

Public Document Pack

Date of meeting Monday, 31st March, 2014
Time 7.00 pm
Venue Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Merrial Street,
Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire, ST5 2AG
Contact Geoff Durham

Public Protection Committee

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA (2)

PART 1 – OPEN AGENDA

16 Vehicle standards

(Pages 1 - 2)

Members: Councillors Allport, Bailey, Hailstones, Mrs Hailstones, Kearon, Matthews, Olszewski (Chair), Miss Olszewski (Vice-Chair), Snell, Welsh, White, Mrs Williams and Mrs Winfield

PLEASE NOTE: The Council Chamber and Committee Room 1 are fitted with a loop system. In addition, there is a volume button on the base of the microphones. A portable loop system is available for all other rooms upon request.

Members of the Council: If you identify any personal training/development requirements from any of the items included in this agenda or through issues raised during the meeting, please bring them to the attention of the Democratic Services Officer at the close of the meeting.

Meeting Quorums :- 16+= 5 Members; 10-15=4 Members; 5-9=3 Members; 5 or less = 2 Members.

Officers will be in attendance prior to the meeting for informal discussions on agenda items.

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STANDARDS FOR HACKNEY CARRIAGE VEHICLES

Submitted by:- Head of Business Improvements, Central Services and Partnerships.

Purpose

To bring to the attention of the Committee the standards of maintenance of Private Hire and Hackney Carriage vehicles licensed by this authority.

Recommendation

That the report be received

Background

The recent decision to amend the age policy on wheelchair accessible Hackney Carriages resulted in a rash of applications by applicants taking advantage of the then 10 year rule.

The Licensing Department has been notified by the Council's Engineer responsible for testing vehicles of his concerns regarding the poor condition and low standards of maintenance of vehicles presented for both initial testing and for subsequent annual tests.

A study of the test result from 1st July 2013 to the 31st December 2013 reveal that a total of 303 vehicles had been tested, of those 120 passed the test with no failures of the remainder 60 vehicles failed the test with what would be described as minor failures, the remaining 123 failed the test for could be classed as major failures, this would be for items including, steering, suspension, braking system, tyres and wheels. To sum up of the 303 vehicles tested 60% failed the test.

Issues

The Council have a duty to protect the public and to ensure that any vehicles licensed as either Private Hire of Hackney Carriages are safe and comfortable.

Further, the Council attaches conditions to its vehicles licences which require the holder of the licence to ensure that:-

"The vehicle and all its fittings and equipment shall at all times when the vehicle is in use or available for hire, be kept in an efficient, safe, tidy and clean condition, and all relevant statutory requirements (including in particular those contained the Motor Vehicles Construction and Use Regulations), shall be fully complied with".

Actions

Officers from the Operations Department, the Licensing Department and Environmental Health are working co-operatively to address the problem of the poor condition and poor maintenance standards of vehicles within the Council's fleet. It

can be anticipated that further reports on this matter will be presented to the Committee when available.

6. Financial and Resource Implications

None.

7. Links to Corporate Priorities

In line with the Council's objectives -

- (a) Promoting a cleaner, safer and sustainable Borough.
- (b) Promoting a Borough of Opportunity.

8. Reasons for the Preferred Option

To continue to provide safe transport for those wishing to use Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Vehicles.

9. Crime and Disorder

Reducing the incidence of crime to vulnerable groups and reducing the fear of crime.

10. Human Rights

Article 6(1) guarantees an applicant a fair hearing.
Article 14 guarantees no discrimination.

11. Equality Impact Assessment

No issues have been identified.

12. Major Risks

None.

13. Key Decision Information

This is not a key decision.

14. Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions

14.1 The Public Protection Committee has previously resolved to have regard conditions attached to licences..