

## **BRECKLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Report of:** Assistant Director of Community

**To:** General Purposes Committee 4<sup>th</sup> February 2015

**Author:** Josie Hoven – Licensing Officer

**Subject:** Request to amend the Executive Vehicle Policy conditions and amend the Breckland Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Procedures.

**Purpose:** The General Purposes Committee are asked to consider amendments to the current Breckland Council Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy and the Executive Private Hire Vehicle conditions.

### **Recommendation(s):**

It is recommended that the General Purposes Committee determine amendments as follows to the Breckland Council Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Procedure: to update the list of Hackney Carriage Stands to include a new taxi stand for Thetford and remove the old stand details once it ceases to operate and to allow an exemption from the window tint condition for vehicles being licensed under the Executive Private Hire Vehicle Policy.

### **1.0 BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The new Bus Station terminal in Thetford and the proposed development of the existing bus station and land at Riverside Thetford has meant that the taxi rank at the current bus station is to be removed. Permission has been sought to site a taxi rank in the new bus station in Thetford (a plan of the proposed position of the rank attached as Appendix A). If the consultation is successful the list of taxi ranks in the Breckland Council Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy would need to be updated to include the new rank and remove the old one. The proposed taxi spaces on the new site would be for four taxis, the same as is currently available on the existing bus station site at Riverside.
- 1.2 The current Taxi Licensing policy (Breckland Council Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Procedures) came into force in 2007. Since that date there have been many changes in car manufacturing and the way in which private hire vehicles are operated. As a result of this the Executive Private Hire Vehicle Policy (attached as Appendix B) was adopted in 2014.

The Executive Private Hire Vehicle Policy allows private hire operators operating an executive chauffeur service and meeting the conditions set in the policy to display a licence sticker rather than a yellow licence plate. The vehicles have to be considered as “executive” compared to the normal fleet alongside the conditions being met. Many of these “executive” vehicles are designed and manufactured with dark windows for privacy and comfort. The current Executive Private Hire Vehicle Policy does not allow for an exemption from the tinted windows condition in the Taxi Policy (attached as Appendix C). The current Taxi Policy states that at least 70% of light must pass through the glass of rear and side windows. The windscreen of any vehicle (other than stated by VOSA) must allow 75% of light to be transmitted through it.

The Members of the Appeals Committee have been advised that a request for an exemption for tinted windows for executive vehicles would be presented to the General Purposes Committee and support the request.

## 2.0 **OPTIONS**

### 2.1 The Committee may

- Grant the policy updates as requested
- Refuse to grant the policy updates as requested
- Amend the policy updates as they see fit.

## 3.0 **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)**

3.1 It is important that the committee is satisfied that if they agree to the exemption to the window tint for executive private hire vehicles the safety of the public is not put at risk.

## 4.0 **EXPECTED BENEFITS**

4.1 To ensure that public safety is protected in Breckland licensed vehicles whilst allowing the licensing officers to licence Executive Private Hire Vehicles promptly.

## 5.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

### 5.1 **Carbon Footprint / Environmental Issues**

5.1.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

### 5.2 **Constitution & Legal**

5.2.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

### 5.3 **Contracts**

5.3.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

### 5.4 **Corporate Priorities**

5.4.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

### 5.5 **Crime and Disorder**

5.5.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

### 5.6 **Equality and Diversity / Human Rights**

5.6.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

### 5.7 **Financial**

5.7.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

### 5.8 **Health & Wellbeing**

5.8.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

### 5.9 **Risk Management**

5.9.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

## 5.10 **Staffing**

5.10.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

## 5.11 **Stakeholders / Consultation / Timescales**

5.11.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

## 6.0 **WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED**

6.1 All Breckland wards.

## 7.0 **ACRONYMS**

7.1 None

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Background papers:- Breckland Council Hackney carriage and Private Hire Licensing Procedures  
<http://www.breckland.gov.uk/content/taxi-licensing>

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### **Lead Contact Officer**

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### **Officer who will be attending the Meeting**

Name and Post: Josie Hoven – Licensing Officer

**Key Decision:** No

**Exempt Decision:** No

**This report refers to a Mandatory Service.**

### **Appendices attached to this report:**

Appendix A – plan of proposed taxi rank at the new Thetford Bus Station

Appendix B – Executive Private Hire Vehicle Policy

Appendix C – Tinted window condition in the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy