

Review of Hackney Carriage Vehicle Specification Age Limits

Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Sub-Committee Date: 22nd February 2012

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Regeneration and Community.**

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

- To consider an amended Swindon Hackney Carriage vehicle specification
- To review the age limit for those vehicles that meet the Swindon wheelchair accessible Hackney Carriage vehicle specification.

Recommendation

The Sub-Committee is asked to:-

- Approve the amended Swindon Hackney Carriage vehicle specification (see Appendix C). This includes confirmation of the age limit for newly licensed wheelchair accessible Hackney Carriages licensed after the 1st of April 2012.
- To request the Director of Planning and Transport to prepare a further report on age limits for the vehicles that meet the Swindon wheelchair accessible Hackney Carriage Specification once local experience has been gained on the durability of these vehicles

Reasons

On the 14th November 2011 the Licensing Committee resolved that, subject to confirmation by Council there should be a change to the Councils Hackney Carriage Vehicle Specification.

1. Current Position

- 1.1. Currently wheelchair accessible Hackney Carriage vehicles, private hire vehicles and Hackney Carriage saloon vehicles can be considered for licensing if they are less than 5 years old when presented for initial licensing.
- 1.2. Wheelchair accessible Hackney Carriages can be licensed until ten years of age with an additional two years after an annual inspection and 2 MOT tests in year 11 and 12. Hackney Carriage saloon and Private Hire vehicles can be licensed until five years of age with an additional two years after an annual inspection and two MOT tests in year 6 and 7.

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2. Detail

- 2.1. On the 10 October 2011 the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Sub -Committee were asked to consider Hackney Carriage vehicle specifications. A proposed Hackney Carriage vehicle specification allowing other types of wheelchair accessible Hackney Carriages to be licensed, was proposed and is shown at Appendix A. On page 10 Item (4) Age of Vehicle it was proposed that all new Hackney Carriage plates would only be issued for new vehicles with delivery mileage only on the odometer. In addition attached to this report shown at Appendix B were the Public Carriage Office conditions of fitness which were applied by Swindon Borough Council as the Hackney Carriage vehicle specification at that time. That meeting was adjourned pending the receipt of additional information.
- 2.2. On the 14 November 2011 the Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Sub-Committee met to consider the Swindon Hackney Carriage Vehicle Specification. Under Item 16 1 (a). a specification was agreed.
- 2.3. The minutes of the Licensing Committee meeting on the 14 November 2011 show at Item 16 1(2) that the Committee would review the age limits for those wheelchair accessible Hackney Carriage vehicles that do not conform to the Metropolitan Conditions of Fitness.
- 2.4. Officers have contacted local authorities, the trade, vehicle manufacturers and operators and are satisfied that the new models that meet the Swindon Hackney Carriage vehicle Specification should meet these criteria before being eligible for licensing.
- 2.5. This review is to confirm the age limits for those vehicles required to meet the Swindon Hackney Carriage vehicle Specification, Appendix C page1 Age of vehicle. It is proposed that all newly licensed Wheelchair accessible Hackney Carriages should be no more than 12 months old from the date of registration when presented for licensing and no more than twelve years old with an annual inspection at ten years and two mot tests and an inspection in year 11 and 12.

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- 2.6. A number of other local authorities that licence vehicles other than those that meet the Public Carriage Office conditions of fitness have been contacted all of whom either have an upper age limit of ten years or no age limit at all. The majority of authorities contacted currently have an initial licensing age for vehicles of three to five years, however many of these authorities are reviewing their age policies in light of European emission standards and to improve the age of their Hackney Carriage fleets. Attached as Appendix D is a table of age limits from Councils in our local area.
- 2.7. After discussions with other Licensing Authorities and the trade, officers feel it is appropriate for Swindon that any newly licensed wheelchair accessible Hackney Carriages meeting the Swindon Specification should be no more than 12 months old from the date of first registration. Previously it was suggested that newly licensed vehicles presented for licensing should have delivery mileage only on the odometer, however it was felt that this did not take into account vehicles that may have been used as a demonstrator.
- 2.8. The Swindon Borough Council Hackney Carriage Vehicle Specification shown at Appendix C has now been updated to reflect the conditions that are applicable to Swindon and to allow for changes in legislation. These changes are in regard to Type Approval Regulations shown under General Construction 1(a), and Age of Vehicle.
- 2.9. It is proposed that these new arrangements, if approved, will commence on the 1st April 2012.
- 2.10. To note the decision on the future licensing of Hackney Carriage saloon vehicles has been deferred to a further meeting by the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Sub-Committee. and further consultation with the trade is ongoing a decision is expected in the new financial year.

3. Alternative Options

None

4. Preferred option

As recommendation

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5. Financial Implications

Allowing newly licensed vehicles that meet the new specification to less than 5 years old will have an adverse effect financially on existing drivers as these vehicles will be significantly cheaper to purchase and any increase in driver numbers in the current climate will impact on existing driver's earnings.

Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. There are no procurement issues arising from this report.

Links to Corporate Plans and Policies (in particular to Swindon 2010 Promises)

Priority: We can all benefit from a growing economy and a better town centre

Priority: Living independently protected from harm, leading healthy lives and making a positive contribution.

Consultees

The Director of Finance (s.151 Officer) and the Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted on all reports.

Background Papers and Appendices

6. Report on consideration of Swindon Hackney Carriage Vehicle Specifications on 10th October 2011.
7. Report on consideration of Swindon Hackney Carriage Vehicle Specifications Minutes of meeting on 14th November 2011

Appendix.A Proposed Hackney Carriage Specification considered at the Licensing Sub-Committee meeting on the 10th October 2011

Appendix B. Public Carriage Office conditions of fitness.

Appendix C. Amended Swindon Borough Council Hackney Carriage Specification.

Appendix D Age limits information from local Councils.