20. Currently the taxi licensing policy for SRBC with regards to ages of vehicles when first licenced by this authority and the age a vehicles can be licenced until are set out below.

Type of Vehicle	Maximum Age When First presented for Licensing
purpose built taxis (i.e. Peugeot E7, Euro taxi) wheelchair accessible vehicles	6 Years
All other vehicle types (hatchback saloon, estate etc)	4 Years

Type of Vehicle	Maximum Age vehicles Can Be licenced Until
purpose built taxis (i.e. Peugeot E7, Euro taxi) wheelchair accessible vehicles	12 Years
All other vehicle types (hatchback saloon, estate etc)	8 Years

21. Any application where a vehicle falls outside the Council's age criteria will be referred to the next scheduled General Licensing Committee for consideration.

22. The taxi licensing Policy states the following

6.9 Vehicle Age Limits

The Council operates an age policy in respect of licensed vehicles and since its introduction, the travelling public of South Ribble have benefitted from more reliable vehicles which are fitted with better safety features and are more environmentally friendly.

The Council will where appropriate, issue Hackney Carriage Licences to vehicles which:

- a) Are no older than 4 years, when first presented for licensing*
- b) In respect of purpose built taxis (i.e. Peugeot E7, Euro taxi) or other wheelchair accessible vehicles are no older than 6 years, when first presented for licensing*

Vehicles in (a) above, which have been continuously licenced by South Ribble, will no longer be eligible for renewal once they are 8 years old.

Vehicles in (b) above, which have been continuously licenced by South Ribble, will no longer be eligible for renewal once they are 12 years old

In order to ensure that the Council does not fetter its discretion, a vehicle proprietor retains the right to apply to licence a vehicle which falls outside the Council's age criteria.

All such applications will be referred to the next scheduled General Licensing Committee for consideration.

The Committee will take into account factors including, but not restricted to:

- *The make and model of the vehicle*
- *The exceptional condition of the vehicle, including the bodywork and interior passenger accommodation*
- *The mileage*
- *The service history*
- *Details of all repairs undertaken throughout the vehicles life*
- *Details of all replacement parts fitted throughout the vehicles life*
- *Whether any particular contracts rely on the specific use of the vehicle.*

The Committee will not take into account the personal or financial circumstances of a proprietor when considering a departure from this policy

Each case will be determined on its own individual merits and any departures from this policy will be in exceptional circumstances only and will be recorded along with the reasons such a departure. Any departure from the policy will not create a precedent for future decisions.

Determination of the number of passengers which the vehicle will be licensed to carry will be the responsibility of the Licensing Officer on presentation of the vehicle at first inspection.

Current Position - Licensing of New Hackney Carriage Vehicles

23. The current policy states the following with regards to licensing new hackney carriage vehicles

The Council will only accept applications for a New Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence for vehicles which meet the age criteria and are wheelchair accessible. There is no restriction on whether accessibility is via rear or side loading doors. Hackney Carriage Proprietors in possession of a current Hackney Carriage vehicle licence that was issued to them on or before the 21st October 2014 (GLC minute 2014/20) may apply to replace their vehicle with either a wheelchair accessible vehicle or a non-wheelchair accessible vehicle.

All other Hackney Carriage proprietors may only replace their vehicle with a wheelchair accessible vehicle.

The decision will be reviewed in 2019, when the Council will consider whether there is still a balance of vehicles for all taxi users, and thus if the authority is complying with its equality duty.

Proprietors of vehicles which have been converted from the manufacturer's original specification, to a wheelchair accessible vehicle, must comply with the SRBC policy on modified vehicles which will be made available separately.

- The council currently licences 105 licenced hackney carriages.
- 61 vehicles are licenced by Avacab
- 44 vehicles either licenced as owner driver hackney carriage vehicles or with other operators.

- With 14 vehicles not linked to any operator at all being full owner driver hackney carriage vehicles.
- 24 hackney carriage WAV vehicles.

24. As stated in the above section of policy, the licensing of hackney carriage vehicles is now due to be reviewed.

Current Problems Identified by Officers

- Is the policy still fit for purpose with regards to the age policy and the licensing of hackney carriage vehicles?
- The vehicle age policy is still due for renewal. The last changes to the policy came in 2015. As per above section of policy, the vehicle age policy was due to be reviewed in 2019.
- And, the licensing of hackney carriage vehicles was also due to be reviewed in 2019.

25. Obviously as previously stated in this report, attempts to review the policy have taken place since before 2019 with working groups with the trade and a consultation taking place. The taxi licensing policy states;

“The Council will consider whether there is still a balance of vehicles for all taxi users, and thus if the authority is complying with its equality duty”

26. In April 2019 an external review/ Unmet Demand Survey, of the SRBC taxi licensing policy took place on behalf of South Ribble Council following the guidance of the 2010 DFT Best Practice Guidance document.

27. The review identified key points to address, in regard to what policies should be revised within the vehicle policy.

28. Sections to note from the report are,

A formal demand survey in 2000 found very low average passenger delay levels and resulted in a decision that all new hackney carriage vehicles needed to be wheel chair accessible.

A subsequent decision led to differential age limits being applied to wheel chair accessible vehicles in both hackney carriage and private hire fleets to encourage more such vehicles.

Hardly any hackney carriage vehicles have been added to the fleet since that time, and the only recent application was for a saloon style vehicle, which was refused.

In operational terms, one large section of the private hire fleet services Lancashire County Council contracts only so that overall the public only see a fleet which 64% are hackney carriage and 36% private hire.

The proximity to Preston and the use of out of town hackney carriages for private hire does lead to some hackney carriage appearing vehicles being seen in these areas.

The present fleet is not particularly air-quality friendly and there are few hybrid and no electric vehicles at present. None of the present wheel chair accessible fleet would pass Clean Air Zone charging regimes.

Private hire vehicles are too 'invisible' giving potential that the public might use non-local or unlicensed vehicles particularly outside Leyland itself. The spirit of the age policy to encourage more wheel chair accessible vehicles has in some cases been abused, but partly by inconsistent wording and application of policy.

With regard to 'pure' hackney carriage operation, just 14% of the hackney carriage fleet are independent owner/driver vehicles with the remainder linked to private hire companies. However, certainly in Leyland, most 'taxis' experienced by people will be hackney carriage.

Does the policy fall in line with the commitments of the council with regards to air quality?

29. The answer currently is no, both private hire and hackney wheelchair accessible vehicles can be purchased up to 2 years older when first licenced than "saloon" non wheelchair accessible vehicles and stay licenced for an additional 4 years.

30. In December 2016 the Council formally adopted the 'South Ribble Air Quality Action Plan' this document was, produced as part of the Council's legal obligations under Air Quality and identified a number of action measures that the authority would undertake to improve, maintain and protection the level of Air Quality throughout the borough.

These measures included to encourage the uptake of low emission vehicles and reduce the age limit of taxis within the borough. Some areas in the country have begun to implement Clean Air Zones some of these areas are known as charging zones whilst other do not apply a charge.

31. A commitment was made in the 2019/2020 Licensing work plan to revisit the age policy with particular emphasis on vehicle emissions.

32. Officers have found that often wheelchair accessible vehicles are more polluting than other options that could be available in saloon type vehicles. When researching the market for hybrid or electric type vehicles, Officers have found more cost-effective options available to drivers for saloon type.

A good example of this would be, the current policy will permit a hybrid Toyota Prius to be licenced as a new private hire vehicle up to 4 years old and then remain licenced up to 8 years old.

Whereas a transit van that has been adapted to the needs of a wheelchair user could be licenced up to 6 years old and stay licenced until it is 12 years old.

It's quite clear that a transit van is going to be a higher polluting vehicle than a hybrid Toyota Prius, yet the current incentive would be to purchase a transit van.

33. With regards to licensing new hackney carriage vehicles, the current policy only permits wheelchair accessible vehicles as new hackney carriages vehicles.

34. As mentioned above these vehicles can be first licenced up to 6 years of age, but they are a higher polluting vehicle than a large number of saloon type vehicles now available (non-wheel chair vehicles). Especially with the option of hybrid or electric models being more available in saloon format than they currently are in wheelchair format.
35. To fall in line with the councils pledges regarding air quality, the taxi licensing policy for new vehicles licenced on the fleet should meet Euro 6 standard at the very least or above.
36. Officers are currently reporting that operators from neighbouring boroughs have been obtaining Private Hire Operator licences from SRBC and then sub contacting work from South Ribble over to their offices in Preston, Chorley, Blackburn etc where it is much easier to licence a vehicle due to no/limited age restriction, to use Preston, Chorley, Blackburn vehicles to perform the work, in an older more polluting vehicle than we currently have now. This makes a mockery of our age policy.
37. Euro 6 - Applies to all new cars registered from 1 September 2015

Benefits: A 67% reduction in the permissible levels of nitrogen oxides in diesels and the introduction of a particle number limit for petrol's.

Euro 6 emissions limits for petrol - CO: 1.00g/km HC: 0.10g/km NOx: 0.06g/km PM: 0.005g/km PM: 6.0×10^{-11} /km

Euro 6 emissions limits for diesels - CO: 0.50g/km HC + NOx: 0.17g/km NOx: 0.08g/km PM: 0.005g/km PM: 6.0×10^{-11} /km

38. According to figures from the Society of Motor Manufacturers & Traders (SMMT), the Euro emissions have had a significant influence in reducing emissions.

It states that since 1993, carbon monoxide levels have been cut by 82% for diesel-engine cars and 63% for petrol's and particulate matter is down by 96%. Since 2001, nitrogen oxide is down by 84% and hydrocarbons are down by 50% in petrol-engine cars.

39. An incentive for more low polluting, extremely low CO2 emitting vehicles is required within the SRBC Taxi licensing policy.
40. Any change in vehicle age policy should have regard for the existing Euro ratings, which since 2016 has required manufactures to reduce emissions year on year.
41. The euro rating of a vehicle does not necessarily increase with newer vehicles, older non-polluting vehicles can still have a euro rating of up to 6.

For example, a VW Passat 2.0 TDI registered in 2016 had an emissions rating of around 145g/km, whereas the same vehicle VW 2.0 TDI registered in 2020 146-155g/km.

At the end of 2013, the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union reached an agreement regarding two regulatory proposals that would implement mandatory 2020 CO2 emission targets for new passenger cars and light-commercial vehicles in the European Union. The passenger car standards are 95 g/km of CO2, phasing in for 95% of vehicles in 2020 with 100% compliance in 2021. The light-commercial vehicle standards are 147 g/km of CO2 for 2020.

42. As per the policy that was presented to the committee in November 2019, the licenced fleet of hackney carriage and private hire vehicles as of November 2019, consisted of 256 licenced vehicles. 89 vehicles did not meet the EU standards for emissions, out of the 89, 76 were wheel chair accessible vehicles.
43. The policy currently promotes the incentive to drivers to licence wheelchair accessible vehicles and not efficient low polluting vehicles.
44. This was the stance of the council in 2015, the fleet consisted of a small amount of wheel chair accessible vehicles and this needed to be address. Times have now changed, and the council should be aiming its age policy to promote clean air zones, whilst still meeting its requirements for Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles designated for the purposes of Section 165 of the Equalities Act 2010.
45. There is currently nothing within the policy that promotes an incentive for drivers to choose more efficient, less polluting vehicles.
46. Electric wheelchair accessible or purpose-built taxis are still too expensive, to be cost effective for a taxi driver to purchase with new models still around £50-60k to purchase, whereas saloon type hybrid are now available in a more cost affective affordable way.

Is there still a need for a grandfather rights policy with regards to licensing new hackney carriage vehicles?

47. The main objective of the grandfather rights policy in 2015 was to restrict the amount of saloon hackney carriages and increase the number of wheelchair accessible vehicles operating within South Ribble. Since then the only way to licence a new hackney carriage vehicle through south ribble borough council, has been to present a wheel chair accessible vehicle.
48. Current policy states;

6.10 Wheelchair Accessibility

The Council will only accept applications for a New Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence for vehicles which meet the age criteria and are wheelchair accessible. There is no restriction on whether accessibility is via rear or side loading doors. Hackney Carriage Proprietors in possession of a current Hackney Carriage vehicle licence that was issued to them on or before the 21st October 2014 (GLC minute 2014/20) may apply to replace their vehicle with either a wheelchair accessible vehicle or a non-wheelchair accessible vehicle. All other Hackney Carriage proprietors may only replace their vehicle with a wheelchair accessible vehicle. The decision will be reviewed in 2019, when the Council will consider whether there is still a balance of vehicles for all taxi users, and thus if the authority is complying with its equality duty. Proprietors of vehicles which have been converted from the manufacturer's original specification, to a wheelchair accessible vehicle, must comply with the SRBC policy on modified vehicles which will be made available separately.

49. Current numbers of hackney carriage vehicles are depleting compared to 2015 when the grandfather rights policy was passed.

A number of drivers retire or no longer choose to work as a hackney carriage driver and let the licence lapse.

New drivers are turning down applying for badges with this authority as they can't obtain a hackney carriage licence for their vehicle,

50. Applicants are applying at neighbouring authorities with no age policy and licencing with them as hackney carriage drivers, only to return to work in this area for the same operators with their vehicle licenced by other authorities. (hackney carriage drivers can take bookings from an operator outside of the borough its licenced by).

Our officers have very little to no enforcement powers over these vehicles operating in our area.

We should be looking to give incentives for extremely low CO2 emitting vehicles as well as promoting wheelchair accessible vehicles still to some extent.

Around 14% of the hackney carriage fleet is used by owner drivers, the rest are made up of operators owned hackney carriage vehicles, who are using the remaining 86% to perform mainly private hire pre booked work and some rank work.

Compared to other boroughs the ranks in South Ribble are empty and could accommodate more hackney carriage vehicles.

The independent unmet demand survey carried out in April 2019 states the following in reference to this,

Many phoned-for bookings will be serviced by hackney carriage vehicles particularly in Leyland. Despite freely available hackney carriage plates for wheelchair accessible capable vehicles, few have been added and the overall evidence is little need for such vehicles. There is a very high provision of wheelchair accessible capable disabled vehicles in the private hire fleet, but all but one is for work on Lancashire county, non-public-facing contracts, which take that fleet across the whole of the County.

51. The council would still have a duty to make public a list of Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles designated for the purposes of Section 165 of the Equalities Act 2010. So, some restriction on the number of saloon vehicles would still be required for equality purposes.

Section 165 of the Equalities Act 2010 imposes duties upon the drivers of designated vehicles when dealing with disabled passengers travelling in wheelchairs or a person who wishes to be accompanied by a disabled person in a wheelchair. Those duties are set out in Section 165(4) as follows:

- to carry to passenger whilst in the wheelchair;
- not to make any additional charge for doing so;
- if the person chooses to sit in a passenger seat, to carry the wheelchair;
- to take such steps as are reasonably necessary to ensure that the passenger is carried in safety and reasonable comfort; and

- to give the passenger such mobility assistance as is reasonably required.

Proposals

52. Officers have come up with a list of proposals that they would like to propose to members of the licensing committee to consult the trade.

53. Option 1 Keep as it is - make no changes.

The Council will where appropriate, issue Hackney Carriage Licences to vehicles which;

Type of Vehicle	Maximum Age When First presented for Licensing
purpose built taxis (i.e. Peugeot E7, Euro taxi) wheelchair accessible vehicles	6 Years
All other vehicle types (hatchback saloon, estate etc)	4 Years

Vehicles which have been continuously licenced by South Ribble, will no longer be eligible for renewal once pass the following ages;

Type of Vehicle	Maximum Age vehicles Can Be licenced Until
purpose built taxis (i.e. Peugeot E7, Euro taxi) wheelchair accessible vehicles	12 Years
All other vehicle types (hatchback saloon, estate etc)	8 Years

54. Option 2 Reduce all vehicles to the same age. (4 and 8).

Reduce all vehicles to fall in line, remove the option for wheelchair accessible vehicles to be able licenced for up to 6 years of age when first licenced, also removing the option for them to stay on for the extra 4 years up to 12 years of age.

All vehicles would only be licenced if the vehicle was under 4 years of age when first licenced and to remain on the fleet until 8 years.

The Council will where appropriate, issue Hackney Carriage Licences to vehicles which;

Type of Vehicle	Maximum Age When First presented for Licensing
All vehicle types (hatchback saloon, estate etc) and purpose-built taxis (i.e. Peugeot E7, Euro taxi) wheelchair accessible vehicles	4 Years

Vehicles which have been continuously licenced by South Ribble, will no longer be eligible for renewal once pass the following ages;

Type of Vehicle	Maximum Age vehicles Can Be licenced Until
All vehicle types (hatchback saloon, estate etc) and purpose-built taxis (i.e. Peugeot E7, Euro taxi) wheelchair accessible vehicles	8 Years

55. Option 3 Have a blanket policy all vehicles for 5 years on and 10 years off the fleet

Reduce the allowance on wheel chair accessible vehicles and increase the non-wheel chair saloon vehicles so they can all be accepted up to the age of 5 years of age when first licenced and stay on the fleet until 10 years.

The Council will where appropriate, issue Hackney Carriage Licences to vehicles which;

Type of Vehicle	Maximum Age When First presented for Licensing
All vehicle types (hatchback saloon, estate etc) and purpose-built taxis (i.e. Peugeot E7, Euro taxi) wheelchair accessible vehicles	5 Years

Vehicles which have been continuously licenced by South Ribble, will no longer be eligible for renewal once pass the following ages;

Type of Vehicle	Maximum Age vehicles Can Be licenced Until
All vehicle types (hatchback saloon, estate etc) and purpose-built taxis (i.e. Peugeot E7, Euro taxi) wheelchair accessible vehicles	10 years

56. Option 4 Reduce all vehicles to 4 and 8 years. With an option of an extension for non-polluting vehicles that conform to a certain euro rating.

Reduce all vehicles to 4 years of age maximum when first licence and to be remain licenced until the vehicle is 8 years old, but, if the vehicle passes a set co2 emissions euro rating an option for an extra 2 years older when first licenced (up to 6 years old) and remain licenced until 12 years of age.

The Council will where appropriate, issue Hackney Carriage Licences to vehicles which;

Type of Vehicle	Maximum Age When First presented for Licensing
All vehicle types (hatchback saloon, estate etc) and purpose-built taxis (i.e. Peugeot E7, Euro taxi)	4 Years

wheelchair accessible vehicles	
All vehicle types (hatchback saloon, estate etc) and purpose-built taxis (i.e. Peugeot E7, Euro taxi) wheelchair accessible vehicles, that has a certain euro rating meeting a set level of CO2 emissions.	6 years

Vehicles which have been continuously licenced by South Ribble, will no longer be eligible for renewal once pass the following ages;

Type of Vehicle	Maximum Age vehicles Can Be licenced Until
All vehicle types (hatchback saloon, estate etc) and purpose-built taxis (i.e. Peugeot E7, Euro taxi) wheelchair accessible vehicles	8 Years
All vehicle types (hatchback saloon, estate etc) and purpose-built taxis (i.e. Peugeot E7, Euro taxi) wheelchair accessible vehicles, that has a certain euro rating meeting a set level of CO2 emissions.	12 years

57. This option would introduce an incentive to drivers to obtain more efficient vehicles as they can buy them older and keep them on for longer. But only certain types of vehicles that are more efficient and low polluting. This would fall in line with the air quality commitments of South Ribble BC.
58. Vehicles would still be licenced subject to passing the rigorous road worthiness certificate and drivers would be required to keep their vehicles in a good safe working order of officers would issue stop notices if vehicles were found to be unfit on the side of the road.
59. Drivers would look to buy hybrid electric and non-polluting vehicles if the incentive was that they could buy a vehicle up to 2 years older and for them to licence for another 4 years up to 12 years of age.
60. This option could be reviewed in 3 years' time, with the option of making the policy more stringent on emissions of the south ribble licenced fleet, but again this would depend of the cost and availability of hybrid and electric vehicles at that point of time as more and more second-hand vehicles of this type become available.

Exemptions from this rules for certain types of vehicle

61. Exemptions may be applied from a Euro rating policy dependant on what type of work the vehicle is required for.

This would be dependent on circumstances like i.e. a vehicles being used specifically for a child with special needs and the vehicles being used meets a required need by the child.

Approximately 70 of the private hire vehicles licenced by this authority are dedicated to special needs transport and are not available for private hire in the conventional sense. Taking into account the TFL charging zones, who have delayed any charges being applied to wheel chair accessible vehicles until 2025 and Governments Clean Air Zone Framework which creates an exemption for vehicles within the disabled passenger vehicle tax class.

62. All vehicles performing special educational needs transport that do not meet the policy proposed for Euro rated vehicles, should be given an exemption and should still be accepted up to 6 years of age when first licenced and be allowed to remain licenced until 12 years of age.
63. The type of vehicle used for disabled school transport is normally a converted mini bus, specifically adapted to meet the needs of the user.
64. Obviously, this exemption would not need to be granted to this type of vehicle, if it passes the Euro rating test and operators should be openly advised by the authority to try to purchase low CO2 rated vehicles where possible and that in 3 years there will be a requirement for all disabled vehicles to pass Euro rating 6.

This exemption would be intended to be revaluated following the next renewal of the taxi licensing policy in 3 years' time- in 2024. At such time a review on the type of mini bus vehicles available to the trade would be investigated by officers and not to mention closer in line to the timeframe of TFL's charging zone and the Government Clean Air Zone Framework.

65. This exemption would be granted with the advice given to operators, that the exemption would not be extended after 3 years. During this time period, operators would be expected to bring their fleet of vehicles in line with the proposed accepted level of CO2.
66. Following the policy review in 3 years' time, if vehicles failed the CO2 test, operators would only be given licences for vehicles no older than 4 years on first licensing and up to 8 years licenced by this authority no matter what type of work was being performed.

It is envisaged that following a period of 3 years, manufacturers will be further down the line with producing mini bus vehicles that are even less polluting, eco-friendlier and would be in line with that rating seen on normal saloon vehicles.

Relevant recommendations set out in the report of the unmet demand survey

On the basis of the evidence gathered in this review of licensed vehicle policy for South Ribble Council, the following revisions should be considered:

- *Revise the current restriction on new hackney carriages to encourage hybrid or electric vehicles to be added to the fleet (retaining the option of wheelchair accessible capable additions but encouraging these to be as air quality friendly as possible)*
- *In the medium to longer term, move towards removing the different age policy between wheelchair accessible and saloon vehicles from both sides of the trade*
- *finding ways to ensure the current hackney carriage wheelchair accessible capable fleet is not diminished*

Many of the above aims will need careful balance to ensure the current fleet moves forward to be future-proofed as early as possible without reducing the fleet size which is probably presently at an optimum level.

there are some concerns that need to be addressed:

- *The current total fleet is not particularly air quality friendly*
- *There are just three hybrid and no electric vehicles in the whole fleet*
- *None of the present wheelchair accessible capable fleet would pass future Clean Air Zone charging regimes*
- *Many of the wheelchair accessible capable vehicles are amongst the most polluting*

Proposals

Age Policy

67. Officers feel their preferred choice would be option 4 going forward with the policy, this would help meet the departments obligation towards the council's clean air zones commitments.

The incentive of being able to licence a vehicle for longer if it meets certain euro rating criteria for lower CO2 levels should help to create a fleet of low polluting vehicles and officers feel we would start to see an increase in electric and hybrid vehicles being licenced by drivers. Drivers should find it more affordable to purchase these types of vehicles with less restrictions on age.

Licensing of new Hackney carriage vehicles

68. Officers feel this is now a good time to review the number of saloon hackney carriage vehicles licenced by this authority and look to cap the amount of saloon hackney carriage vehicles licenced.

69. Once this agreed set cap has been reached a review could take place 6 monthly or annual applications for saloon hackney carriage vehicles. Drivers would still be able to licence wheelchair accessible hackney vehicles as they please with no cap.

The proposed changes required to the Taxi licensing policy with regard to licensing hackney carriage vehicles can be found in appendix 4 of this report.

70. It would create a controlled balance of wheelchair accessible and saloon type vehicles that are greener and compliant with required CO2 levels. Whilst still complying with its obligations under section 165 of equalities act 2010.

Climate change and air quality

71. The work noted in this report impacts on the following areas of climate change and sustainability targets of the Councils Green Agenda: net carbon zero by 2030, reducing waste production, limiting non sustainable forms of transport, working with sustainable and green accredited companies, limiting or improving air quality, limiting water waste and flooding risks, improving green areas and biodiversity.

Equality and diversity

72. The report sets out how the council will still meet its equality requirement of section 165 of equalities act 2010.

Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

73. There are no direct financial implications of this report.

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

74. The Council has power to licence private hire vehicles under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 and hackney carriages under the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 . Any refusal to grant a private hire vehicle licence may be appealed to the local magistrates court (and conditions imposed on grant of a private hire vehicle licence or a hackney carriage vehicle licence may also be likewise appealed). A refusal to grant a hackney carriage vehicle licence may be appealed directly to the Crown Court.

Background documents

Background Document 1 - Clean Air Zone Framework - Principles for setting up Clean Air Zones in England

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/863730/clean-air-zone-framework-feb2020.pdf

Background document 2 - SRBC Unmet Demand Survey

Appendices

List the appendices in the order that they are attached to the report with titles as appropriate. Any spreadsheets/diagrams should be in pdf format and be headed up.

Appendix 1 - Proposed wording for option 2

Appendix 2 - Proposed wording for option 3

Appendix 3 - Proposed wording for option 4

Appendix 4 – Proposed wording for licensing new hackney carriage vehicles

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