

- 2.3 Transfer of Hackney Carriage vehicles can take place between different owners, provided that the Council is notified within 14 days in writing. However, there does appear to be a premium charged on the sale of such vehicles, which is considered to be a valuable asset by the Hackney Carriage trade.
- 2.4 In order to retain restrictions, extensive consultation should take place with all affected parties including users of all types and vulnerabilities and the retail and hospitality sectors.
- 2.5 Additionally, in the event of a challenge to refusal of a licence due to such a restriction, evidence should be available. This is in the form of an extensive survey, to demonstrate that there is no significant unmet demand, which should be undertaken at least every 5 years. To date, Ribble Valley Borough Council has not undertaken such a survey. The cost of the survey should be paid for by the local taxi trade through general revenues from licence fees.

3 ISSUES

- 3.1 The Council is currently in a position whereby it is part of a minority of Councils imposing a restriction in conflict with best practice issue by the Department for Transport. If the restriction is to be maintained, then the Council must have an evidence base to support it.
- 3.2 Officers have carried out some research into preparation of demand surveys. A nearby authority, which restricts its Hackney fleet to 160, recently had an updated survey carried out at a cost of £14,250. That authority had a supplement to the annual licence fee for Hackney Carriages to recoup the cost of the survey. Were Ribble Valley to carry out a similar exercise, the same cost would result in expense of £268.87 for each Hackney Carriage, or approximately £90 per vehicle each year. The survey would be carried out every 3 years, as recommended. There is no guarantee that this price would be applicable at this stage for an initial survey in the Council's particular circumstances.
- 3.3 Rather than embarking on such a survey in the first instance, Committee may wish to carry out extensive consultation, to establish the views of the various parties concerned in principle. This could then be considered alongside a more detailed costing of the survey and continuing additional costs for licence holders.

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

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

- Resources – Officer time will be utilised in consultation and in obtaining detailed quotations.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – conducting consultation and thereafter a survey (if appropriate) will comply with best practice.
- Political – N/A
- Reputation – N/A
- Equality & Diversity – N/A

5 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

5.1 Authorise the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to consult all interested parties on whether the current restriction on the number of Hackney Carriage licences issued by the Council should be maintained, and to obtain costings for a survey of unmet demand.

STEPHEN BARKER
SOLICITOR

MARSHAL SCOTT
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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