

To: General Purposes Licensing Committee

Date: 21 May 2013 **Item No:**

Report of: Head of Environmental Development

Title of Report: Hackney Carriage Unmet Demand Survey

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To consider the report of the “Unmet Demand” survey that was carried out between October 2012 and December 2012

Report Approved by:

Finance: Paul Swaffield
Legal: Daniel Smith

Policy Framework: Policy on Hackney Carriage Quantity Control
Vibrant Sustainable Economy.

Recommendation(s):

Committee is requested to:

- (i) agree to accept the conclusions of the Hackney Carriage “Unmet Demand” survey report prepared by Halcrow Group Limited, that there is currently no significant unmet demand for Hackney Carriage vehicles;**
- (ii) recommend to City Executive Board and Council that there is currently no unmet demand for the services of Hackney Carriage vehicles and to therefore resolve to maintain the Council’s policy of quantity control on the number of Hackney Carriage vehicle licences; and**
- (iii) agree that a further Unmet Demand survey be commissioned in 2015, subject to any future changes to relevant legislation.**

Background

1. The Town Police Clauses Act 1847, section 37 and the Transport Act 1985, section 16 allow a licensing authority to limit the number of hackney carriages as long as they are ‘satisfied that there is no significant demand for the services of Hackney Carriages which is unmet’.

2. Oxford City Council has a policy to limit the number of Hackney Carriage vehicle licences granted to a level that meets but does not exceed demand for the services of Hackney Carriage vehicles. It checks this limit by carrying out periodic surveys. The policy forms part of the Council's Policy Framework. It can only be changed with Council's agreement. The only change that can be made is to abandon the policy
3. A full review of Hackney Carriage vehicle licensing was carried out by the Environmental Scrutiny Committee on 12th November 2007. The recommendations from the review went before this committee on the 16th January 2008 and were agreed by Council on the 30th June 2008, including having a regulated number of Hackney Carriage vehicle licenses.
4. At the General Purposes Licensing Committee on the 19th October 2011 it was agreed to note the Council resolution of the 30th June 2008 to continue with the regulated number of Hackney Carriage vehicle licenses and request officers to commission a new "Unmet Demand" survey to determine if there is a significant unmet demand for Hackney Carriage vehicles.

Hackney Carriage "Unmet Demand" Survey 2012

5. The Head of Environmental Development invited tenders for a survey to be carried out and the Halcrow Group limited was appointed. The survey was carried out between October 2012 and December 2012.
6. Halcrow Group Limited has produced a report with their conclusions regarding the survey. The full "Unmet Demand" survey report is 44 pages long and therefore only the Summary of the "Unmet Demand" Survey is attached to this report at **Appendix One**. Ahead of this Committee meeting the full "Unmet Demand" survey report has been emailed to Members and two hard copies have been made available in the Members Lounge.
7. The survey concluded:
 - **That there is no evidence of significant unmet demand for Hackney Carriages in Oxford. This conclusion covers both patent and latent/suppressed demand and is based on an assessment of the implications of case law that has emerged since 2000, and the results of Halcrow's analysis.**
8. A consultant from Halcrow Group Limited will be at the meeting to present the report to the Committee and answer any questions Members may have.

Legal Implications

9. Legal implications are contained within this report at paragraphs 1 and 2.

Financial Implications

10. Any financial implications contained within this report will be met within existing budgets.

Recommendations

11. The Committee is recommended to:
 - (i) agree to accept the conclusions of the Hackney Carriage “Unmet Demand” survey report prepared by Halcrow Group Limited, that there is currently no significant unmet demand for Hackney Carriage vehicles;
 - (ii) recommend to City Executive Board and Council that there is currently no unmet demand for the services of Hackney Carriage vehicles and to therefore resolve to maintain the Council’s policy of quantity control on the number of Hackney Carriage vehicle licences; and
 - (iii) agree that a further “Unmet Demand” survey be commissioned in 2015, subject to any future changes to relevant legislation.

Name and contact details of author: **Jill Cramer**
Senior Licensing Officer
Environmental Development
Tel: 01865 252115
Email: jcramer@oxford.gov.iuk

Background papers:

Appendix One : Summary of “Unmet Demand” Survey

Version number: 1

This page is intentionally left blank