

Report from the Assistant Director – Housing and Public Protection

Revised Taxi Licensing Policy

Summary

1. This report asks Members to approve a revised taxi licensing policy.

Background

2. At the meeting of the Gambling, Licensing & Regulatory Committee meeting on 13 July 2011 Members considered a report containing 16 recommendations arising from the Review of the Taxi Licensing Policy. These recommendations are set out in Annex A to this report.
3. On 13 July 2011 Members resolved:
 - a. That the Committee approved recommendations 5 to 15 of the Review.
 - b. That recommendation 1 be approved subject to the wording being amended to clarify that the issuing of 2 additional licences for hybrid vehicles would be over and above licences issued subject to future unmet demand surveys.
 - c. That Taxi Licensing Policy be re-drafted to take account the recommendations approved by this Committee, the results of the Halcrow Unmet Demand Survey and the officer Delegated decisions in relation to recommendations 2, 3, 4 and 16.
 - d. That the draft revised Taxi Licensing Policy be presented to the Gambling, Licensing and Regulatory Committee at a future date.

The Halcrow Unmet Demand Survey

4. The 2011 survey was concluded in August 2011 and this has identified that there is no evidence of significant unmet demand for Hackney Carriages in York. The survey report is available upon request.

Officer Delegated Decisions

5. In relation to 3.c. above:
 - a. Officers have contacted the Assistant Director City Strategy (Planning and Sustainable Development) and recommended the planning department encourage the siting of new/additional taxi ranks adjacent to major new developments, e.g. outside the new community stadium or near the new council offices or major retail centres/supermarkets.
 - b. A map will be produced and available on CYC website showing the location of all taxi ranks, details of the times that ranks are operational will also be included on the website. This information will be provided in hardcopy to relevant external parties.
 - c. Officers have contacted the Director of City Strategy and recommended that the taxi rank at Duncombe Place be made available for use on a full time basis for a trial period of 12 months.
 - d. Officers will continue to assist in raising all drivers awareness of the training programme offered by Visit York. All new applicants are advised of the programme.

Revised Taxi Policy

6. A suggested policy is set out in Annex B to this report. This incorporates the decision of Members on 13 July 2011 and the outcome of the Halcrow Unmet Demand Survey.
7. The current policy of issuing two new licences every 6 months has been modified to restrict licences to environmentally friendly and/or wheelchair accessible vehicles. It is not suggested that two licences for 'environmentally friendly' vehicles will be issued in addition to the two licences issued under the current policy.

Consultation

8. Interested parties were consulted in the preparation of the Review of Taxi Licensing Policy report presented to Members on 13 July 2011.
9. With regards to this report the City of York Councils Environmental Protection Units Air Quality Officer was consulted. Their comments have been taken into consideration regarding the vehicle types that new licences will be issued to.

Options

10. Option 1 is to approve the Taxi Licensing Policy set out in Annex B to this report.
11. Option 2 is to approve the Taxi Licensing Policy set out in Annex B to this report subject to the removal of paragraph 2 of the Policy i.e. that two additional hackney carriage licences for hybrid or electric vehicles will be issued in each 6 month period.
12. Option 3 is to recommend the adoption of a different Taxi Licensing Policy.

Analysis

13. Option 1 incorporates the recommendations of Members on 13 July 2011 but now restricts the issue of new hackney carriage licences to electric, hybrid or wheelchair accessible petrol or diesel cars.
14. Option 2 incorporates the majority of recommendations of Members on 13 July 2011 but will limit the hackney carriage fleet to the existing number of licences.
15. Option 3 will involve further consultation and additional costs which may be reflected in revised fee structures.

Council Priorities

16. The Taxi Licensing Policy supports the council priority of 'Get York Moving'.

Implications

17. The implications arising from this report are:

- (a) **Financial** - There are no financial implications. However, there may be financial implications for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle operators associated with the new Policy. These include the purchase of new taximeters. This may lead to legal challenge in the future which would result in added costs to the authority.
- (b) **Human Resources (HR)** - There are no HR implications.
- (c) **Equalities** - The Taxi Licensing Policy promotes the adoption of hackney carriages with wheelchair access.
- (d) **Legal** - There are no legal implications.
- (e) **Crime and Disorder** - There are no crime and disorder implications.
- (f) **Information Technology (IT)** - There are no IT implications.
- (g) **Property** - There are no property implications.
- (h) **Other** - There are no other implications.

Risk Management

- 18. There are no known risks associated with this report.

Recommendations

- 19. That Members approve Option 1 of this report and adopt the Taxi Licensing Policy as set out in Annex B.

Reason: This Policy incorporates the recommendations of the Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the findings of the Halcrow Unmet Demand survey.

Contact Details

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	Report Approved	√	Date	10 th Nov 11
Specialist Implications Officer(s) Martin Blythe – Legal 01904551044				
Wards Affected:			All	√
For further information please contact the author of the report				

Annexes

Annex A – Review of Taxi Licensing Policy Recommendations

Annex B – Taxi Licensing Policy

Background Papers

Review of Taxi Licensing Policy – Final Report (Gambling, Licensing & Regulatory Committee 13 July 2011)

Halcrow Unmet Demand Survey