

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO LICENSING COMMITTEE

DECISION

meeting date: TUESDAY, 7 SEPTEMBER 2021
title: ELECTRIC AND HYBRID VEHICLES
submitted by: MARSHAL SCOTT – CHIEF EXECUTIVE
principal author: STEPHEN BARKER – SOLICITOR

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To inform Committee of issues in relation to the possible introduction of support for the use of hybrid or electric vehicles for taxi and private hire use.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Community Objectives – }
- Corporate Priorities – } The Council aims to be a well-managed Council supporting environmentally friendly initiatives.
- Other Considerations – }

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 At the meeting of this Committee held on 23 March 2021, Members considered the possibility of amending the taxi licensing regime to favour the use of electric or hybrid vehicles. Officers were requested to consider the approach adopted by other authorities. At the time, the Ribble Valley taxi fleet included 2 hybrid vehicles and no electric vehicles.

3 ISSUES

3.1 Officers have reviewed the policies and conditions of other local authorities. No authority has been identified which requires use of vehicles which are powered in any particular way. One authority has been identified which favours older (more than 10 years old) hybrid or electric vehicles by reduction of their testing intervals from four monthly to six monthly. No explanation is given as to how this relaxation assists with regular monitoring of parts such as brakes and suspension which are not dependent on the engine type.

3.2 There are no known incentives or support available to assist drivers and operators to acquire hybrid or electric vehicles. Many drivers and operators have been working at vastly reduced capacity since the start of the pandemic and grants and furlough have not necessarily been available. For many drivers, the taxi or private hire vehicle is a second vehicle for the household (as it cannot be driven by a person who does not hold the relevant licence). In such circumstances, consideration would need to be given as to whether introduction of a requirement to use electric or hybrid vehicles would be proportionate and fair to the trade.

3.3 If Members wish to pursue this initiative at this stage, it is suggested that the initial step would be consultation with the trade, so as to establish their views in principle, and to gather evidence to determine whether introduction of a requirement/or incentive for replacement of current vehicles by hybrid or electric vehicles is realistic and affordable, and what initiatives they would consider helpful.

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- Resources – Resources may be expended in carrying out any consultation in officer time.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – Utilisation of electric or hybrid vehicles is likely to achieve an environmental benefit. A further assessment of what initiatives/requirements are lawful would need to be carried out.
- Political – No implications identified.
- Reputation – No implications identified.
- Equality & Diversity – Introduction of such a policy could cause financial pressure on individuals from certain parts of the community.

5 **RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE**

5.1 Authorise the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to consult with licensees upon proposed requirements/incentives for use of electric/hybrid vehicles.

STEPHEN BARKER
SOLICITOR

MARSHAL SCOTT
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

For further information please ask for Stephen Barker, extension 3216.

REF: SB/CMS/Licensing/7 September 2021.