

LICENSING REGULATORY COMMITTEE

Vehicle Age Limits

18 November 2010

Report of Licensing Manager

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To enable Members to reconsider the provisions regarding vehicle age limits included in the Rules, Regulations and Procedures for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing

This report is public.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are requested to approve the proposed amendment to the Rules, Regulations and Procedures for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing by adding the following condition with regard to vehicles:

“Any vehicle submitted for licensing that is 10 years old or older, or any vehicle which continues to be licensed beyond the age of 10 years must be in exceptional condition and must be approved by the Licensing Regulatory Committee, on initial application and each subsequent renewal. Any such vehicle will be subject to a full test at the Council’s designated testing station every 4 months.”

1.0 Report

1.1 Members will recall that the Licensing Regulatory Committee meeting on 2nd September 2010 considered the Rules, Regulations and Procedures for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing and approved a number of amendments to the consultation draft in the light of consultation responses received..

1.2 One of the amendments made at that meeting was the removal of age restrictions on licensed vehicles. This was decided following discussions at the Taxi Liaison Group, the receipt of a representation from a member of the trade and in line with the Department for Transport Best Practice Guidance which states:-

“Age Limits. It is perfectly possible for an older vehicle to be in good condition. So the setting of an age limit beyond which a local authority will not license vehicles may be arbitrary and inappropriate. But a greater frequency of testing may be appropriate for older vehicles - for example, twice-yearly tests for vehicles more than five years old.”

1.3 The Council Procedure Rules provide that in order to rescind a previous decision taken within the past six months, a motion from a quorum of the Committee is required. Following the informal meeting between the Committee and the trade on the 4th November 2010, the required number of members indicated that they would wish to review the issue of age limits. This was in the light of concern expressed by the trade about the standard of vehicles should vehicles more than ten years old be accepted for licensing.

1.4 The Licensing Manager would suggest that to address this concern, a new condition be added to the Rules and Regulations. This condition would read:-

“Any vehicle submitted for licensing that is 10years old or older, or any vehicle which continues to be licensed beyond the age of 10 years must be in exceptional condition and must be approved by the Licensing Regulatory Committee, on initial application and each subsequent renewal. Any such vehicle will be subject to a full test at the Council’s designated testing station every 4 months.”

2.0 Conclusion

If members are minded to approve the proposed change the licensing officers would wish the change to take effect immediately.

2.1 The addition of this condition would still ensure that the Council are considering the DFT guidance, whilst maintaining the standards of the vehicles that we license.

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT

(including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)

The Rules, Regulations and Procedures contribute to – developing and strengthening Lancaster’s economy and promoting the well being of Lancaster’s Communities.

The additional recommendations will improve public safety, failure to continually improve safety could leave the Council open to criticism.

The proposed policy does not have the potential to cause negative impact or discriminate against different groups in the community based on age, disability, gender, race/ethnicity, religion or religious belief (faith), sexual orientation, or rural isolation.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The constitutional issues are addressed in the report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

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