

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE

ORIGINATING SECTION: PUBLIC PROTECTION SERVICE

REPORT TO: LICENSING COMMITTEE 19th SEPT S2016

TITLE : HACKNEY CARRIAGE UNMET DEMAND SURVEY

1. PURPOSE

To update members on the recent trade consultation concerning the commissioning of a new unmet demand study.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members note the report and determine the commissioning of a further unmet demand study.

3. KEY ISSUES

As members will be aware the Council currently has a policy of restricting the number of hackney carriage vehicle licences. When licence plates are restricted in this way the local authority must conduct regular unmet demand surveys to ensure the restriction is not adversely affecting the public across a range of hours. In order to provide evidence, it is necessary to commission an independent survey to assess the level of demand. Such surveys must be conducted by companies specialising in this area of work. The Department of Transport guidance states these surveys should be undertaken every 3 years.

Following the recommendation of the Licensing Committee on 4th February to undertake a consultation with all of the hackney carriage vehicle proprietors and the private hire operators, this was undertaken in June /July (see appendix 1). There were 22 responses in total, with the responses split 50/50. 11 vehicle owners wanting a survey to be commissioned and 11 stating the council should delimit.

The issue was discussed at the Taxi Forum meeting on 20th July 2016 where trade representatives from both hackney carriage associations stated that they wished the council to commission a further unmet demand study.

4. RATIONALE

In February 2013 CTS were commissioned to undertake an unmet demand study. The report concluded that there was no significant unmet demand at that time.

Members decided to maintain the policy on restricting the fleet to 70 vehicles in accordance with the recommendation in the 2013 unmet demand survey

If the Council are minded to maintain the restriction on the fleet then a further report will need commissioning. The cost of the survey is borne by the hackney carriage trade through the licence fees.

If the Council are considering delimiting the Hackney Carriage Fleet to allow market forces determine the number, then a survey is not needed.

Quotes for undertaking the work associated with the survey have been sought from companies who undertake this work. As the surveys are quite specialised there are only a small number of companies available to submit quotes.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Should members be minded to propose a review of the current policy on restricting hackney carriage vehicle licences, it will be necessary to amend the current policy. There will be no policy implications if the council maintain the restrictions on hackney carriage vehicle licences.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The cost of the survey is borne by the hackney carriage trade through the licence fees. The Council will pay the fee initially and reclaim the cost of the survey from the fees.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Current unmet demand studies are necessary to support Council decisions when determining hackney carriage applications. It is generally agreed that the survey results remain valid for 3 years.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There are no resource implications.

9. CONSULTATIONS

As detailed in key issues a consultation was undertaken in June/July with the trade.

10 . CONTACT OFFICER

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