

<b>Subject:</b>	Minor amendments to Taxi Licensing Policy	<b>Status:</b>	For Publication	
<b>Report to:</b>	Licensing Committee	<b>Date:</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> July 2023	
<b>Report of:</b>	Public Protection Manager	<b>Lead Member:</b>	Planning, Licensing and Enforcement	
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input type="checkbox"/>	General Exception <input type="checkbox"/>	Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Equality Impact Assessment:</b>	Required:	No	Attached:	No
<b>Biodiversity Impact Assessment:</b>	Required:	No	Attached:	No
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## 1. RECOMMENDATION(S)

1.1 To approve the amendments to the Taxi Licensing Policy.

## 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- MoT testing stations at present are limited to 3 stations
- Shortage of qualified testers are impacting on service delivery
- Using any registered MoT station will alleviate the pressure
- “Rossendale Test” carried out by licensing officers will ensure consistent standard
- Amendment to lower age limit will still ensure that the most current Euro standard is maintained
- Delegate future minor amendments of the Policy to officers

## 3. BACKGROUND

The councils Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policy was adopted in 2017. Since that time, minor amendments have taken place to reflect the most current standards. The two proposed changes would still ensure that the quality of our licensed vehicles was at the highest level, whilst addressing some concerns both of the trade and the Licensing Authority.

## 4. DETAILS

### MOT's

- 4.1 Currently the Taxi Licensing Policy limits the number of approved MOT stations to three garages. Historically, these have carried out both the vehicles MOT test and the additional “Rossendale test” which ensures that the cleanliness, bodywork appearance and other non-mechanical matters are addressed.
- 4.2. Since Covid, all three establishments have found it increasingly difficult to recruit and retain qualified MOT testers, and consequently have been cancelling increasing numbers of taxi and private hire vehicle tests.
- 4.3. In order to alleviate this issue, it is proposed that all suitably authorised MOT test stations in Rossendale become authorised garages.
- 4.4. In addition, it is proposed that licensing officers at Futures Park carry out the “Rossendale Test” when the proprietor attends to collect their licence plates.

4.5 This will ensure that the standard of this inspection is carried out to a consistent standard, and will allow officers an opportunity to examine the internal CCTV system to ensure that this is functioning correctly.

## **AGE LIMITS**

4.6. The existing licensing policy states at paragraph 4.5 (p17):

*'Applications for a new vehicle licence will only normally be accepted in respect of vehicles that are less than 5 years of age from the date of first registration or are less than 7 years of age where an approved conversion kit has been installed on the vehicle reducing its emissions to within the current Euro standard as amended from time to time'.*

4.7. Presently, the current standard is Euro 6, which was introduced in 2014.

4.8. This means that all vehicles first registered after that date are fully compliant with the current Euro standard, and are therefore eligible to be licensed without an approved conversion kit being fitted.

4.9. It is anticipated that Euro 7 will not be introduced before 2025 at the earliest.

4.10 It is proposed that the age policy is amended to allow vehicles to be first licensed up to the age of 7 years, as long as they are Euro 6 compliant.

4.11 However following the introduction of Euro 7, this again would be subject to an approved conversion kit having been installed, reducing the emissions to within Euro 7 standards. Otherwise, the age limit would remain at 5 years of age.

4.12 It is therefore proposed that the licensing policy be amended to read:

*'Applications for a new vehicle licence will only normally be accepted in respect of vehicles that are less than 5 years of age from the date of first registration or are less than 7 years of age and meets the current Euro standard or has an approved conversion kit installed on the vehicle reducing its emissions to within the current Euro standard as amended from time to time'.*

4.13 Members are asked to consider delegating future minor amendments of the Policy to the Public Protection Manager in consultation with the Chair of the Licensing Committee. Major changes which materially change the policy and which cannot be considered minor would as per standard procedure, return to the Licensing Committee for consideration.

## **5. RISK**

There are no specific risk issues for members to consider arising from this report.

## **6. FINANCE**

There are no financial implications outside of current budgets

## **7. LEGAL**

All legal matters are covered in the body of the report

## **8. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

The Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policy will be amended to reflect these changes.

## 9. REASON FOR DECISION

The current policy does not take into account that all vehicles currently on the fleet are compliant with the most recent Euro standards. It is therefore important that this is recognised and to remove any ambiguity.

Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policy	On line - <a href="#">Click here to view the taxi policy</a>
Summary of Changes	Attached

**Policy for the Licensing of:  
Hackney Carriage Drivers and Vehicles  
Private Hire Operators, Drivers and  
Vehicles**

Date of Issue: March 2017

**SUMMARY OF  
PROPOSED CHANGES**

## 1.4 Changes to Policies, Procedures and other matters

A paragraph is added here to allow the delegation of minor amendments to the Public Protection Manager in consultation with the Chair of the Licensing Committee.

### Current:

Significant changes to this Policy, internal procedures and other matters will be reasonably consulted upon and communicated via the Council's website, Social Media pages and the Council's official One Stop Shop.

### Change:

Significant changes to this Policy, internal procedures and other matters will be reasonably consulted upon and communicated via the Council's website, Social Media pages and the Council's official One Stop Shop.

Minor amendments to this Policy is delegated to the Public Protection Manager in consultation with the Chair of the Licensing Committee.

## 4.13 Vehicle Suspensions

This section refers to the MOT and Rossendale Test being undertaken by an authorised garage. The changes reflect that the MOT will be done by an authorised garage and the Rossendale Test will be done by Council officers.

### Current:

If the vehicle suspended under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 section 68 has been subject to an MOT and Rossendale Test undertaken by an authorised garage, the lifting of the suspension will become an administrative process. Where relevant, the Council reserves the right to conduct a vehicle inspection before lifting the suspension.

### Change:

If the vehicle suspended under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 section 68 has been subject to an MOT undertaken by an authorised garage and a satisfactory Rossendale Test by an Authorised Officer, the lifting of the suspension will become an administrative process. Where relevant, the Council reserves the right to conduct a vehicle inspection before lifting the suspension.

## 4.15 Rossendale Vehicle Test

This section refers to the MOT and Rossendale Test being undertaken by an authorised garage. The changes reflect that the MOT will be done by an authorised garage and the Rossendale Test will be done by Council officers.

### Current:

The 'Rossendale Test' element of the vehicle check will be conducted at the same time as the MOT at a Council authorised testing centre within the one calendar month preceding the licensing application and at the 4-month test.

The vehicle may be subject to further inspection(s) by Authorised Officers during the duration of the licence

### Change:

The 'Rossendale Test' element of the vehicle check will be conducted by an Authorised Officer within the one calendar month preceding the licensing application and at the 4-month test.

The vehicle may be subject to further inspection(s) by Authorised Officers during the duration of the licence

## Appendix L

### Documents to be submitted when making an application for a new or renewal vehicle licence

This section refers to the MOT and Rossendale Test being undertaken by an authorised garage and submitted with a new or renewal application. The changes reflect that the MOT will be done by an authorised garage and the Rossendale Test will be done by Council officers.

#### Current:

- the correct fee;
- An original certificate of insurance for the vehicle, valid on the day the licence is collected, insuring it for the purpose of its use as a hackney carriage vehicle or private hire vehicle as appropriate ; certificates of insurance emailed direct from the insurance company will be accepted;
- The original Vehicle Registration Document showing the current owners name and address or the new keeper supplement; (document must be in person name, sole trader, partnership or limited company);
- An MOT certificate issued during a mechanical vehicle inspection at a Council nominated testing station dated within the month preceding the application; on renewal applications, this certificate shall be no older than two months prior to the expiry of the vehicle licence;
- A 'Rossendale Test' pass certificate from the same MOT testing station the MOT certificate was issued from confirming that the vehicle conforms to the standards set by the Council dated within the month preceding the application; on renewal applications, this certificate shall be no older than two months
- prior to the expiry of the vehicle licence; and
- If applicable, a letter from the registered keeper of the vehicle to the applicant, stating that they have given their permission for the vehicle to be licensed.
- If the applicant is not a holder of a current Rossendale drivers licence or a Rossendale Private Hire Operators licence the application must include a valid basic disclosure (issued within 1 month of the application being submitted) and a completed statutory declaration

#### Change:

- the correct fee;
- An original certificate of insurance for the vehicle, valid on the day the licence is collected, insuring it for the purpose of its use as a hackney carriage vehicle or private hire vehicle as appropriate ; certificates of insurance emailed direct from the insurance company will be accepted;
- The original Vehicle Registration Document showing the current owners name and address or the new keeper supplement; (document must be in person name, sole trader, partnership or limited company);
- An MOT certificate issued during a mechanical vehicle inspection at a Council nominated testing station dated within the month preceding the application; on renewal applications, this certificate shall be no older than two months prior to the expiry of the vehicle licence;
- A 'Rossendale Test' pass certificate issued by an Authorised Officer confirming that the vehicle conforms to the standards set by the Council dated within the month preceding the application; on renewal applications, this certificate shall be no older than two months
- prior to the expiry of the vehicle licence; and
- If applicable, a letter from the registered keeper of the vehicle to the applicant, stating that they have given their permission for the vehicle to be licensed.
- If the applicant is not a holder of a current Rossendale drivers licence or a Rossendale Private Hire Operators licence the application must include a valid basic disclosure (issued within 1 month of the application being submitted) and a completed statutory declaration