

REPORT OF LEAD LICENSING OFFICER
To: LICENSING COMMITTEE
Subject: TAXI POLICY AMENDMENT
Date: 18 OCTOBER 2023

Reference:

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To present to the Committee a request from the taxi liaison committee to amend the Taxi Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

The Council approved the current Taxi Policy on 22 May 2022. The Policy introduced a new standard for vehicle emissions and a timescale for the taxi trade to comply.

2. REPORT

The Licensing Team has received a request from the Taxi Liaison Committee to extend the timescales for compliance with the new standards.

The taxi trade have stated that following the impact of the covid pandemic demand for taxis has still not returned to pre-pandemic levels. The night time economy has particularly been affected and the main nightclub in the Town has not re-opened since enforced closure.

The taxi trade have stated that the cost of living crisis has also made a significant impact. The cost of new and second hand vehicles has increased substantially. There has not been sufficient progress in respect of charge-points or the availability of cost effective and suitable electric vehicles to operate in a large rural district.

The government have recently announced that the 2030 target for the end of sales of petrol and diesel cars has been extended until 2035.

The current standard is as follows:

The Authority is seeking to improve air quality and reduce emissions from the licensed fleet, standards relating to the exhaust emissions will be introduced as follows:

- *From April 2026 all vehicles licenced by TDC will be required to meet or exceed Euro 6 Emissions standards (or recognised UK equivalent).*
- *From April 2030 all vehicles being licensed for the first time must have CO2 emissions of less than 50 g/km*
- *All Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles will have a 2 year allowance on the emissions standards dates given in this policy.*
- *To promote the move to electric vehicles, the Authority will provide a discount on the standard vehicle licence fee of 20% for a period of 5 years (subject to the necessary funding provision).*

The taxi trade have asked that the Licensing Committee consider amending the policy as follows:

The Authority is seeking to improve air quality and reduce emissions from the licensed fleet, standards relating to the exhaust emissions will be introduced as follows:

- *From April 2030 all vehicles licenced by TDC for the first time will be required to meet or exceed Euro 6 Emissions standards (or recognised UK equivalent).*
- *From April 2035 all vehicles being licensed for the first time must have CO2 emissions of less than 50 g/km*
- ~~*All Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles will have a 2 year allowance on the emissions standards dates given in this policy.*~~
- *To promote the move to electric vehicles, the Authority will provide a discount on the standard vehicle licence fee of 20% for a period of 5 years (subject to the necessary funding provision).*

The Lead Licensing Officer has consulted with the Council's Sustainability and Climate Officer. The Officer is supportive of the extension to 2035 of the requirement for electric cars as this is in line with central government policy. However, she has expressed concern in respect of the Euro 6 requirement.

The Licensing Committee may wish to retain the 2026 deadline but implement this for newly licensed vehicles only. Existing vehicles can be kept until they need to be replaced. There is also the possibility of reviewing vehicle renewals on a case by case basis via a Licensing Sub-Committee.

3. IMPLICATIONS

Legal Implications

None

Financial Implications

None

Human Resources Implications

None

Sustainability Implications

None

Equality/Diversity

None

Risk Management

None

Compliance with Policies and Strategies

The revised policy would conflict with the Council's Carbon Reduction Plan so the Committee will need to balance the consequences of the decision.

Data Protection (GDPR) Implications

None

Climate Change

The revised policy would conflict with the Council's Carbon Reduction Plan so the Committee will need to balance the consequences of the decision.

Lead Member Views

Councillor Bright, Chair, has been consulted.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The Licensing Committee are asked to consider the amendment to the Taxi Policy proposed by the taxi trade and consider an appropriate course of action.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that members consider the options available and make a balanced decision.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Consultations:	Taxi Liaison Committee – 5 October 2023
Contact Officer:	Chris Parkhouse
Background Papers:	Licensing data area/files