

## READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	LICENSING APPLICATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE 3		
DATE:	12 FEBRUARY 2015	AGENDA ITEM:	4
TITLE:	HACKNEY CARRIAGE VEHICLE EMISSIONS AND AGE POLICY		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	PAUL GITTINGS	PORTFOLIO:	CULTURE, SPORTS & CONSUMER SERVICES
SERVICE:	PLANNING DEVELOPMENT & REGULATORY SERVICES	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
LEAD OFFICER:	CLYDE MASSON	TEL:	0118 937 2453
JOB TITLE:	INTERIM LICENSING MANAGER	E-MAIL:	<a href="mailto:clyde.masson@reading.gov.uk">clyde.masson@reading.gov.uk</a>

#### 1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 In September 2011 the hackney carriage emissions and age policy was introduced to both update the standard of vehicles on the fleet and reduce exhaust emissions from hackney carriages which included retrofitting emission abatement systems to sections of the fleet to improve their reduction in emissions output.
- 1.2 This report is to allow the Council to consider amending one of the conditions which only permits new abatement systems to be fitted to hackney carriage vehicles.

#### 2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 Members approve the Option proposed.

#### 3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 Under the Environment Act 1995, Reading Borough Council has a duty to constantly review and assess the air quality within its borough, and compare pollution concentrations against a set of European and National air quality standards. Monitoring has shown that Reading has areas where concentrations of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) are exceeding both European and national standards, and as such Reading Borough Council has declared an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and implemented an Action Plan. The Council's action plan includes

proposals to investigate ways to reduce emissions from the local Hackney Carriage and Private Hire fleet.

- 3.2 The Council's air quality action plan and the proposal to improve emissions standards from hackney carriages relates directly to the strategic aim "to enhance and maintain our natural and urban assets, making Reading an attractive place to be..." as well as the aim "to improve the health of the population, prevent and treat ill-health".
- 3.3 The Council's Environmental Policy Statement (agreed by Council on 30th March 2006, Minute 68 refers) requires that we "...meet, and where possible, go beyond our legal obligations, statutory duties and codes of practice with regards to the environment, and where no such obligations, duties or codes of practice exist, work to develop our own environmental standards".
- 3.4 The Council has adopted the London Public Carriage Office (PCO) conditions of fitness as policy. This currently restricts the hackney carriage fleet to purpose built London Taxis International (LTI) vehicles, the now out of production Metrocab or the Mercedes Vito taxi.

#### **4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 On 27 September 2011 the Licensing Applications Sub 3 Committee approved the hackney carriage vehicle emissions and age policy. The principal requirements of the policy were that on 1 October 2013, the hackney carriage vehicle fleet would be Euro 3 emissions standard or better, no vehicles would be more than 20 years old, and no vehicles would be licenced for the first time if they were more than 15 years old.
- 4.2 On 26 January 2012 committee resolved to agree changes to the hackney carriage vehicle age and emissions policy. The changes agreed were that Euro 2 emission standard vehicles new to the fleet should be permitted to be licensed if they were capable of being retrofitted to meet the Euro 3 standard. All such vehicles capable of being converted to meet the Euro 3 standard must have a new Euro 3 retro fit abatement system fitted by 1 October 2013. Vehicles that had been converted to run on alternative fuels such as LPG which achieve equivalent or better emissions as Euro 3 would also be permitted.
- 4.3 Vehicles new to the fleet after 1 October 2013 which met the general requirements of the policy and which did not have the original engine fitted at manufacture, be permitted to have an engine that was Euro 3 compliant or better fitted, or had been retrofitted with an emission abatement system to achieve Euro 3 standard or better.
- 4.4 Following the 26 January 2012 Committee decision, all hackney carriage vehicle owners were written to on 21 May 2012. The letter sent outlined the amendments to the policy and reminded vehicle owners of the Committee decision initially taken on 27 September 2011 and reconfirmed on 26 January 2012 centred on vehicles either being compliant with the Euro 3 standard or taken off the road by

1 October 2013. Vehicles not retrofitted to the Euro 3 standard by 1 October 2013 would cease to be licensed.

- 4.5 On 12 February 2013 Committee considered a report following representations from the hackney carriage representative trade bodies who requested an extension of the 1 October 2013 compliance date for the Euro 3 standard following which it was resolved to retain the 1 October 2013 compliance date.
- 4.6 On 15 May 2013 Committee considered a report following representations from a small number of hackney carriage vehicle owners to permit pre-Euro and older Euro 1 emissions vehicles to be retrofitted to the Euro 3 standard. Committee resolved not to permit these changes to the policy.
- 4.7 The retrofit exhaust abatement system agreed on by the trade and officers was supplied by Eco power at a cost of £1,350 and fitted by one of the Council's approved garages at a cost of £300. The exhaust abatement systems have been fitted as new to hackney carriage vehicles through the Council's agreed supplier and Council approved garages and been continuously licensed by the authority. Officers are satisfied that the exhaust abatement systems are sufficiently monitored and maintained through the Council's MOT and compliance testing systems.
- 4.8 Eco Power, the supplier of the exhaust abatement systems has been contacted for their view on transferring the exhaust systems from one vehicle to another and they have responded stating, that they were satisfied that the exhaust systems could be transferred to another vehicle as long they are fitted by one of the Councils approved garages and no more than 2 years old on transfer. (Appendix I refers).
- 4.9 APPENDIX II - Hackney carriage vehicle emissions and age policy.

## 5. THE PROPOSAL

- 5.1 The hackney carriage trade have requested that point 6 of the hackney carriage vehicle emissions and age policy be amended to permit the transfer of existing retrofit exhaust abatement systems from Reading Borough Council licence hackney carriage vehicles to new to fleet hackney carriage vehicles. At present only new systems are permitted to be fitted to new or existing vehicles.

## 6. Option Proposed

- 6.1 Amend point 6 of the hackney carriage emissions and age policy as set out in Appendix III.
- 6.2 Other Options Considered
- 6.3 Make no change to the existing policy.

## **7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION**

- 7.1 Regular meetings with trade representatives at which the Vehicle Emissions and Age Policy has been discussed

## **8. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS**

- 8.1 The implementation of measures specified in the air quality action plan contributes to the strategic aims:
- To Develop Reading as a Green City with a sustainable environment and economy at the heart of the Thames Valley
  - To promote equality, social inclusion and a safe and healthy environment for all

## **9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, section 47 (1) states that a district council may attach to the grant of a licence of a hackney carriage under the Act of 1847 such conditions as the district council may consider reasonably necessary. Section 47 (2) states that without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing subsection, a district council may require any hackney carriage licensed by them under the Act of 1847 to be of such design or appearance or bear such distinguishing marks as shall clearly identify it as a hackney carriage. Section 47 (3) states that any person aggrieved by any conditions attached to such a licence may appeal to a magistrates' court.

## **10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 Whilst there are financial implications associated with fitting exhaust emissions abatement systems to vehicles, the proposals provided no further burden of financial implications for owners of vehicles.

## **11. APPENDICES**

APPENDIX I - Hackney carriage vehicle emissions and age policy

APPENDIX II - Proposed new Hackney carriage vehicle emissions policy

## Fundrey, Dan

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**From:** Dave Davies <daviddavies6@btinternet.com>  
**Sent:** 12 January 2015 13:09  
**To:** Masson, Clyde  
**Subject:** RE: Emissions

Hi Clyde

A belated Happy New Year!

I can confirm that it ok to change the kit from one taxi to another on the condition that it was a certified kit fitted by UCV and also that the kit is no more than 2 years old (after that it is probably better to install a new kit)

Regards Dave

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**From:** Masson, Clyde [<mailto:clyde.masson@reading.gov.uk>]  
**Sent:** 09 January 2015 14:59  
**To:** 'Dave Davies'  
**Subject:** Emissions

Hi Dave

Hope everything is going well for you in 2015!

Last year I wrote to you asking if you had any concerns with our hackney carriage vehicle owners moving their exhaust abatement systems from their current vehicles to new vehicles as along as the work is carried out by one of our approved garages.

At the time you replied and said this would be ok as long as the work was carried out by one of our approved garages. Is your position the same as then and if so can you confirm this in an email to me as I can't find the previous confirmation from you.

Regards

Clyde Masson  
Interim Licensing Manager  
Licensing | Environment & Neighbourhood Services

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## Appendix II

### READING BOROUGH COUNCIL HACKNEY CARRIAGE VEHICLE EMISSIONS AND AGE POLICY

#### New to fleet vehicles

1. With immediate effect of the Licensing Committee taking a decision to implement this policy new to fleet vehicles will be permitted to be licensed if they were manufactured as Euro 2 compliant or better, subject to compliance with paragraph 2 below. No Euro 1 or pre Euro vehicles will be permitted to be licensed as new to fleet vehicles.
2. Vehicles new to the fleet, be permitted to be licensed if they have been manufactured to meet the Euro 2 standard. All such vehicles must have a new Euro 3 retro fit abatement system fitted by 1<sup>st</sup> October 2013. Vehicles that have been converted to run on alternative fuels such as LPG which achieve equivalent or better emissions as Euro 3 will also be permitted.
3. After 1<sup>st</sup> October 2013 any vehicle which either meets the general requirements of this policy and does not have the original engine fitted at manufacture, but has an engine which is Euro 3 compliant or better fitted, or has been retrofitted with an emissions abatement system to achieve Euro 3 standard or better, will be permitted to be licensed
4. From 1<sup>st</sup> October 2013 new to fleet vehicles that are over 15 years old shall not be permitted to be licensed.
5. Any conversion to alternative fuels must be certificated to adequately demonstrate that the vehicle meets the Euro 3 standard.
6. Any retrofit technology which is fitted shall be:
  - an emissions reduction system manufactured by a company approved by the Energy Savings Trust and the Public Carriage Office
  - fitted by an installer approved by the Council
  - new and not previously used equipment

Documentation must be provided at the time of first licensing demonstrating that the equipment is new and is manufactured and installed in accordance with the above requirements.
7. Where an emissions reduction system is fitted, on a yearly basis upon relicensing of the vehicle, certification shall be provided by an approved installer to demonstrate that the retrofit abatement equipment remains installed and working correctly.

### Existing fleet

1. Vehicles registered prior to 1 October 1998 and/or Euro 2 standard will not continue to be licensed beyond 1 October 2013.
2. As of 1 October 2013 no vehicle older than 20 years, regardless of its emissions standard, will continue to be licensed.

N.B. This policy will not override any conditions placed upon individual vehicle licences that result in newer vehicles being required, as is currently the situation in relation to hackney carriage vehicle numbers 300 to 362, unless the vehicle is written-off or the engine is beyond economic repair.”

## Appendix III

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  6. Any retrofit technology which is fitted shall be:
    - an emissions reduction system manufactured by a company approved by the Energy Savings Trust and the Public Carriage Office
    - fitted by an installer approved by the Council
    - new and not previously used equipment (unless the equipment to be installed was new when originally installed to a Reading Borough Council licensed vehicle and which has remained a licensed vehicle with the Council since installation of the equipment).
- Documentation must be provided at the time of first licensing demonstrating that the equipment is new and is manufactured and installed in accordance with the above requirements.
7. Where an emissions reduction system is fitted, on a yearly basis upon relicensing of the vehicle, certification shall be provided by an approved installer to demonstrate that the retrofit abatement equipment remains installed and working correctly.



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