

REPORT: Regulatory Committee

DATE: 19 March 2012

REPORTING OFFICER: Chief Executive

PORTFOLIO: Resources

SUBJECT: Taxi Licensing – Current Age Restrictions on Licensed Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles

WARDS: Borough-wide

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise the Committee of current concerns within the trade relating to the replacement of vehicles on reaching the prescribed age limits.

2. RECOMMENDED: That the Committee consider the options outlined in this report

3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1** Members will recall at the meeting on 19th March 2007 that an item regarding Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing - Age restrictions - was presented to the Committee
- 3.2.** As a result of this presentation it was resolved that Licensed Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles in Halton would be subject to age restrictions.
- 3.3** Minute 23/2007 is set out in the Appendix to this report.

4. CURRENT CONCERNS

- 4.1** Replacing a licensed vehicle on attaining current age limits could, in the current time of austerity, be punitive to the proprietor and place unreasonable financial and/or personal pressures on Licence holders.
- 4.2** Removing the Condition in its entirety could lower the standards achieved in the Borough since age restrictions were established, to the detriment of the service to which the public are entitled.

4 OPTIONS

- 4.1** The options available to The Committee are:

- Take no action
- Revoke the Current Conditions relating to Age
- Modify the Current Conditions for a restricted period.
- Introduce further qualifying Conditions in order to maintain the status quo whilst still assisting Licence Holders.

6 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Any changes made would affect existing policies regarding age restrictions on, and possibly standards of, Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles Licensed by Halton Borough Council

7 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None

8 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCILS PRIORITIES

8.1 Children and Young People in Halton

None

8.2 Employment Learning and Skills in Halton

N/A

8.3 A healthy Halton

N/A

8.4 A Safer Halton

None

8.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

N/A

9 RISK ANALYSIS

N/A

10 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

N/A

11 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Application Documents	Legal Services	John Tully/ John Findlow

23. [Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Age Policy Review](#) 
[PDF 53 KB](#)

Additional documents:

- [Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Age Policy, item 23.](#)
 [PDF 104 KB](#)

Minutes:

At a previous meeting held on 18th September 2006, the Committee agreed that a review of the age policy on Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles in the Borough be undertaken.

Subsequently, on 26th October 2006, Members of the Taxi Consultative Group were advised of the review and asked for their comments and the reasons for their comments in writing.

As a result, 5 responses were received from the trade which were collated together with other relevant information and proposals for the age limit and reported back to the meeting of the Taxi Consultative Group on 25th January 2007.

At this meeting, the members of the group made comments both for and against the proposals and were requested to make recommendations/comments in writing to the Licensing Section, Legal Services by 16th February 2007.

RESOLVED: That the vehicle age policy outlined in appendix 1 be adopted as Council policy.

APPENDIX 1

PROPOSED VEHICLE AGE POLICY
Maximum age limit

Saloons estate and MSV's **8 years**
(Status quo)

MPV FULLY wheelchair compliant **12 years**

Purpose built (definition to remain the same) **16 years**

Grandfather rights period – 2011

Grandfather rights will be given for those adversely affected by any policy change. The current proposals mean that only Hackney Carriage purpose built vehicles could theoretically be adversely affected. By 2011 all purpose built vehicles will be no older than 16 years

REASONS FOR HAVING AN AGE LIMIT

- **Inevitable decline in mechanical standards including greater likelihood of breakdown.**
- **Inevitable decline in comfort (seats / interior looking tired)**
- **Image**
- **Perfectly lawful to have an age limit (Hyndburn)**
- **System currently works**
- **Implication for no age limit would be a massive increase in enforcement to police the vehicles.**
- **Provides an incentive to invest in more expensive fully wheelchair compatible vehicles whilst balancing this against total absence of an age limit which would result in more vehicles of a lesser standard.**
- **Saloon and Estate and MSV's are not included whatever the cost of those vehicles. They do not contribute to increasing fully wheelchair accessible vehicles in the Borough.**