



Leicester
City Council

WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

LICENSING & PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

22 October 2019

TAXI STRATEGY – UNMET DEMAND

Report of the Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to inform the Committee of the need for a survey of unmet demand for hackney carriages.

2. Background

- 2.1 The taxi strategy involves a review of all of the council's policies and procedures in relation to taxi licensing. This is being taken in phases in order to make to task more manageable.
- 2.2 The vehicle licensing phase has not begun yet. However, there are links with work being undertaken within Transportation to improve air quality. Members will recall the introduction of a grant scheme to help existing taxi owners with the purchase of ULEVs to replace their existing vehicles. The committee previously approved the LEVC electric vehicle for licensing as a hackney carriage.
- 2.3 Members will also be aware that the council currently limits the number of hackney carriage licences that it issues. This was introduced and subsequently retained following surveys of unmet demand for hackney carriages.

3. Unmet demand

- 3.1 The council current limits the number of hackney carriages that it issues. A survey of unmet demand is necessary to justify maintaining, amending or removing this limit.
- 3.2 An unmet demand survey involves on-street observations to see whether or not the existing number of hackney carriages is sufficient to meet customer demand. If the survey finds that there is no unmet demand this may justify retaining a limit on the number of hackney carriages. If the survey finds that there is unmet demand, then the limit may be increased or lifted altogether.
- 3.3 A number of changes to the locations of existing taxi ranks are imminent. This is in connection with highways improvements and pedestrianisation within the city centre.

Once the changes have begun, it would be necessary to wait for the works to be completed and embedded before carrying out an unmet demand survey. This is because the survey may not give a true picture during or immediately after works due to customers potentially being unsure of where the permanent ranks are located. It is important to undertake a survey of unmet demand sooner rather than later.

3.4 The Service Director, in consultation with the Deputy City Mayor, has approved the commissioning of a survey of unmet demand as soon as possible.

4. Recommendation

4.1 Members are asked to note the report.

5 Financial & Legal Implications

Financial Implications

5.1 The cost of the survey will be met from licensing income.

Colin Sharpe, Deputy Director of Finance, ext 37 4081

Legal Implications

5.2 Section 37 of the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 as amended by Section 16 of the Transport Act 1985 provides that the Council is entitled to limit the number of Hackney Carriage Licences it grants provided it is satisfied there is no significant demand for the services of Hackney Carriages which is unmet.

5.3 The Council is under no legal obligation to limit the number of HC Licences it grants, however if it wishes to, it may only do so if it is satisfied that there is no significant unmet demand for Hackney Carriages. To prove this, the Local Authority will have to conduct a survey because it is the only way they can be satisfied that there is significant demand for all services of Hackney Carriages which is unmet.

Katherine Jamieson, Solicitor, Legal Services, ext 37 1452

6 Background Papers – Local Government Act 1972

None

7 Consultations

Head of Legal Services
Head of Finance

8 Report Author

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