

**LICENSING  
COMMITTEE**

**11th March 2013**

**Private Hire Vehicle Policy - Multi Seated Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles.**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Rebecca Blake
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Steve Jordan – Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services
Wards Affected	All Wards
Ward Councillor Consulted	N/A
Non-Key Decision	

**1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

- 1.1 The report provides a recommendation to consult with the taxi trade and other agencies on the draft Private Hire Vehicle Policy (appendix 1) which incorporates adapted vehicles (Multi seated wheelchair accessible vehicles). and the recommendation from Access for Disabled People Task Group that those vehicles be allowed; subject to three vehicle tests per year, to have an extended life span of 3 years over current policy.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Committee is asked to RESOLVE that**

- 2.1 **Officers undertake a 12 week consultation with the taxi trade and other agencies on the draft Private Hire Vehicle Policy and that Officers report back to the Licensing Committee any changes.**

**3. KEY ISSUES**

**Financial Implications**

- 3.1 There are no financial implications to Redditch Borough Council. The cost of the consultation would be covered by Worcestershire Regulatory Services within current budget.

**Legal Implications**

- 3.2 There are no legal implications to the Council arising from this report however, should an applicant feel aggrieved by any decision made by a Sub Committee then the applicant may apply for a Judicial Review.

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**Service / Operational Implications**

- 3.3 On the 17<sup>th</sup> December 2012, at the Overview & Scrutiny Committee it was recommended that taxi proprietors who operate adapted vehicles should be offered a licence for an extended period of time over the standard period of time for vehicles (currently 9 years) from the date of first registration.
- 3.4 In November 2011, members gathered data on adapted vehicles which showed that there were 4 adapted Hackney Carriages and 10 adapted Private Hire vehicles, representing approximately 2% of the taxi fleet, compared to Worcester City Council (30%) and Wyre Forest District Council (50%). These figures have not changed to date.
- 3.5 The Access for Disabled People Task Group was concerned about the relatively low number of adapted vehicles currently in the taxi fleet operating in Redditch.
- 3.6 A key incentive that the group believes would encourage an increase in the number of adapted vehicles would be to offer licenses for an extended period of time for adapted vehicles. In this context, adapted vehicles would be awarded licenses to operate for a number of years longer than standard vehicles.
- 3.7 A higher age criteria could enable a taxi company to justify the significant expenditure required to invest in an adapted vehicle, which costs more than a standard vehicle as the costs involved would be offset by the additional trade that could be attracted over an extended period of time.
- 3.8 Neighbouring Authorities provide:

Licensing Authority	Wheelchair Accessible - Number of years
Bromsgrove District Council	10 years
Wychavon District Council	12 years
Malvern District Council	10 year
Worcester City Council	12 years
Wyre Forest District Council	7 years

- 3.9 Officers, having considered the feedback from Members, the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire trade and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee propose to overhaul the Private Hire Vehicle Policy to incorporate adapted vehicles (wheelchair accessible) and multi seated vehicles and the draft policy can be found at appendix 1.

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**4. RISK MANAGEMENT**

4.1 None

**5. APPENDICES**

5.1 Appendix 1 - Draft Private Hire Vehicle Policy

**AUTHOR OF REPORT**

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