

Report to the Licensing Committee

Report reference:

Date of meeting: 15 October 2008



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Subject: Hackney Carriage And Private Hire Review.

Responsible Officer: Alison Mitchell (01992–564017).

Democratic Services Officer: Gary Woodhall (01992–564470)

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) To vary the licence conditions in respect of:
 - (a) Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence;
 - (b) Hackney Carriage Driver's Licence;
 - (c) Private Hire Vehicle Licence;
 - (d) Private Hire Driver's Licence; and
 - (e) Operator's Licence.

Other Options for Action:

The Council could consider reducing the number of tests to be carried out on vehicles to the minimum required once a year after the vehicle is over three years. However, having sought technical advice from officers at the Langston Road depot this is not recommended.

Report:

1. A review has been carried out of the various taxi licences in order to incorporate changes in legislation and generally update the provisions. There are set out below details of the main changes

Hackney Carriage /Private Hire Vehicle Licence

2. Some amendments have been made to the Vehicle Specifications which are as follows:

- (a) The previous conditions asked for three doors, this has been increased to four doors.
- (b) There is a trend with smaller new cars not to provide a spare wheel. A repair kit is included instead but advice received suggests that although this would be sufficient to repair a small hole but not a larger gash. However, if the Council continued to insist upon a spare wheel then the amount of storage for luggage would be substantially decreased. The conditions have been amended to allow the vehicles to carry a spare wheel or a run flat type of tyre, which is smaller together with the necessary tools for fitting.

- (c) Additional requirements for storage of luggage in a safe way.
- (d) The requirements of side view mirrors.

3. There is a legal duty to have inspections once a year after the vehicle is over three years old. Government guidance suggests that inspections for older vehicles should be carried out more frequently. At present the Council requires that inspections take place every four months. It is suggested that the inspections of new vehicles should take place twice yearly and for vehicles over five years old they should continue to be inspected three times a year.

4. The inspections are to ensure that the vehicles comply with the conditions set out in the Vehicle Licence and the Taxi Inspection Report also attached.

Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Vehicle Driver's licence

5. There has been a requirement that the driver must not smoke in his vehicle. This is to take account of recent legislation.

6. A new duty has been introduced to permit animals to be allowed into vehicles where they are assisting a disabled person. This is a legal requirement.

7. There is included as one of the conditions that the driver must have passed a knowledge test of this area.

Operator's Licence

8. The conditions suggested are similar to those operated by other authorities.

Resource Implications:

None.

Legal and Governance Implications:

The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.
The Town Police Clauses Act 1847.
The Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

None.

Consultation Undertaken:

None.

Background Papers:

None.

Impact Assessments:

Not performed.