

Update on the Taxi Licensing Policy

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Purpose of the Report

1. To update the Committee on the review of the Taxi Licensing Policy and wheelchair accessible vehicles.
2. Request that the Committee approves work on a Somerset Taxi Licensing Policy.

Public Interest

3. This is a report to update the Licensing Committee on the review of the Taxi Licensing Policy and to request that a recommendation to create a Somerset wide hackney carriage and private hire policy is approved. The Council currently has a Taxi Licensing Policy, this includes application requirements for hackney carriage and private hire driver applications, types of vehicles that can be licensed as well as a condition that at least 20% of the licensed hackney carriages (taxis) are wheelchair accessible. The report also contains information about the current number of licensed wheelchair accessible vehicles.

Recommendation

4. That the Licensing Committee:
 - a. Approves work to create a Somerset Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy.

Background

5. Full Council adopted the South Somerset District Council – Taxi Licensing Policy at the meeting of 6th November 2014 and agreed that it was to take effect from 1st April 2015.
6. As the Policy has been in force for 5 years it is due for review.

Taxi Licensing Policy

7. A meeting has been arranged to create a Somerset wide hackney carriage/private hire policy.
8. A legal opinion on the enforceability of a having a proportion of wheelchair accessible vehicles has been sought. The legal advice was not available at the time of writing the report. There are currently 112 licensed hackney carriage vehicles and 41 of these are wheelchair accessible (39%) (data analysed 13/03/2020). In December 2019 there were 111 licensed hackney carriages and 48 of these were wheelchair accessible (48%).
9. Full consultation will take place in relation to any changes made to the wheelchair accessible vehicle section as well as the overall Policy.

Financial Implications

10. Officer time to review Policy.
11. The above costs associated costs can be met from existing budgets.

Council Plan Implications

12. To promote a strong and growing economy with thriving urban, rural and land-based businesses
13. To enable health communities which are cohesive, sustainable and enjoy a high quality of life.

Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

14. Nothing which affects the report on “greenhouse gas emissions from local authorities own estate and operations”.

Equality and Diversity Implications

15. There are no direct equality implications arising from this report.
16. A further report regarding any proposed changes to the policy as informed by the evidence will be supported by an Equality Impact Assessment.

Privacy Impact Assessment

17. No change to processing of personal data.

Background Papers

- South Somerset District Council - Taxi Licensing Policy
 - South Somerset District Council decisions taken by South Somerset District Council 6th November 2014
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