

Report to: Licensing Committee

Date: 7th July 2022

Title: Supporting the transition to low vehicle or zero emission vehicles in the taxi and private hire sector

Report of: Director of Service Delivery

Ward(s): All

Purpose of report: For Members to consider ways of supporting the transition to low or zero emission vehicles in the taxi and private hire vehicle sector.

Officer recommendation(s): (1) The Licensing Committee agrees that a feasibility study is undertaken into all options. The Lead for Regulatory Services to investigate grant funding to cover the costs of the feasibility study; and

(2) The Licensing Committee agrees that, as an immediate incentive, the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Guidance at Appendix, be amended so that low and zero emission vehicles may have an extended licence span.

Reasons for recommendations: For the Licensing Committee to consider steps to transition to low and zero emission vehicles in the taxi and private hire sector.

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Lewes District Council is responsible for the licensing of drivers, vehicles and operators in relation to the hackney carriage and private hire trade.
- 1.2 In exercising its discretion in carrying out its licensing functions, the Licensing Authority shall have regard to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Guidance.
- 1.3 The current Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Guidance applies to all drivers, vehicles and operators and was implemented on the 4th April 2022. (See Appendix 1.)

2 Background

- 2.1 In July 2019 Lewes District Council declared a Climate Emergency. The Climate Emergency Strategy demonstrates a commitment by the Authority to progress towards being Carbon Neutral by 2030. (See appendix 2.)
- 2.2 In 2005 an Air Quality Management area was declared in Lewes town centre and in 2014 for the Newhaven gyratory.
- 2.3 Air Quality and climate change are high priorities for Lewes District Council. This is the reason that a strategy has been developed to support a more environmentally sustainable future.
- 2.4 There are a number of schemes which have been undertaken throughout the United Kingdom by various licensing authorities to encourage a transition to changing vehicles through a variety of schemes.
- 2.5 To support the move to low and zero emission vehicles Lewes District Council will be installing 30 charge points in public car parks throughout the District by the end of 2022.
- 2.6 East Sussex County Council is responsible for facilitating charging hubs on the highway. This is ongoing work currently in partnership with all authorities throughout East Sussex to identify locations for charging hubs to be set up.
- 2.7 Members are asked to consider some examples of such practices below in other Council areas:
 - a) **Electric Vehicle Taxi Transition in Cambridge** (See Appendix 3.) In Cambridge new policies and incentives were introduced to the taxi and private sector to encourage a shift to low and zero emission vehicles. e.g. a mandated policy for all new vehicles and fee exemptions. Please see current and prospective Actions Summary Table for reference for the strategy adopted.
 - b) **Fleet Transition to zero emission through home charging scheme in Leeds** (See Appendix 4.) In Leeds, a home charging pilot scheme was introduced to enable the adoption of a more EV fleet and overcome current barriers regarding charging points. Improving the current infrastructure of charging points
 - c) **Go Ultra Low Oxford** (See Appendix 5.) In Oxford, there was a trial of 100 charge points through funding of the Office for Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV). Oxford City Council developed a bespoke concession framework to incentivise the trial period.
 - d) **Emissions Standards for Taxis in London** (See Appendix 6.) In London, a number of financial incentives and amendments to policies relating to the emissions from vehicles have been introduced to encourage the transition to zero and low emission vehicles.

3 Recommendations

3.1 Members are asked to note that this is the start of the discussion process.

- 1) To approve for the Lead for Regulatory Services to investigate grant funding to cover the costs of a feasibility study; and
- 2) Members are asked to agree that, as an immediate incentive, the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Guidance, be amended so that low and zero emission vehicles may have an extended licence span.

3.2 The following are the recommended changes to the Guidance giving effect to 3.1(2) above:

- i) Vehicles presented for first licensing shall not be more than five years old and vehicles presented for re-licensing shall not be more than ten years old apart from in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of an Authorised Officer.
- ii) An addition inserted - For new and relicensed vehicles defined by the Vehicle Certification Agency as Ultra Low Emission Vehicles and Zero Emission Vehicles shall not be more than 15 years old in age.
- iii) Applications to re licence vehicles over their licensable age must be made in writing to the Council citing what is considered to be an 'exceptional circumstance'.

Financial matters nor the condition of the vehicle come into this exceptions category and will not be considered in the determination.

4 Financial appraisal

4.1 There are no financial implications, at this stage.

5 Legal implications

5.1 The Legal Section considered this Report on 28 June 2022 (IKEN-11127-LDC-MW).

6 Risk Management Implications

6.1 There are no implications around risk.

7 Equality analysis

7.1 There are no implications around equalities.

8 Environmental sustainability implications

8.1 This report supports a more sustainable environment and reduction of emission of vehicles.

9 Appendices

Appendix 1 - Taxi and Private Hire Guidance

Appendix 2 - LDC Climate Emergency Summary

Appendix 3 - Electric vehicle and infrastructure Strategy Cambridge

Appendix 4 - Leeds City Council – Fleet Transition to zero emission

Appendix 5 - Go Ultra Low Oxford

Appendix 6 - Taxi and private hire action plan for London Taxis

10 Background papers

10.1 None.