



Report to:	Licensing Committee 29 November 2021
Lead Cabinet Member:	Cllr Brian Milnes
Lead Officer:	Rachel Jackson Principal Licensing Officer

Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy – 2nd Review

Executive Summary

1. That the Committee agree to recommend to the Lead Cabinet Member for Environmental Services and Licensing further revisions to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy.

Key Decision

2. No

Recommendations

3. That the Licensing Committee consider the proposed amendments to the Policy, taking into account representations received and the decision outcomes from the Members' Workshop held in October 2021, and make recommendations to the Lead Cabinet Member for Environmental Services and Licensing.
4. That the Licensing Committee consider if it wishes to further amend the Policy so as to permit the licensing of diesel hybrid plug-in vehicles until December 2023.
5. It is recommended that where any further minor amendments to the policy or Driver Handbook are required or statutory changes make amendments necessary, then such Policy changes can be made and implemented by the Head of Head of Climate, Environment and Waste following consultation with the Chair of the Licensing Committee and Lead Cabinet Member for Environmental Services and Licensing.

Reasons for Recommendations

6. The Licensing Committee agreed at its meeting on 7 September 2021 to recommend to the Lead Cabinet for Environmental Services and Licensing, partial revisions to the Council's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy.

The amendments were agreed by the at Council on 23 September, and those policy amendments took effect on 24 September 2021.

7. The Licensing Committee agreed that it wished to have further discussion on the remaining proposed amendments by way of a workshop, which was undertaken on 4 October 2021.
8. The proposed outstanding amendments, together with the decision (of the majority) of Members at the workshop, is attached as Appendix A.
9. A copy of the current Policy is attached as Appendix B.

Details

10. Consultation with the trade, Parish Councils, Cambridgeshire Police, neighbouring Authorities and via the Council's website commenced from 8 July and closed on 2 August 2021.
11. Responses to the proposals were received from:
12. **Parish Councils** – Orwell Parish and Swavesey Parish Councils had no comment to make on the proposals.
13. **Private Hire Operators** – one response, from Panther, one of the District's largest private hire operators is generally supportive of the proposals, and have provided a detailed response and rationale, which is attached as Appendices C1 and C2.
14. At the workshop, Members agreed that to support the Council's "Green to the Core" commitment that it would agree to a restriction that no new applications for a diesel vehicle will be approved from 1 December 2021. Subsequent to the Member workshop, a request has been made by the licensed operator Panther. The request was asking if consideration could be given to permit diesel engine wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAV) to continue to be licensed until 1 December 2023. The Chair and Vice Chair of the Licensing Committee have confirmed they both agree to this amendment. The rationale behind the decision is included within the workshop document attached as Appendix A.
15. A further request was submitted by Panther Taxis that diesel plug-in hybrid vehicles ne permitted to be licensed until 1 December 2023, advising that there are a small range of these vehicles available and include Mercedes C300, Peugeot 308 and 508, Volvo 360, with emissions that meet the requirements of 50g/km or lower.
16. A representative from Panther Taxis has been invited to address the Committee.
17. The Committee may recommend to the Cabinet Lead the amendments to the Policy.

Options

18. The Committee may agree one of the following options;

- (i) Recommend that the Lead Cabinet Member for Environmental Services and Licensing approves the Policy revisions.
- (ii) Recommend that the Lead Cabinet Member rejects the Policy revisions.
- (iii) Recommend that the Lead Cabinet Member approves the revisions with amendments.

19. In addition, the Committee is asked to agree the following;

- (i) Where any further minor amendments to the policy and/or driver handbook are required or statutory changes make amendments necessary, then such changes can be implemented by the Head of Head of Climate, Environment and Waste following consultation with the Chair of the Licensing Committee and Lead Cabinet Member for Environmental Services and Licensing.

Implications

20. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk, equality and diversity, climate change, and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered: -

Financial

21. The Finance Officer considers that the financial implications should be negligible.

Legal

22. There is no legal requirement for a policy, however it is best practice. This is different from the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005 where a written policy is a legal requirement.

23. Rights of appeal are granted to all applicants and licensees who are aggrieved by any licensing decisions.

Staffing

24. None for the purposes of this report.

Risks/Opportunities

25. With an extension to deadlines which were published within the Policy previously, there could be some reputational risk, and slight impact on the Council's green

agenda. The risks are likely to be medium to low impact. Amending the Policy would support the trade post pandemic, with the positive impact far outweighing any potential reputational damage. Additional lead in times for ultra-low and zero emission vehicles would allow for wider installation of charging points within the District.

Background Papers

Report to the 7 September 2021 Licensing Committee
Existing Policy
Department for Transport Statutory Taxi & Private Hire Vehicle Standards

Appendices

Appendix A: Decisions from the Member Workshop October 2021.
Appendix B: Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy September 2021.
Appendix C1 and C2: Response to the initial consultation.

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