

LICENSING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE - 23 OCTOBER 2019

Present: Councillor Edwards (Chair), Maskell, Page, Rowland, D Singh and Skeats.

Apologies: Councillors Grashoff and Woodward.

4. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 11 June 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

5. HACKNEY CARRIAGE VEHICLE EMISSIONS AND AGE POLICY

The Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report asking the Committee to adopt a Hackney Carriage Vehicle (HCV) emissions and age policy which would contribute to the Council's objective to be carbon neutral by 2030. The report advised that the policy would complement the existing Local Transport Plan (LTP) and feed into the new LTP when adopted.

The report stated that the Council had declared a 'Climate Emergency' at its Strategic Environment Planning and Transport Committee meeting on 18 March 2019 (Minute 37 refers) and set an objective to be carbon neutral by 2030. The report highlighted the impact of road travel on carbon emissions and air quality and advised on the incentives becoming available to encourage the use of electric vehicles. The report also advised that a significant reduction in carbon emissions could be achieved by converting to an ultra-low emission vehicle (ULEV).

The report stated that the proposed policy would entail a staged approach and had been formulated in consultation with the Reading Taxi Association (RTA) and the Reading Cab Drivers Association (RCDA) following the declaration of the 'Climate Emergency'.

The report explained that the approach would remove vehicles of European Exhaust Emissions Standard Euro 3, 4 and 5a, leaving Euro 5b or cleaner vehicles by 2024 and from 2025 would favour ULEVs over Euro 5b and 6b vehicles. Incentives would also be offered to encourage the take up of ULEVs and 100% electric vehicles and version 4 of the Local Transport Plan would make reference to a charging network.

Paragraph 2.1 of the report set out the proposed emissions and age policy for HCV's, as follows:

Date	Proposed Standard
23 October 2019	Vehicle Age policy 15 years for all vehicles, 100% electric 20 year Vehicle Age Policy

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23 October 2019	All replacement vehicles will be a minimum of Euro 5b and less than 8 years old. This rule will apply regardless of whether the vehicle is new to the fleet or an existing vehicle.
1 October 2021	Vehicle Age Policy 14 years for vehicles up to and including Euro 5a (vehicles aged over 1/10/07 only)
1 October 2022	Vehicle Age Policy 13 years for vehicles up to and including Euro 5a (vehicles aged over 1/10/09 only)
1 October 2023	Vehicle Age Policy 12 years for vehicles up to and including Euro 5a (vehicles aged over 1/10/11 only)
1 October 2025	All replacement vehicles are minimum ULEV and less than 8 years old. This rule will apply regardless of whether the vehicle is new to the fleet or an existing vehicle.
1 October 2028	All vehicles to be minimum ULEV

Date	Incentives
Currently	All 100% electric vehicles pay 41% of the standard vehicle fee
From 1 April 2020	All ULEV (CO2 <50kg/km emissions) pay a 25% reduction in the annual standard vehicle fee 100% electric vehicles will receive a 50% reduction in the annual standard vehicle fee
1 October 2021 to 1 October 2022	Any ULEV/100% electric vehicle that has never been on the fleet before receives a free licence for its first year on the fleet

The report recommended that the Committee adopt the proposed policy set out at paragraph 2.1.

Paragraphs 2.2 to 2.5 of the report recommended that the Committee agree the following:

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- The definition of an Ultra-Low Emission Vehicle (ULEV) as a vehicle emitting a maximum of 50g/km of CO₂ from the tailpipe as detailed in the DVLA vehicle specification, which would bring forward the national standard definition which was due to come into force from 2021;
- That the HCV emissions and age policy would complement version 4 of the Local Transport Plan, which would acknowledge the greater electric charging infrastructure required to achieve the air quality standards and carbon neutral strategy by 2030;
- That a further report be submitted to the Committee in Autumn 2020 to review the vehicle fees and charges for Hackney carriages to ensure that any incentives given were maintained within the current advances of technology and within the overall budget;
- That, where Government grant money or incentives became available in the future, the Council might bring about a revision of the policy to accelerate the move to zero emissions.

Appendix 1 to the report set out the emission standard compared to the age of the vehicle.

The representation sent by the Reading Taxi Association (RTA) in response to the proposed policy was shown at Appendix 2 to the report and the representations sent in response to the proposed policy by the Reading Cab Drivers Association (RCDA) were shown at Appendix 3 to the report. The report advised that meetings had been held with the RTA and the RCDA to hear their views and the proposals that would be acceptable to them.

Asif Rashid, Chairman of Reading Taxi Association, and Ali Sheilk and Mirza Beg from the Reading Cab Drivers Association (RCDA), were present at the meeting and addressed the Committee. Hackney carriage vehicle owner Imran Ali and hackney carriage vehicle driver Sohail Abbas were also present at the meeting and addressed the Committee.

Resolved -

- (1) That the Emissions and Age Policy for Hackney Carriage Vehicles, as set out at paragraph 2.1 of the report, be adopted;
- (2) That the recommendations set out at paragraphs 2.2 to 2.5 of the report be agreed.

(The meeting started at 5.00pm and closed at 5.41pm)