

## Permission to Apply for a Private Hire Vehicle Licence

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## Purpose of the Report

1. The Committee is asked to consider a request from an applicant to be permitted to apply for a private hire vehicle licence contrary to paragraph 3.13 of the South Somerset District Council Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy.

## Public Interest

2. The Council has a policy which states, the Council will only issue licences to vehicles which meet the current euro standard (emissions) except where the vehicle is currently licensed and a renewal application is submitted. This report is to request that the Committee consider departing from this policy so the applicant can apply to licence this vehicle.

## Recommendation

3. That the Licensing Committee:
  - Review all the information provided and make a decision on whether to:
    - a) Refuse the application as it does not meet the criteria written in the policy or;
    - b) Accept the application on the grounds the applicant has demonstrated exceptional circumstances.

## Background

4. South Somerset District Council adopted the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy in January 2022 agreeing it was to take effect from 4 April 2022. The policy is published on our website.
5. The policy states at paragraph 3.13 that all new vehicle applications be restricted to vehicles which are compliant with the current Euro standard. The relevant sections from the policy are shown below. The emissions policy was introduced for environmental reasons to reduce the levels of harmful emissions, which include,



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nitrogen oxides and carbon monoxide. This requirement supports the Council's commitment to reduce emissions.

### **Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy Environmental Vehicle Standards**

3.13 In recognition of the Council's wider role, the Licensing Authority will require all new licensed vehicles to be compliant with the current European Emission Standard (Euro).

3.15 Specific requests for vehicles outside of this specification would have to be approved by the Licensing Committee.

6. The applicant's vehicle has not been licensed before, therefore, the requirement for the vehicle to be Euro emission standard 6 (current standard) applies. The vehicle doesn't meet the standard required for licensing.

7. The letter provided by the applicant (Appendix 1), said that he was not aware of the requirement for vehicles presented for licensing for the first time to be Euro 6 and has stated financial loss if the vehicle cannot be licensed and he sells the vehicle. The policy is available on the private hire driver, vehicle and operator licensing website pages and the requirement for new vehicles to be Euro 6 is stated on the vehicle licensing page. The applicant already holds a South Somerset District Council Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Driver's badge and a private hire vehicle license and held these licenses when changes to the policy were proposed last year, therefore, the applicant was invited to respond during the consultation period and was informed when the amended policy took effect in April of this year.

### **Financial Implications**

8. None at this stage, however if an official application is made and refused there are the possible costs of appeal to Magistrates if the license is refused.

### **Council Plan Implications**

9. None as this is one request to depart from the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy.

### **Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications**

10. Nothing which affects the report on "greenhouse gas emissions from local authorities' own estate and operations".

11. The requirement for vehicles being licensed for the first time has been set at the current Euro standard to help reduce the number of older vehicles which have higher harmful emissions. Licensing vehicles which do not meet the current Euro standard would mean there is a greater contribution to the air pollutants which have a detrimental effect on the environment.



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**Equality and Diversity Implications**

12. There are no equality implications arising from this report.

**Privacy Impact Assessment**

13. There are no privacy concerns arising from this report.

**Background Papers**

South Somerset District Council – Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy.