

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO LICENSING COMMITTEE

meeting date: 30 JANUARY 2024
 title: MAXIMUM AGE; HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES
 submitted by: CHIEF EXECUTIVE
 principal author: STEPHEN BARKER, SOLICITOR

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To determine whether the Council's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle licence conditions should be amended, to withdraw the requirement for vehicles over 7 years old to be tested and licensed every 4 months.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities

- Community Objectives }
 - Corporate Priorities }
 - Other Considerations }
- Consideration of these issues will promote the Council's aim to be a well managed Council.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 The Council issues vehicle licences for Hackney Carriages and Private Hire vehicles, subject to conditions. Condition one for each type of vehicle is identical stating that:

"The term of a vehicle licence is determined by the age of the vehicle. The vehicle licence terms are:

- a) *vehicles under 3 years old – 12 months*
- b) *vehicles over 3 years old but less than 7 years old – 6 months; and*
- c) *vehicles over 7 years old – 4 months. "*

2.2 The reason for this condition is to ensure that vehicles are regularly inspected, but in a process which is proportionate to the age of the vehicle. The fee charged for each licence is calculated proportionately. The licence fee for a four month licence is £77.60; for a six month licence the fee is £109.00; and for a one year licence the fee is £207.80.

3 ISSUES

- 3.1 Prior to the annual taxi meeting, several drivers had requested that the 4 month licence should be removed, and that all vehicles over 3 years old should be licensed for 6 months. It was suggested that Ribble Valley was one of the few Council's still issuing 4 month licences.
- 3.2 Research had been carried out of neighbouring Councils and it has been established that three Councils have 4 month licences, and that Burnley will only licence vehicles for a period of 4 months (£41 for private hire vehicles and £62 for Hackney Carriages).
- 3.3 Other Councils have a regime of 12 month licensing, or 12 month and 6 months depending on the age of the vehicle. These Councils maintain a degree of supervision by various means including imposition of a maximum age for vehicles or requiring evidence of regular maintenance to be produced and retained.
- 3.4 It is of note that, on recent vehicle inspections conducted by VOSA, the police and the Council's enforcement officer, vehicles licensed by Ribble Valley have been compliant. On some occasions, prohibition notices have been issued to vehicles licensed by other authorities.
- 3.5 It is also of note that certain drivers at the meeting supported the retention of the 4 month licence, as this was a quality check to ensure that vehicles were roadworthy.

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:
- Resources – issue of fewer licences would free up a small amount of officer time.
 - Technical, Environmental and Legal – regular checks of older vehicles will ensure that they are in a condition that meets the Council's standards including engine efficiency and emissions testing.
 - Political – N/A

- Reputation – scrupulous and frequent inspection of vehicles, on a proportionate basis, will enhance the Council's reputation.
- Equality & Diversity – N/A

5 **RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE**

5.1 Approve the retention of 4 month licences and make no amendment to Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle licences.

STEPHEN BARKER
SOLICITOR

MARSHAL SCOTT
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

BACKGROUND PAPERS

(If any)

For further information please ask for Stephen Barker, extension 3216