

Appendices
A.NLES key policies
B & C.Air Quality Locations
& Mortality Rates
D.NoX Emissions
E.Proposed Policy
F.Cost Efficiencies



LICENSING COMMITTEE REPORT

Report Title	Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Emissions Policy
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AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC

Committee Meeting Date:	13th September 2016
Policy Document:	Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Emissions Policy
Directorate:	Customers & Communities

1. Purpose

1.1 To consider a Private Hire & Taxi Vehicle Emissions Policy to improve the air quality and reduce the health impact for the residents of Northampton Town

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the report be considered with a view to consulting with interested parties as to the feasibility of introducing a Hackney and Private Hire Vehicle Emissions Policy.

2.2 That consultation should take place with interested parties and residents of Northampton even though there is no legal requirement to do so, and that any objections should be considered before any changes are implemented.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background

3.1.1 On the May 2012 a report was considered by the Licensing Committee concerning age limits in respect of the taxi and private hire trade. A decision was made at that time not to implement any age limits on private hire vehicles and to remove the age restriction upon new taxi vehicles entering the trade.

This was agreed with a phased in implementation period, ending in January 2015.

- 3.1.2 Since the full implementation of the policy, the trade have voiced concerns that the standard of vehicles has fallen within the town and in particular older vehicles are now being licensed that have high emissions and creating a less environmental friendly fleet of taxi and private hire vehicles. The Hackney trade have requested that an age policy is reintroduced and have asked for this to be considered as a matter of urgency to avoid a gradual increase in the number of older vehicles entering the trade
- 3.1.3 The emission standards of the current fleet and the age of the vehicle is dealt with in separate reports, in order that each is given due consideration and is determined on its individual merits.
- 3.1.4 At Cabinet on the 8th June 2016 a draft Northampton Low Emission Strategy (NLES) was approved for public consultation and includes a strategy to improve the emissions for the private hire and taxi vehicles. A copy of the how the NLES links to other key policies is shown in **Appendix A**
- 3.1.5 The NLES documents the affects that poor air pollution can have on the impact of health for the population of Northampton. Extracts detailing the poor air quality locations and mortality rates attributable to particulate air pollution for Northamptonshire are detailed in **Appendix B & C**.
- 3.1.6 Key comments taken from the draft NLES regarding the impact that traffic adds to the pollution are detailed below.

¹“Traffic in our urban centre and areas near busy roads are affecting concentrations of air pollution that can have a significant impact on the health of the general population, with those having underlying health conditions being most at risk. There are two pollutants of greatest concern: Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) and Particulate Matter (PM), which have an adverse effect on health and are mainly a problem because of vehicle exhaust emissions, with diesel exhaust emissions contributing most to the air pollution problem”

²“Unlike the smoke and smog problems of the past, NO₂ and PM are invisible, leading to a perception that the air is “clean”. However, particulate matter is so fine that it is inhaled deep into the respiratory tract and, in the case of very fine particles and NO₂ may transfer into the blood stream. A range of health problems are attributed to exposure to high levels of nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter, the most obvious being respiratory conditions, asthma and coronary heart disease, but evidence is now also showing a strong association with cancer, strokes, low birth-weight babies and even childhood cognitive development. These health conditions impact both on quality of life and life expectancy. The Public Health Outcomes Indicator for air pollution points to as many as one in twenty deaths each year in Northampton being attributable to particulate air pollution”

¹ Northampton Low Emission Strategy 1.1.1

² Northampton Low Emission Strategy 1.1.2

3.1.7 There are approximately 850 taxis (hackney carriages and private hire vehicles) currently operating in Northampton, with the majority being diesel cars. The majority of journeys are short journeys in town and city centres and therefore contribute to overall air pollution and most taxi journeys take place within the urban centre with some high-use taxis covering in excess of 30,000 miles each year. Although they make up only a small proportion of the overall vehicle numbers in the region, taxis do emit a higher proportion of NO_x and particulate emissions in key areas. These pollutants are the ones which have a proven impact on human health so contribute disproportionately to poor urban air quality, exposing residents of Northampton to poor air quality. An extract of the NLES data showing the NO_x emissions for diesel cars is shown in **Appendix D**

3.1.8 Taxis and private hire can be part of the solution, by show-casing the potential for low-emission vehicles and “normalising” their use to the thousands of passengers they carry each year. The NLES will encourage and support taxi and private hire operators to switch to low emission alternatives and consider what policy incentives will support taxi and private hire operators to make the change.

3.1.9 Although the public consultation on the draft NLES is still ongoing, it is considered that there is no reason that the Licensing Committee cannot consider implementing an emission policy sooner, rather than later, in order to restrict a growth of more polluting taxi and private hire vehicles entering the trade. The recommendations in the NLES for the private hire and taxi trade have been taken into consideration within the proposed policy.

3.1.10 The tables below detail the number of current licensed vehicles that fall into the different emission categories, with those highlighted green falling within the proposed lower pollutant emission categories and those highlighted red falling into the higher pollutant emission categories.

CURRENT LICENSED PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES	
Emission Standard	Number of Vehicles
Electric	2
Electric/Hybrid	180
Euro 6 Diesel	0
Euro 5	116
Euro 4 Petrol	18
Adapted	N/K
No Standard Petrol	13
No Standard Diesel	380
Total Vehicles	709

CURRENT LICENSED TAXI VEHICLES	
Emission Standard	Number of Vehicles
Electric	0
Electric/Hybrid	0
Euro 6 Diesel	3
Euro 5	36
Euro 4 Petrol	0
Adapted	N/K
No Standard Diesel	111
No Standard Petrol	0
Total Number Vehicles	150

3.1.11 It is important that, any policy that is adopted now should have a long term aim, in order to avoid frequent changes that may impact upon the proprietor's financial investment into particular vehicles. However whilst it is proposed that there is a gradual implementation towards an improved fleet to allow the time for financial adjustments, the policy also needs to reflect an almost immediate improvement by preventing the new registration of higher polluting vehicles coming into Northampton.

3.1.12 It is recognised that many proprietors buy vehicles as a long term investment, particularly taxi vehicles, the investment might be over 10 years and therefore this policy aims to strike a balance between improving the emission standards, whilst still allowing time for drivers to make financial adjustments and decisions about vehicles that they may be purchasing in the near future.

3.1.13 In order to achieve a balance the proposed policy is aimed at different timescales for those vehicles being licensed for the first time in Northampton and those vehicles already licensed by this authority. It is also important to set standards that are common to all within the taxi and private hire fleet, to ensure consistency and a level playing field for all licence holders

3.1.14 In the first phase of the policy it is proposed that from the 1st January 2018 only vehicles licensed for the first time with this authority must meet one of the emission standards as shown in the proposed policy at **Appendix E**

3.1.15. In the second phase, it is proposed that from 1st January 2020, renewal and transfer applications will be subject to the same standard.

3.1.16 In the third phase it is proposed that from the 1 January 2025 all newly licenced vehicles upon first application must be electric or electric hybrid, or have emissions of an equivalent or better standard.

3.1.17 The third phase will also apply to existing vehicle licence holders upon the renewal application, in order that from the 1 January 2025 all vehicles on the fleet will be an electric/hybrid vehicle.

3.1.18 The approach taken in the proposed policy is aimed at working with the trade to encourage the take up of low emission vehicles, rather than at this present time applying the 1st Phase criteria immediately to all currently licensed vehicles. Details of how the authority intend to promote the uptake of low emission vehicles is detailed later in this report.

3.1.19 Proprietors of new vehicles from 1 January 2018 will still be able to consider purchasing poor emission vehicles, providing that the vehicle is adapted to meet the new proposed standards. Adaptions to these vehicles may include:

- Having the vehicle adapted / modified to meet the standard
- Change the fuel that is used to a cleaner alternative, such as bio diesel

3.1.20 It is also recommended that officers are given discretion to licence vehicles outside of any agreed vehicle emissions policy, in order to allow for exceptional circumstances that may arise.

3.1.21 Many other local authorities and Transport for London are adopting maximum age limits and emissions standard policies for their taxi and private hire trade, this may result in vehicles being removed from the fleet in other towns and cities and introduced into Northampton if we do not adopt a similar or better emission standard policy sooner rather than later.

3.1.22 Therefore it is proposed that Northampton adopts a Clean Air Emission Standard for Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles that is comparable to other authorities, in order that their redundant poor emission vehicles do not become licensed by this local authority. The table below shows a snapshot of other local authorities that have already adopted emission policies and shows that other authorities are also aiming to licence only electric or hybrid electric etc. for all vehicles from 2025.

Local Authority	Emission Policy Private Hire	Emission Policy Taxi	Electric/Hybrid Vehicles Only Accepted	Comments
York	Euro 5 diesel	Euro 6 Diesel, or ultra low emission		From 1/11/2016
Transport for London	Euro 4 Petrol or Euro 6 diesel by 1 st Jan 2018 for new registrations 1 st jan 2020 new registrations must be zero	1 st Jan 2018 no diesel taxis will be licensed 1 st Jan 2018 all first registrations must be zero emission capable mid 2017 – 2020 diesel taxi decommissioning scheme		

	emission capable 1 st Jan 2023 all vehicles licensed for first time must be zero emission capable			
Shropshire	Euro 4	Euro 5		All vehicles must be NCAP 5* rated wef 1/4/2015
Rotherham	Euro 5	Euro 5		Euro 6 from April 2020 – Vehicles allowed with adapations
Leicester			All new registrations from 2025 to be ULEV 8 year age limit to be introduced 2017	
Birmingham	All taxis to be Euro 6 diesel or Euro 4 petrol by 2020 or sooner	All taxis to be Euro 6 diesel or Euro 4 petrol by 2020 or sooner		Mandated Clean Air Zone
Leeds	All taxis to be Euro 6 diesel or Euro 4 petrol by 2020 or sooner	All taxis to be Euro 6 diesel or Euro 4 petrol by 2020 or sooner		Mandated Clean Air Zone
Southampton	All taxis to be Euro 6 diesel or Euro 4 petrol by 2020 or sooner	All taxis to be Euro 6 diesel or Euro 4 petrol by 2020 or sooner		Fixed penalty notices for idling (HC's) Mandated Clean Air Zone
Nottingham	All taxis to	All taxis to be		HC's 100%

	be Euro 6 diesel or Euro 4 petrol by 2020 or sooner	Euro 6 diesel or Euro 4 petrol by 2020 or sooner		electric from 2020, 25% of PHV's by 2020 Mandated Clean Air Zone
Derby	All taxis to be Euro 6 diesel or Euro 4 petrol by 2020 or sooner	All taxis to be Euro 6 diesel or Euro 4 petrol by 2020 or sooner		Mandated Clean Air Zone

3.1.23 As with other commercial operations we have a limited influence over the types of car which taxi and private hire operators buy. However, the local authority can implement an emission policy and there may be opportunities to apply for funding from the governments Office for Low Emission Vehicles and investigate offer financial incentives. Areas which could include the following;

- Work with taxi and private hire companies to apply for Government funding (for example the £20m ULEV Taxi Grant Scheme announced in 2015) to support ULEV taxis and private hire vehicles.
- Using our taxi licensing function to promote incentives to encourage the uptake of ultra-low emission taxis and private hire vehicles, for example by designating ULEV taxi ranks in high demand areas and by providing dedicated charging points with the cost of electricity for charging being subsidised..
- Demonstrating the potential fuel savings and financial benefits from operating ULEV taxis and private hire vehicles.
- Working with taxi and private hire operators to develop rapid or fast electric charge point network in suitable locations.
- Working with partner organisations to Use public sector transport contracts to promote low emission taxis. This for example may include a local authority financially competitive vehicle lease agreement scheme.

3.1.24 The local authority aim to continue to engage with hackney carriage and private hire operators to determine how they may be supported to reduce emissions from taxi and private hire fleet, including demonstrating financial benefits; supporting funding bids and considering policy incentives to promote uptake of low emission taxis.

3.1.25 There are potential fuel efficiency savings etc. that can be realised from the investment of improved eco vehicles as demonstrated in **Appendix F**

3.1.26 Whilst it is realised that these are costings are more beneficial to the private hire trade, it is anticipated that more cost efficient Hackney Carriage vehicles will be introduced to the Hackney trade in the near future. A specialist environmental consultant who has been employed to assist with the NLES and may continue to work with the licensing team and the trade to bid for funding

3.1.27 Consideration has been given to applying different licence fee levels for different types of vehicles, to offer incentives to purchase newer and more eco-friendly vehicles, similar to how the road tax duties are calculated on emissions. However, it is not clear at this present time if it will be lawful to set the licence fee level based on the emissions of the vehicle.

3.2 Issues

3.2.1 If the Licensing Committee decides to take no action now Northampton will / is likely to attract taxi and private hire vehicles that produce higher levels of pollutant from other areas that are refusing to licence such vehicles. Whilst some higher pollutant vehicles have a financial benefits to the trade, it will not improve the air quality for Northampton residents.

3.3 Choices (Options)

3.3.1 Agree to consultation on the proposed emissions policy at **Appendix A**

3.3.2 Agree to consultation on a proposed amended emissions policy

3.3.3 Agree no changes and keep the existing vehicle policy

3.3.4 Agree that insufficient information exists and postpone the consultation for further studies on emissions to be undertaken?

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

4.1.1 Northampton Hackney and Private Hire Vehicle Standards Policy 2012

4.2 Resources and Risk

4.2.1 There is likely to be an impact upon the administration of the new policy. As currently no emission policy exists, initially any new policy will involve more time for staff to verify if new vehicles presented for licensing fulfil the required criteria. However this impact can be minimised with good communication with

the trade, ensuring good practices and staff training is undertaken. There may also be an impact upon staff resources to ensure compliance with the policy and reviewing necessary data to ensure that the policy remains fit for purpose. As it is anticipated that the impact will be minimal it can be included within the current resources.

4.3 Legal

4.3.1 The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, allows the Local Authority to set conditions for the granting of taxi and private hire vehicle licences.

4.3.2 There is a legal requirement to improve and maintain air quality standards. Air Quality Directive 2008/50/EC13 sets out the obligations for Member States in terms of assessing ambient air quality and ensuring Limit Values (LV) for certain pollutants are not exceeded. The requirements of the Directive have been transposed into domestic law through the Environment Act 1995 and subordinate regulation14.15

4.4 Equality

5 There is no equality issues identified as this policy would apply equally to any proprietor of a Hackney or Private Hire vehicle in similar circumstances.

5.1 Consultees (Internal and External)

5.1.1 Julie Seddon

Legal

5.2 Other Implications

5.2.1 None identified

5. Background Papers

5.1 Northampton Town Low Emission Strategy Consultation

5.2 Northampton Borough Council Vehicle Conditions Policy

5.3.1. Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

5.4.3. European Union emission control standards.

5.4.1 Department for Transport Taxi & Private Hire Guidance 2010

5.4.2 Office for Low Emission Vehicles

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