



Regulatory Committee

Wednesday, 18 September 2024 at 7.30 pm

Council Chamber - Civic Centre

Supplementary Agenda

Page

Review of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy

1. Since preparation of the agenda, Officers have reviewed the Policy with regard to the Environmental Policy approach and emissions standards.
2. Officers propose the policy be amended in respect of the 'General environmental policy approach' at Part 6 Vehicle Licensing, numbers 6.86-6.87 as set out below:

6.86. The Runnymede Climate Change Action Plan (February 2024) provides a framework to take action to reduce emissions which is driven by the vision, objectives and targets set out in the Council's Climate Change Strategy (2022 – 2030). The Strategy describes how the Council will work towards reducing carbon emissions from Council operations to 'net zero' by 2030, and work with our local communities and other stakeholders to achieve net zero across the wider borough by 2050, in line with national targets. The Council seeks to positively influence our environment by promoting sustainability in all Council decisions and actions. In recognition of the RBC's wider role As such, the licensing authority will seek to promote and encourage vehicle proprietors to invest in vehicles and related technologies that offer the best environmental standards in terms of emissions as these are critical to the level of pollutants emitted and hence public health.

6.87. In keeping with the above Strategy and RBC's Air Quality Action Plan to improve air quality, standards relating to exhaust emissions will be introduced as follows; From 1 January 2030 the Council will only licence Hackney carriage and private hire vehicles (new and renewal) which are Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEV), as defined by the Vehicle Certification Agency (<https://www.vehicle-certification-agency.gov.uk/fuel-consumption-co2/fuel-consumption-guide/zero-and-ultra-low-emission-vehicles-ulevs/#topic-title>)

3. Justification:

- 3.1 RBC resolved to declare a climate emergency on 7 December 2023, which means the Council will use its reasonable endeavours to continue its work to meet the Council's target of net zero operational emissions by 2030, and to use its sphere of influence to support the Borough and its communities to achieve the 2050 national net zero target for the UK.
- 3.2 The Council's Climate Change Strategy (2022 – 2030) recognises that we

have an obligation to reduce carbon emissions not only from our own operations but should also support businesses to do the same. There is a significant opportunity available for the Council to act as a facilitator and enabler for change to reduce levels of air pollution and helping to improve public health as a result.

- 3.3 The Runnymede Climate Change Action Plan (February 2024) provides a framework to take action to reduce emissions, such as to create a low-carbon and resilient transport sector. Covering all modes of mobility across the borough, transport is the highest emitter of greenhouse gas emissions for Runnymede.
- 3.4 Where the Council finds that air quality for a particular pollutant is unlikely to be met in an area where there is relevant public exposure, we must designate this as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and produce a remedial action plan. We have two AQMAs declared in our borough;
- along the full length of the M25 within the borough including an extended area at Egham;
 - Addlestone Town Centre.

One of the areas prioritised in the Air Quality Action Plan is “low emission transport”.

- 3.5 Whilst the proportion of licensed Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles makes up a very small percentage of traffic in and around the borough at any one time, it is recognised that licensed vehicles are used regularly throughout the day and on multiple journeys. As such, it is proposed to improve the fleet by setting minimum emission standards for vehicles licensed by the Council. This is also in line with the vast majority of other Surrey Local Authorities.
- 3.6 Whilst a change such as this has to be balanced with the resulting financial pressures that any new requirements might have on the trade, it is proposed to Members that we adopt a requirement for the latest Euro engine emissions standards (i.e. Ultra Low Emission Vehicles) to be met or exceeded by 2030. This gives the trade a long lead in time to meet the new requirements, and is in line with the Sustainable Fleet Management Strategy for the Council vehicle fleet to transition to zero emissions by 2030. It is noted that the majority of the licensed vehicles in the borough (approx 73%) already meet or exceed the Euro 6 standard. It is important to set standards that are common to all within the licensed taxi trade, to ensure consistency and a level playing field for vehicle proprietors, operators and drivers.

Revised Recommendation that:

- i) **the revised Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy as set out in Appendix A, be amended as set out in the addendum and be approved for public consultation; and**

(recommendation ii) is as set out on the main agenda)