

26 September 2018

Report title	Private Hire Vehicles (Replacement Vehicles)	
Wards affected	All	
Accountable director	Ross Cook, Place	
Originating service	Licensing Services	
Accountable employee(s)	Chris Howell	Licensing Manager
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Report to be/has been considered by	None	

Recommendation for decision:

The Licensing Committee is recommended to:

1. Approve the proposed change to the private hire vehicle replacement process.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 This report is to gain support for ending the current private hire vehicle replacement process.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Private hire vehicle proprietors sometimes need to replace their vehicles during the lifetime of the licence. This is due to the vehicle being involved in an accident or being replaced with another vehicle the proprietor has purchased.
- 2.2 The vehicle licence effectively ends when the vehicle is replaced, however due to the cost burden to the vehicle proprietor, it was agreed that the cost of the new licence being issued would be reduced pro-rotata for the time remaining on the existing licence. The agreement to reduce the fee was introduced when vehicle licence costs were over £600. However, the fee is now £207.
- 2.3 There has been a significant increase in the number of replacement vehicles and because it is effectively a paper exercise, it is very slow and labour intensive. This places a strain on the service offered due to the extra time this procedure takes.
- 2.4 Where the replacement is due to an accident and the vehicle being written off, the loss of any monies on the licence should be claimed back from the insurer.

3.0 Proposal

- 3.1 Replacement vehicles are to be treated as a new application and shall be made on the Councils online system. If a vehicle is replaced during the lifetime of the licence this vehicle licence and plate, which is no longer required, is to be surrendered by the proprietor.
- 3.2 There shall be no pro-rotata payments deducted or refunded. However, if a private hire vehicle licence has more than 6 months remaining, the new application can be fast-tracked free of charge. Fast-tracking enables a vehicle to be plated within 2 working days. The 6 months is to be a calendar month and is not negotiable.

4.0 Consultation

- 4.1 A consultation exercise has been undertaken with the private hire trade working group members which includes over 100 licensed private hire operators.
- 4.2 One response to the consultation was received from Star Cars. They support the amended procedure but not the cessation of refund payments. The full response is at Appendix 1.

4.3 Their support is welcomed, but any potential refund would be swallowed up in administrative costs due to the current low cost of application fee.

5.0 Financial implications

5.1 The fast-tracking of applications that have more than 6 months remaining may result in a loss of the £180 fee currently levied. Based on an assessment of the number of historic fast track applications processed in these circumstances, the maximum loss of income is estimated to be in the region of £7,000. [MK/19092018/K]

6.0 Legal implications

6.1 Section 70 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 relates to fees for hackney carriage and private hire vehicles.

6.2 This provides the Council may charge such fees as are sufficient in the aggregate to cover (a) inspections for grant or renewal, (b) reasonable costs of Hackney Carriage stands, (c) administrative or other costs in connection with inspecting vehicles and Hackney Carriage stands and with the control and supervision of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles. [SH12092018/L]

7.0 Equalities implications

7.1 Initial equality analysis has been carried out and determined that a full equality analysis is not required.

8.0 Environmental implications

8.1 There are no Environmental implications associated with this report.

9.0 Human resources implications

9.1 There are no Human resources implications associated with this report.

10.0 Corporate landlord implications

10.1 There are no Corporate landlord implications associated with this report.

11.0 Schedule of background papers

11.1 None