

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
4 JULY 2018
IMPLEMENTATION OF MEASURES TO IMPROVE AIR QUALITY – HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE STRATEGY 2017- 2020
REPORT OF HEAD OF LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To receive information on the impact the implementation of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Strategy 2017-2020, including the age and specification policies, may have on improving air quality in the city.

2 Action required

- 2.1 To consider the information provided and use it to inform questioning and make recommendations, where appropriate.

3 Background information

- 3.1 At its meeting on 4 April 2018, the Committee decided to look at a number of measures that are being implemented to improve air quality in the city. It decided to specifically look at the impact of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Strategy 2017-2020, including the age and specification policies, at its July meeting, and the Council's plans regarding the charging infrastructure for electric vehicles and reducing the impact of the Council's own fleet at its September meeting.
- 3.2 Air pollution is recognised as a significant health issue with work flowing from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment estimating that up to 250 deaths can be linked to air pollution in the city area in 2010.
- 3.3 Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) were declared in 2002 on the grounds that annual mean nitrogen dioxide levels exceeded permissible limits in heavily trafficked parts of the City. One of these areas covers the main traffic routes in the City Centre and the second the Dunkirk area close to the Ring Road.
- 3.4 In December 2015, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) published a new Air Quality Plan. The aim of this was to reduce air pollution levels in problem areas to within EU threshold limits.
- 3.5 As a result the Government is going to mandate certain areas, including Nottingham, to implement Clean Air Zones. This means that by 2020 polluting taxi and private hire vehicles along with buses, coaches and heavy goods vehicles will be required to pay a charge to enter designated areas unless they meet stringent emission standards i.e. are classified as Ultra Low Emission.

- 3.6 In December 2017 the Council approved a Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Age and Specifications Policy, as part of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Strategy 2017-2020.
- 3.7 The Council has various statutory requirements and targets in relation to air quality which sit alongside its licensing duties to ensure that Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles are safe and of a suitable size, type, mechanical construction and design. The existing Hackney Carriage specification has not kept pace with significant advances in design and technology since it was first adopted. The current specification for the Hackney Carriage fleet is over 20 years old.
- 3.8 Whilst the Private Hire fleet is younger due to the requirement that no Private Hire vehicle is licensed after the age of 10 years from first registration, it is envisaged that with the increase in technology there is still scope for improvement.
- 3.9 The revision of the existing age policy and further amendments to vehicle specifications are necessary to not only introduce new technological advances to the aging fleets but also to support the Councils responsibility in relation to the lowering of emissions and the reduction in pollution levels from inefficient diesel cars.

4 List of attached information

- 4.1 Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Strategy 2017-2020.
- 4.2 Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Age and Specifications Policy.
- 4.3 Briefing note from Taxi Licensing.

5 Background papers, other than published works or those disclosing exempt or confidential information

- 5.1 None.

6 Published documents referred to in compiling this report

- 6.1 Regulatory and Appeals Committee agendas and minutes.

7 Wards affected

- 7.1 All.

8 Contact information

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