

<b>Subject:</b>	To amend licensing conditions for full electric and plug in hybrid electric vehicles	<b>Status:</b>	For Publication
<b>Report to:</b>	Licensing Committee	<b>Date:</b>	19 <sup>th</sup> October 2021
<b>Report of:</b>	Public Protection Manager	<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Communities
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>General Exception</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Special Urgency</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Equality Impact Assessment:</b>	Required:	no	Attached: no
<b>Biodiversity Impact Assessment</b>	Required:	no	Attached: no
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Phil Morton	<b>Telephone:</b>	01706 252442
<b>Email:</b>	philmorton@rossendalebc.gov.uk		

<b>1.</b>	<b>RECOMMENDATION(S)</b>
1.1	That the Licensing committee approve the extension of the upper age limit for Ultra Low Emission Vehicles and the waiving in licensing fees as outlined

## 2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To consider an amendment to the existing Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle policy to extend the upper age limit for Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEVs) from ten to twelve years and to approve the outlined reduction in fees

## 3. BACKGROUND

3.1 In March 2017, the Licensing Committee approved a new policy for the licensing of Private Hire and Hackney carriage drivers and vehicles.

3.2 The policy requires that to be considered for licensing, the vehicle must be under 5 years of age and all vehicles to be removed from the fleet when they reach 10 years of age, except those that are purpose built hackney carriage vehicles and minibuses which can remain on the fleet until the age of 12

3.3 This age limit not only ensures that the quality of the fleet is maintained to the highest standard, but that the most stringent euro standards in relation to emissions is achieved

3.4 In 2019, the Council declared a Climate Emergency and declared its aim to be carbon neutral by 2030.

3.5 To support this, a ten-year Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan was adopted. This includes a major commitment to encourage the uptake of electric vehicles by the public, the council and the taxi industry.

3.6 To support this, the Council has recently fitted a number of EV charge points across the borough which is the first step to improve the infrastructure to support the use of electric vehicles

3.7 Encouraging the uptake of ULEVs for hackney carriage and private hire use supports both Council initiatives to reduce carbon emissions and improve air quality through an increase in low and carbon neutral vehicles plying their trade across the valley.

3.8 In recognition of the increased initial costs of purchasing an ULEV, and to support the taxi trade to reduce its carbon footprint, it is proposed that the following amendments to the current policy are adopted;

1. That the maximum age to join the fleet is removed (currently 5 years) and the upper age limit for vehicles to remain on the fleet is raised to 12 years from 10.
2. That the fees for licensing a hackney or private hire vehicle are waived for 2 years from first licensing. Currently this would mean a saving of £280

3.9 It is recommended that any relaxation of age limit with regard to hybrid vehicles is restricted to plug in hybrid vehicles that meet the DVSA ULEV standard.

The more common hybrid electric vehicle (HEV), where the drive of a conventional engine charges batteries which in turn provide assistance to the engine, enabling the vehicle to drive parts of short journeys at low speed using the electric motor alone, do not meet the ULEV standard or cost as much as plug in vehicles.

#### **4. RISK**

4.1 All the issues raised and the recommendation(s) in this report involve risk considerations as set out below:

Relaxation of the lower and upper age limit for licensed ultra-low emission vehicles will contribute to the council's priority of becoming carbon neutral by 2030 by providing further incentive to purchase such vehicles and recognising the additional expense incurred in purchasing them.

Failure to provide this support may hinder the councils commitment to achieving this goal

#### **5. FINANCE**

5.1 The uptake of EV's over the next 2 years is anticipated to be low before the impact of legislation requires all vehicles to be zero emissions.  
A 10% uptake would result in an annual cost of £2800

#### **6. LEGAL**

6.1 The Local Government (miscellaneous provisions) Act 1976 lays down the mechanism for setting fees for taxi licensing. Section 70 (6) states;

A district council may remit the whole or part of any fee chargeable in pursuance of this section for the grant of a licence under section 48 or 55 of this Act in any case in which they think it appropriate to do so.

#### **7. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 These proposals will require an amendment to the councils policy for the Licensing of Hackney Carriage Drivers and Vehicles, Private Hire Operators, Drivers and Vehicles

**8. CONCLUSION**

8.1 Any increase in the use of Ultra Low Emission Vehicles by the taxi trade needs to be encouraged. These amendments and incentives will show the councils commitment not only in reducing our carbon footprint, but also in supporting a sustainable taxi industry across Rossendale.

Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policy	<i>Public Protection Unit or on line</i>