

Report to Environment and Licensing Committee

Subject: Changes to Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Age Policy, Specification for Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles and the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Supplementary Testing Manual

Date: 9th February 2016

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Purpose of the Report

To approve:

- the proposed Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Specification, Inspection and Testing Manual detailed in appendix A for consultation with the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire trade, and the Corporate Director in consultation with the Chair of Environment and Licensing Committee be authorised to agree the final Manual after taking into account any comments received during the consultation period.
- that all vehicles presented at the test station in pursuit of either a Private Hire or Hackney Carriage vehicle licence, on or after 1st April 2016, will be considered and tested in line with Gedling Borough Council Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Specification, Inspection and Testing Manual (as amended following the consultation)

Background

The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 ("the Act") enables Local Authorities to administer licences for Hackney carriage and Private Hire vehicles and drivers. The Act provides that a Local Authority shall not grant a licence unless the vehicle is deemed suitable in type, size and design - is in suitable condition, and the vehicle is 'safe and comfortable.' The Council can apply any tests and checks it deems appropriate to establish this.

The proposed changes to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Age Policy; the Specification for Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles and the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Supplementary Testing Manual are to recognise new technologies, vehicle performance / types / sizes, and feedback from drivers and the trade. By combining the three existing documents, the

Council is aiming to provide one document that will be the sole source of information for prospective vehicle licence applicants and for vehicle licence holders already licensed by Gedling Borough Council.

The proposed amendments can be found in the new document Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Vehicle Specification, Inspection and Testing Manual, see Appendix A which is accompanied by a Record of Changes, at Appendix B

Proposal

It is proposed that all vehicles, both new to the fleet and existing licensed vehicles, be subjected to, and be tested against the new combined Specification, Inspection and Testing Manual as laid out in Appendix A. It is felt this document will be beneficial to the trade and the public, as it will provide clear and consistent information, with respect to obtaining a vehicle licence from this Authority.

If the changes are approved and the document is adopted, all vehicles from the 1st April 2016, will be required to meet the specification, and will be tested in line with the requirements of the new document. Existing licensed vehicles presented for retest to obtain another licence will be subject to the specification and test at the time of renewal inspection.

The Council has a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between predicted groups (such as disabled people or ethnic minority groups) when considering proposed new or changing policies, services or functions. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been prepared in relation to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Specification, Inspection and Testing Manual and is attached at Appendix C.

Consultation

In order to ensure the views of the trade are considered the Licensing section will carry out a consultation exercise with the Taxi and Private Hire trade in relation to the introduction of the proposed Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Vehicle Specification, Inspection and Testing Manual.

Consultation letters will be sent to current and prospective members of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire trade, should Members approve the consultation.

Recommendation

That Members approve:

- the proposed Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Specification, Inspection and Testing Manual detailed in Appendix A for consultation with the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire trade, and the Corporate Director in consultation with the Chair of Environment and Licensing Committee be

authorised to agree the final Manual after taking into account any comments received during the consultation period.

- That all vehicles presented at the test station in pursuit of either a Private Hire or Hackney Carriage vehicle licence, on or after 1st April 2016, will be considered and tested in line with Gedling Borough Council Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Specification, Inspection and Testing Manual (subject to any changes made following the consultation).

Attachments

Appendix A

Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Specification, Inspection and Testing Manual

Appendix B

Record of Changes

Appendix C

Equality Impact Assessment