

Licensing Committee

Specification for Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles-Consultation

7 October 2009

Report of Head of Urban and Rural Services

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To report on the feedback from the Hackney Carriage Vehicles (HCV's) and Private Hire Vehicle (PHV's) Specification consultation that was agreed at the 11 June 2009 Licensing Committee meeting.

This report is public

Recommendations

The meeting is recommended to:

- (1) Note the feedback received on the Vehicle Specification consultation.
- (2) Approve amendments to the current Vehicle Specification taking into account the consultation feedback as set out in the attached Appendix 1.

Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1 This report sets out the outcomes of the second consultation on the current Taxi and PHV Specification following the Licensing Committees decisions at its 11 June 2009 meeting.

Proposals

- 1.2 Subject to the approval of the Committee, it is proposed that the current Vehicle Specification for HCV's and PHV's be amended in accordance with the recommendation, effective from 1 December 2009.
- 1.3 The proposed amendments are as set out under the Officer

Recommendations in Appendix 1.

Conclusion

- 1.4 Following consultation on the current Vehicle Specification a number of proposals were agreed by Committee for further market testing and consultation with interested parties. These were circulated to all licensed drivers and vehicle operators and 17 completed response forms received. A review of the feedback indicates some amendments to the current Vehicle Specification would help to clarify requirements and improve standards.

Background Information

- 2.1 The Licensing Committee at its meeting on 11 June 2009 received a report on the feedback received on the Vehicle Specification introduced in September 2009.
- 2.2 At this meeting, Committee agreed to undertake further consultation on a series of proposals arising from a review of this feedback. These proposals were circulated to all interested parties, including Cherwell Valley Hackney Association (CVHA) and North Oxfordshire Hackney Association (NOHA).
- 2.3 Seventeen responses were received to this consultation, including from NOHA and two from CVHA. The schedule at Appendix 1 provides a summary of the feedback received together with officer comment and recommendations.

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

- 3.1 The Council has established a Vehicle Specification as part of its Licensing Policy for PHV's and HCV's. This helps to establish minimum standards for all licensed vehicles that operate under Cherwell District Council as Licensing Authority.
- 3.2 The Policy and Vehicle Specification establishes a clear set of standards to all license holders and applicants, and it enables inspection and enforcement work to be undertaken within an agreed, transparent framework and in accordance with legislative requirements.
- 3.3 The following options have been identified. The approach in the recommendations is believed to be the best way forward.

Option One	Do nothing. This would mean the current Vehicle Specification remains as written.
Option Two	Amend the Vehicle specification without reference to the consultation feedback.
Option Three	Amend the Vehicle Specification to take account of the consultation feedback as set out at Appendix 1.

Consultations

CVHA	As summarised in Appendix 1
NOHA	As summarised in Appendix 1
Licensed Operators and drivers.	As summarised in Appendix 1

Implications

Financial:	There are no financial implications to these proposals.
Legal:	The trade has been properly consulted and the recommended amendments to the vehicle standards take account of their comments. Comments checked by Nigel Bell, Solicitor 01295 221687
Risk Management:	The recommendation enables the Council to manage licensing of HCV and PHV in an open and transparent manner that protects the public and ensures as far as is reasonably practicable that vehicles meet required standards to operate as HCV's/PHV's. Comments checked by Rosemary Watts, Risk management and Insurance Officer 01295 221566.

Wards Affected

All

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Consultation Feedback and Officer Recommendations.
Background Papers	
Cherwell District Council Vehicle Specification	
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