

REPORT TO:		Cabinet	
DATE:		18 March 2020	
PORTFOLIO:		Cllr Joyce Plummer - Resources	
REPORT AUTHOR:		Wendy Redfern – Licensing Manager	
TITLE OF REPORT:		Amendment to the Rules, Regulations and Procedures for Hackney carriage and Private Hire Licensing	
EXEMPT REPORT (Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A)	No	Not applicable	
KEY DECISION:	No	If yes, date of publication:	N/A

1. **Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To seek approval for the amendment to the Rules, Regulations and Procedures for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing so as to extend the issue of a 6 month licence plate to any electric or hybrid vehicles up to the age of 15 years old.

2. **Recommendations**

- 2.1 Cabinet approves the amendment to the Rules, Regulations and Procedures for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing.

3. **Reasons for Recommendations and Background**

- 3.1 The Council are responsible for setting the vehicle testing frequency for hackney carriage and private hire vehicles, which in turn determines the period of the licence that is issued. Currently vehicles under the age of 2 years are tested annually and issued with a 12 month licence. Vehicles between the age of 2 years and 10 years are tested every 6 months and issued with a 6 month licence and vehicles over the age of 10 years are tested every 4 months and issued with a 4 month licence. A vehicle cannot remain licensed beyond the age of 15 years.
- 3.2 Members will be aware that this Council has declared a climate emergency and all areas of the Council have been asked to consider ways to reduce our carbon footprint. At a recent Taxi Liaison Group a request was received from one of the representatives of the trade, for the Council to consider extending the issue of 6 months taxi licences to the age of 15 for all electric or hybrid vehicles that we licence. This will encourage drivers to purchase hybrid vehicles and will go some way to addressing the climate issue.

- 3.3 Members of the taxi trade have been consulted and asked to give their views on this matter. There has been a very positive response from the trade and there have been no negative comments at all. Some other neighbouring authorities already offer some incentive to applicants to try and encourage them to licence cleaner hybrid or electric vehicle.
- 34 Officers now believe that the 6 month licence could be extended to include electric and hybrid vehicles up to the age of 15 years, to encourage the uptake of these types of vehicles and to help to improve the climate. Officers are now carrying out frequent roadside inspections which would highlight any potential issues between tests.

4. **Alternative Options considered and Reasons for Rejection**

- 4.1 The Council could take no action and continue with the current policy and frequency of testing, however as the Council has declared a climate emergency and this change of policy could assist in the reduction of carbon emissions in the Borough by encouraging the use of cleaner vehicles, officers would recommend that member approve the change of policy.

5. **Consultations**

- 5.1 Members of the trade have been consulted and although there have been no written responses received, officers are aware from verbal responses that this is a move that is highly supported by them.
- 5.2 Further members of the trade have elected representatives to attend the taxi liaison group meetings to raise any issues and make any suggestions for improvements, and the taxi liaison group supports this proposal.

6. **Implications**

Financial implications (including any future financial commitments for the Council)	None relating to licensing although if there is a large uptake it would lead to less frequent testing required at the Council's Vehicle Maintenance Unit and therefore income from tests would be reduced.
Legal and human rights implications	None
Assessment of risk	No specific risks have been identified.
Equality and diversity implications <i>A Customer First Analysis should be completed in relation to policy decisions and should be attached as an appendix to the report.</i>	The Council is subject to the public sector equality duty introduced by the Equality Act 2010. When making a decision in respect of the recommendations in this report Cabinet must have regard to the need to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; and • advance equality of opportunity

	<p>between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who don't; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who don't. <p>For these purposes the relevant protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. To assist the Cabinet in this regard a Customer First Analysis has been carried out as part of the review process and is attached as Appendix 1 to this report. Cabinet is advised to consider the Customer First Analysis and its obligations in respect of the public sector equality duty when making a decision in respect of the recommendations contained in this report.</p>
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**7. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985:
List of Background Papers**

Rules, Regulations and Procedures for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing.

Appendix 1 - Customer First Analysis.