



Reigate & Banstead
BOROUGH COUNCIL
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SIGNED OFF BY	Morag Williams
AUTHOR	Ben Murray
TELEPHONE	01737276085
EMAIL	Ben.murray@reigate-banstead.gov.uk
TO	Licensing & Regulatory Committee
DATE	Wednesday 3 June 2020
EXECUTIVE MEMBER	Cllr Mrs Bramhall

KEY DECISION REQUIRED	
WARDS AFFECTED	All

SUBJECT	AMENDMENT TO HACKNEY CARRIAGE VEHICLE LICENSING POLICY AND CONDITIONS TO ALLOW A RESTRICTED NUMBER OF FULLY ELECTRIC VEHICLES TO BE LICENSED IN ADDITION TO CURRENT REQUIREMENTS
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RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) To agree changes in policy, as set out in Annex 2, for determining applications to license fully electric vehicles as Hackney Carriages on first application in line with current vehicle age requirements.
- (ii) To recommend to Council the adoption of the changes to policy as set out in Annex 2.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

Several licensed drivers have expressed an interest in licensing fully electric vehicles for use as hackney carriages. Current policy does not allow non-wheelchair accessible vehicles to be licensed for the first time. The release of a small number of fully electric vehicles onto the hackney carriage fleet will promote the Council's sustainability aims and give clarity on vehicle type and specification to potential applicants.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- At its meeting on 25 July 2012, the Regulatory Committee agreed changes to its taxi and private hire licensing policy allowing vehicles up to seven years from date of registration to be newly licensed and up to 9 years for wheelchair accessible vehicles.
- The purpose of this report is to allow an additional 5 fully electric vehicles capable of travelling 150 miles on a single charge to be licensed for the first time as Hackney Carriage Vehicles without the need to be wheelchair accessible.
- These changes to the policy will provide clarity to those in the existing Hackney Carriage trade who drive non wheelchair accessible vehicles and to those in the Private Hire trade who are considering their purchase.

The Licensing & Regulatory Committee has authority to determine recommendation 1 above.

Recommendation 2 stands referred to full Council and the Licensing & Regulatory Committee is recommended to refer it to full Council.

STATUTORY POWERS

1. The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 (LG(MP)A 1976) allows Local Authorities to attach such conditions as it considers reasonably necessary to licences for Hackney Carriage Vehicles (s47(1)), Private Hire Vehicles (s48(2)), Private Hire Drivers (s51(2)) and Private Hire Operators (s55(3)).

BACKGROUND

2. Several drivers have approached the licensing team to request fully electric vehicles be licensed as Hackney Carriages. Current Policy would allow the Council to grant a licence for a fully electric vehicle provided the vehicles are wheelchair accessible.
3. Under current policy, non-wheelchair accessible vehicles are only allowed to replace an existing non-wheelchair licensed hackney carriage vehicle. There are currently 107 Hackney Carriages of which 44 are wheelchair accessible.
4. While fully electric wheelchair accessible vehicles are available, they are prohibitively expensive for the level of trade available in the Borough. The current TX range (traditional recognisable taxi style used in London) costs just under £800 per month in hire purchase or an on the road price of £62500 before grants.

KEY INFORMATION

5. Few fully electric vehicles such as the London style taxi are available on the used market at a reasonable cost however there is a far greater choice of non-wheelchair electric vehicles available, even new that are far more affordable.
6. A fully electric vehicle suitable for use as a Hackney Carriage that meets the Council's requirements for age, power and size (for example a recent Nissan Leaf or a Volkswagen Golf) is available used from £18K to £25K, similar in price to a newer wheelchair accessible vehicle. The range of such fully electric vehicles runs into the hundreds of miles. One of the challenges for electric vehicles is the range available. Hackney Carriages average 25000 miles a year or 70 a day.
7. The range of electric vehicles is currently 100 to 200 miles with the Tesla Model S capable of 250 miles on a full charge. As time moves on so the battery technology and subsequent range increases.
8. It is proposed that a reasonable range for electric vehicles is specified. At time of writing the average range for four door fully electric vehicles is in the region of 150 miles. This is based on vehicles currently available shown at Annex 2. As a gauge - two round trips to Heathrow totals 120 miles.
9. Older electric vehicles for example the original Nissan Leaf have a limited range of approx. 80 miles therefore a suggested minimum range of 150 miles will exclude these and similar vehicles but will cover:
 - Average daily mileage for a HCV
 - A good number of available models of electric vehicle under £30,000
 - A return trip to Heathrow or central London with miles to spare.
 - Variations in temperature and load where range is reduced.
10. Confirmation of vehicle range on a full charge from original manufacturer information will become a checklist item on inspection for electric vehicles.
11. It is likely as prices come down and with road tax being zero or very low that the private hire trade would like the ability to license fully electric vehicles therefore if approved, the range vehicles are capable of should additionally be inserted into the policy for private hire vehicles.
12. The current policy allows only wheelchair accessible vehicles to be licensed for the first time as hackney carriage vehicles. It is proposed that up to 5 additional fully electric vehicles are allowed to be licensed for the first time. This will ensure that a sufficient number of wheelchair accessible vehicles is maintained during the time that affordable electric wheelchair accessible electric vehicles become available..

Factors for consideration

13. The proposed policy additions regarding electric vehicles are attached for consideration at Annex 2

14. The policy and checklist is designed to be transparent and accountable. In this way, officers will be able to demonstrate clearly that, in their assessment of the vehicle, they have been able to review the points listed and can respond to enquiries on any point when reviewing their decision.

15. Detailed photographs will be kept both for vehicles accepted for licensing and those refused.

Resource Implications

16. No further resource implications have been identified as a result of this amendment to the proposed policy changes.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

17. The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 allows any person aggrieved by conditions imposed on a licence granted to them, a right of appeal under sections 47(3) for Hackney Carriages, s48(7) for Private Hire Vehicles, s52(2) for Private Hire Drivers and s55(4) for Private Hire Operators.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

18. No budget implications have been identified as a consequence of the proposed policy changes.

EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

19. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out which has identified that the steps taken to restrict the number of licences for fully electric hackney carriage vehicles will encourage their take up with minimal impact on wheelchair users.

20. This restricted number of licences will promote the use of fully electric vehicles by the hackney carriage trade while industry catches up with the production of reasonably priced fully electric wheelchair accessible vehicles.

COMMUNICATION IMPLICATIONS

21. Should the changes be approved by the Licensing and Regulatory Committee then the release of these five licences for fully electric hackney carriages will be communicated to the trade to encourage uptake and to the public as part of a wider project promoting environmental sustainability.

RISK MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

22. No risks have been identified as a consequence of the proposed policy changes.

CONSULTATION

23. As there has been interest from several licensed drivers already to use fully electric vehicles as hackney carriages, this report is in place of an individual having to purchase one then apply to license it through the Licensing and Regulatory Committee. For this reason full stakeholder consultation has not been undertaken,

however input and advice has been given from the Council's Air Quality officer and vehicle Fleet Manager.

24. Full consultation on all related policy and conditions relating to the licensing of hackney carriage and private hire vehicles, drivers and operators including fully electric vehicles will take place under a separate review.

POLICY FRAMEWORK

25. The Committee is being asked to recommend the changes in policy to Full Council shown in Annex 2 as part of the Policy Framework

BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Existing Licensing Policy and Conditions for Private Hire Drivers, Vehicles and Operators
2. Existing Licensing Policy, Conditions and Byelaws for Hackney Carriage Proprietors and Drivers