

**Report to:** **PUBLIC PROTECTION SUB-COMMITTEE**

**Relevant Officer:** Tim Coglan, Service Manager Public Protection

**Date of Meeting:** 21 June 2022

## **HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY**

### **1.0 Purpose of the report:**

1.1 To consider a draft Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy.

### **2.0 Recommendation(s):**

2.1 To consider the draft policy and, subject to any amendments the Sub-Committee wishes to make, to approve the draft for an eight week consultation exercise to take place.

### **3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):**

3.1 The existing policy received approval in 2016. The policy is due for a full review taking into consideration the Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Standards published by the Department for Transport.

3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

### **4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:**

4.1 None.

### **5.0 Council priority:**

5.1 The relevant Council priority is

- "The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool".

### **6.0 Background information**

6.1 Best practice dictates that the Council should have a policy setting out how it will approach decisions relating to taxi and private hire licensing. The last full review of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy took place in 2016, although the Council made minor amendments in 2018 a full review is now required to ensure that the policy remains up

to date and fit for purpose.

- 6.2 The Policing and Crime Act 2017 empowered the Secretary of State for Transport to issue statutory guidance on exercising taxi and private hire licensing functions to protect children and vulnerable individuals from harm when using these services. The Department for Transport published the statutory standards in July 2020 and there is an expectation that authorities will implement the recommendations contained therein unless there is a compelling reason not to do so.
- 6.3 The draft policy at Appendix 3a takes into account the recommendations of the statutory standards. The main change is to the convictions policy.
- 6.4 Whilst there is a desire for the trade to invest in newer, more environmentally friendly vehicles, officers recognise that drivers and operators have suffered from a lack of trade over the last few years due to COVID 19 and therefore require a period to recover. For this reason, there is no proposal to reduce the maximum age limit for licensed vehicles.
- 6.5 The draft policy does recognise that the Council has committed to achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2030 and the proposal is to ban the sale of combustion engines from the same date. Accordingly, the intention is to commence discussions with the trade about how the trade can move towards a more sustainable fleet.
- 6.6 A change to the testing policy for vehicles is proposed. Currently vehicles below 14 years of age have 2 'pit tests' at the Council's Central Vehicle Maintenance Unit each year. Vehicles over 14 years of age have 3 tests. A pit test involves all of the checks undertaken during an MOT plus additional checks of a more cosmetic nature on bodywork, seating etc. The proposal put forward is that this will change to one pit test and one MOT after six months for vehicles under 14 years and one pit test and two MOTs for vehicles over 14 years of age. Both the pit test and MOTs will be undertaken by CVMU.
- 6.7 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

**7.0 List of Appendices:**

- 7.1 Appendix 3a – draft Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy.

**8.0 Financial considerations:**

- 8.1 None.

**9.0 Legal considerations:**

- 9.1 Before approving any changes to the policy, there must be a period of consultation with the trade and other interested parties.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 None.

**11.0 Equalities considerations:**

11.1 None.

**12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:**

12.1 There are a number of climate change and environmental issues to consider and these are outlined in sections 6.4 and 6.5 of the background information.

**13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:**

13.1 Consultation will take place following approval of the draft policy.

**14.0 Background papers:**

14.1 [Statutory taxi and private hire vehicle standards.](#)