

APPENDIX 1

CONFIDENTIAL

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM TO THE
PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE

30 November 2009

1. HACKNEY CARRIAGE AGE LIMITS (RESOLUTION 365/10)

Purpose

To inform this Committee of the results of a consultation undertaken with Newcastle's Hackney Carriage owners about the Council's proposed change of Policy in relation to the age of Hackney Carriage Vehicles.

Recommendation

That, notwithstanding the replies and the consultation the proposed changes to the Policy be adopted.

1. Background

- 1.1 Committee may recall that at its meeting held on 21 September 2009 they considered an item, which proposed changes to the Council's policy on the licensing of Hackney Carriage Vehicles. Specifically the age at which vehicles can first be licensed and when they should cease to be licensed.

2. Issues

- 2.1 The holders of Hackney Carriage licences were consulted about the changes and of the 47 who were consulted 18 replied as individuals, 23 signed a petition, and a letter was received from the Newcastle and Kidsgrove Hackney Carriage Association (See Appendix A).

All the replies indicated no support for the proposed changes. However, there was some acceptance that there should be an age when vehicles should cease to be licensed.

- 2.2 The Council currently has 3 types of vehicles licensed as Hackney Carriages.

1. Those that are purpose-built, i.e. designed and built to a specification laid down by the Public Carriage office.
2. Those that are a conversion from another type of vehicle, usually a van or M.P.V. and have a certification or type approval known as M1, which is a standard laid down by V.O.S.A.
3. Finally, Saloon Cars.

- 2.3 Objections to the proposal were mainly one of cost; however the amounts of money quoted in the replies used the most expensive scenario, that of purchasing a new vehicle.

There is no requirement for a vehicle to be new when making an application for a Hackney Carriage licence. In the last 14 years of all the vehicles licensed as Hackney Carriage's only 2 have been new vehicles.

Research by your officers has shown that a saloon car suitable for licensing can be purchased for less than £5000 (examples provided at Appendix B have been sourced from the auto-trader web site).

Examples of purpose-built and M1 conversions sourced from Taximart web site are shown as follows:

V.W. Transporter M1 conversion 2006 model £16,995
Eurotaxi M1 conversion wheelchair access 2005 £7,495
Eurobus M1 conversion wheelchair access 2005 £6,395

Using these prices as a guideline and the fact that the proprietors will spend less on the upkeep and maintenance of a newer vehicle and the fact that it may have some residual value when it ceases to be licensed helps to show that the proposal is not as financially damaging as the replies indicate.

In your officers view implementing the changes would have the effect of upgrading and modernising the Council's Hackney Carriage fleet, and would go towards creating a greener and safer fleet.

3. **Links to Corporate Priorities**

In line with the Council objective, creating a greener & safer Borough.

4. **Financial Implications**

None.

5. **Implications for Crime and Disorder**

None.

6. **List of Appendices**

A – replies to consultation
B – saloon cars suitable for licences.