

To: General Purposes Licensing Committee

Date: 28 May 2012 **Item No:**

Report of: Head of Environmental Development

Title of Report: Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Vehicles: Review of Euro Emission Standard Levels & Vehicle Age Limits

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To seek approval to consult on the proposals to increase the rate of compliance for licensed vehicles to meet with the latest Euro Emission Levels and implement an upper age limit for licensed vehicles.

Report Approved by:

Finance: Paul Swaffield
Legal: Daniel Smith

Policy Framework:
A Vibrant and Sustainable Economy
Cleaner, Greener Oxford

Recommendation(s):

Committee is recommended to:

i) approve in principle the proposal to change the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle criteria in relation to vehicle emissions as set out in paragraph 8 of this report; and

ii) request the Head of Environmental Development carry out a consultation with the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire trade as to the proposed changes, and provide details of any responses to the Committee at its next meeting.

Introduction

1. On 15th June 2009, the General Purposes Licensing Committee approved the implementation of a new standard of licensing criteria for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles based on Euro Emission Standards. At the time the highest Euro Standard was Euro V. The Euro Standards have since been extended to Euro VII although no date has yet been set for the implementation of Euro VII.

- The Euro Emissions Standards have two applicable dates. The date applicable in relation to the Licensing Authority is the date that vehicles first become available on the open market.

Euro standard	Type Approval	Vehicles Available
Euro IV	1 st January 2005	1 st January 2006
Euro V	1 st September 2009	1 st January 2011
Euro VI	1 st September 2014	1 st January 2016
Euro VII	No dates yet set	No dates yet set

Background

- The current criteria for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles states:

New Vehicle Licences:

Until 31st December 2012 any vehicle must not be older than 5 years of age at the date of the grant of the vehicle licence.

From 1st January 2013, any vehicle must not be older than 3 years of age at the date of the grant of the vehicle licence.

Renewal of existing Vehicle Licences:

From 1st January 2013, all vehicles submitted for a licence renewal will need to be Euro 4 Emissions compliant, which in effect means that any vehicle first registered prior to 1st October 2006 will not meet current regulations.

- In order to address the concerns that some of the older vehicles in operation are still two Euro Emission Levels behind the most recently implemented Euro Emission Level and to generate a continual modernisation of vehicles with lower emissions, it is proposed to extend the criteria by amending the age limit for licenced vehicles.
- The Committee is asked to note that following a meeting between the Licensing Team Leader and the London Taxi Company (the manufacturer of the London Black cabs), it was established that there are no plans to introduce a “retro-fit emissions system” to the market. The effect of this is that for older Hackney Carriage vehicles there will be option but for them to be replaced to meet with either Euro IV or Euro V Emission Standard Levels.
- When formulating the proposal for future vehicle criteria, the Head of Environmental Development gave consideration to the following matters relating to not only the Councils Corporate Objectives but also the local economy at both a residential and commercial level:
 - Cleaner Greener Campaign

- Low Emission Zone
- Maintenance costs of older vehicles
- Certificate of Compliance failure rate for older vehicles
- Volume of enforcement actions undertaken by the Licensing Officers in relation to the condition of older vehicles
- Economic effect of increased trade within the motor industry
- Customer expectations of the high standards already implemented by the Committee in relation to the Taxi Licensing function
- Enhancing the reputation of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Trade by increasing the professional appearance both externally and internally of all licensed vehicles

Proposal

7. It is proposed that the conditions relating to new Vehicle Licences remain the same but that the following condition relating to the renewal of existing Vehicle Licensing be introduced:

From 1st January 2014 no vehicle shall be re-licensed if it has reached 5 years of age from the date of first registration.

This in effect means that all vehicles re-licensed on or after 1st January 2016 will be Euro V compliant as Euro V was implemented on 1st January 2011. Similarly, all vehicles re-licensed on or after 1st January 2021 will be Euro VI compliant as Euro VI will be implemented on 1st January 2016.

8. The full set of conditions would then read:

New Vehicle Licences:

- Until 31st December 2012 any vehicle must not be older than 5 years of age at the date of the grant of the vehicle licence.**
- From 1st January 2013, any vehicle must not be older than 3 years of age at the date of the grant of the vehicle licence.**

Renewal of existing Vehicle Licences:

- From 1st January 2013, all vehicles submitted for a licence renewal will need to be Euro 4 Emissions compliant, which in effect means that any vehicle first registered prior to 1st October 2006 will not meet current regulations.**
- From 1st January 2014 no vehicle shall be re-licensed if it has reached 5 years of age from the date of first registration.**

Consultation

9. The Licensing Team Leader has developed these proposals with the assistance of the 2011/12 Chair and Vice-Chair. The proposals were discussed at a Taxi Trade Meeting held on 17th April 2012 and received the support of both COLTA and the Private Hire Trade Association members who were present.
10. Following receipt of this support, a Taxi Newsletter was sent to all licence holders advising them of the proposed criteria.
11. In order to assess the views held by the wider Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Trade it is necessary to invite responses to the in principle decision of this Committee by means of a full Consultation.

Financial Considerations

12. There are no financial considerations contained within the content of this report that apply to the Authority.

Legal Considerations

13. The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 at sections 47 and 48 allows the licensing authority to attach to vehicle licences such conditions as it considers reasonably necessary. Any licence holder aggrieved by any condition attached to their licence may appeal to the Magistrates' Court

Recommendations

14. The Committee is recommended to:
 - i) approve in principle the proposal to change the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle criteria in relation to vehicle emissions as set out in paragraph 8 of this report, and
 - ii) request the Head of Environmental Development carry out a consultation with the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Trade as to the proposed changes, and provide details of any responses to the Committee at its next meeting.

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