

LICENSING COMMITTEE

Hackney Carriage Proprietor Licence – Specification

12 June 2025

Report of Licensing Manager

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The Licensing Service has available two new Hackney Carriage licences, members are asked to determine requests from 2 licensed drivers wishing to take advantage of the licences available.

This report is public.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) Members are asked to consider each request on their own merits and determine whether to amend the criteria relating to the 2 available hackney carriage licences.**

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 In April 2022, members of Licensing Committee made available two hackney carriage vehicle licences. Members specified that the vehicles considered for licensing must align with the Council's aspirations around air quality and accessibility, be zero emission and wheelchair accessible.
- 1.2 Since implementation, no applications have been forthcoming in relation to the additional licences. Feedback suggests that the current market for wheelchair accessible/zero emission vehicles is small/expensive/non-existent.

2.0 Proposal Details

- 2.1 The taxi and private hire working group recently met to discuss accessibility, specifically how the trade and Council can work together to improve the current position.
- 2.2 One of the suggestions at the meeting was to remove the emission standards in relation to the 2 available hackney carriage licences, additionally mandating that any replacement vehicle must also be wheelchair accessible. Thus, improving the offering in respect of wheelchair accessible vehicles locally.
- 2.3 One licensed private hire operator and one current licensed driver who attended the meeting wish to apply for the available licences; members are asked to consider their request and amend the specification in relation to the 2 available licences.
- 2.4 The two applicants have been invited to attend the Licensing Committee and address members regarding their request(s).

3.0 Options available to members

- a) Maintain vehicle specification for 2 additional hackney carriage licences (zero emission and wheelchair accessible)
- b) Amend vehicle specification for 2 additional hackney carriage licences (wheelchair accessible only), and
- c) Mandate that any future replacement vehicle on such licences must be wheelchair accessible.

4.0 Conclusion

- 4.1 The licensing service receives complaints from the public regarding the difficulties in obtaining a suitable wheelchair accessible vehicle, either by making a booking for future or same day journeys.
- 4.2 The taxi and private hire liaison group held a special meeting to discuss the issues affecting the uptake of specialist vehicles and how the Council and trade can work together to improve the local provision.
- 4.3 All licensed private hire operators were invited to attend the meeting, as were the current vehicle proprietors who have 1 of 15 mandatory wheelchair accessible hackney carriages. Just one private hire operator and one licensed driver attended the meeting.
- 4.4 During the meeting a number of proposals were discussed, one of which was to remove the requirement on 2 available hackney carriage licences to be zero emission and wheelchair accessible in favour of being wheelchair accessible only.
- 4.5 Members are asked to consider amending current specifications for the 2 available licences and mandate any replacement vehicles to be wheelchair accessible: protecting the provision in years to come.

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT (including Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing):
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Approval of the request will increase and maintain the availability of 2 additional hackney carriages locally, providing a useful service to those who require specialist vehicles.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Applicants have the right of appeal to Crown Court for the refusal of a Hackney Carriage Proprietors Licence (vehicle).

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None identified.

OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS, such as Human Resources, Information Services, Property, Open Spaces	
None identified	
SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS	
None	
MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS	
None	
BACKGROUND PAPERS	Contact Officer: Miss Jennifer Curtis Telephone: 01524 582732 Email: jcurtis@lancaster.gov.uk Ref: HC2WAV