

CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT OF: Jas Lally
Head of Refuse and Environment

TO: Licensing Committee 28/01/2013

WARDS: All

HACKNEY CARRIAGE DEMAND SURVEY

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Cambridge City Licensing Taxi Association (CCLT Ltd) submitted a request to Cambridge City Council for a survey to be undertaken to establish whether the demand for the services of Hackney Carriages within the City of Cambridge was met by the existing fleet and if so, whether to propose that a limit should be imposed on the number of Hackney Carriages that are licensed by the Council.
- 1.2 The funding for the survey was agreed by the Executive Councillor and on 24 October 2011, the Licensing Committee resolved to:
Agree the purpose of the demand survey is to establish whether or not the current Hackney Carriage fleet meets the demand for the services of Hackney Carriages within the district and additionally to cover accessibility issues and the provision of ranks within the Council's district.
- 1.3 CTS Traffic and Transportation Ltd was appointed to conduct the survey was carried out between 29 May 2012 and 24 August 2012.
- 1.4 The results of the survey have been published by CTS Traffic and Transportation Ltd in a report that is attached as Appendix A.
- 1.5 A Member briefing took place on the 11th January 2013 where CTS Traffic and Transportation Ltd gave a presentation to Councillors. A copy of the presentation is attached as Appendix B.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are recommended:

- 2.1 To consider the report prepared by CTS Traffic & Transportation Ltd and agree that a full consultation and community engagement programme should be carried out to gather evidence as to whether:
 - i) The demand for the services of Hackney Carriages within the City of Cambridge is met by the existing fleet and whether the Council should consider imposing a limit on the number of Hackney Carriages that it licenses;
 - ii) The Council's accessibility criteria for Hackney Carriages should be revised;
- 2.2 To appoint an external consultant to carry out the consultation and community engagement within the existing budget of the Head of Refuse and Environment.
- 2.3 To request that the Head of Refuse and Environment report the findings of the consultation and community engagement programme to a future Licensing Committee.

3. LEGISLATION and POLICY

Limiting the number of Hackney Carriages that are licensed

- 3.1 Hackney Carriages are licensed under section 37 of the Town Police Clauses Act 1847. Section 16 of the Transport Act 1985 removed the Council's ability to impose a limit on the number of Hackney Carriages that it licenses, unless the Council is satisfied that there is no significant demand for the services of Hackney Carriages, within the area to which the licences would apply, which is unmet.
- 3.2 The Council may only refuse an application to license a vehicle as a Hackney Carriage on the basis of a limitation on the number of vehicles licensed, if the Council is satisfied that there is no significant unmet demand for the services of Hackney Carriages.

Accessibility Criteria for Hackney Carriages

- 3.3 It is Cambridge City Council's policy that every new Hackney Carriage that is licensed by the Council must be wheelchair accessible. Furthermore, the policy requires that when transporting wheelchair users whilst in their wheelchair, vehicle proprietors and

Private Hire operators should ensure that passengers are carried in safety and comfort and, in particular, that wheelchair passengers do not travel sideways in their wheelchair.

Provision of Taxi Ranks within the City of Cambridge

3.4 Cambridge City Council has the power to appoint stands for Hackney Carriages within its district pursuant to section 63 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. However, the consent of the Highway Authority is required prior to the appointing of any such ranks. This power has therefore not been used by the City Council and instead Cambridgeshire County Council has appointed ranks by way of Traffic Regulation Orders.

4 BACKGROUND

4.1 The Transport Act 1985 allows the Licensing Authorities to limit the number of Hackney Carriage Vehicles Licences issued provided it ensures that there is no significant unmet demand.

4.2 Until 1995 Cambridge City Council limited the issue of Hackney Carriage Licences to 120 and the vast majority of vehicles to which these licenses were issued were saloon type vehicles.

4.3 In 1995 TechEcon completed a survey at the request of Cambridge City Council to determine whether any significant demand remained unmet for the services of Hackney Carriages and on completion of this revealed that 5 new hackney carriage licenses should be issued to meet the unmet demand outlined by the survey report.

4.4 When considering the survey results Cambridge City Council decided to make conditions in respect of the new hackney carriage vehicles licences to be issued, to ensure that any vehicle issued with these new licences would be wheelchair accessible.

4.5 In 1997 a further survey was completed by Halcrow Fox to see if again there was any unmet demand in respect of hackney carriage vehicle licences issued by Cambridge City Council and again the survey found there was a significant unmet demand and recommended that a further 22 hackney carriage vehicle licences were issued. These vehicles had to be wheelchair accessible in line with the conditions set out in 1995.

4.6 A further survey was completed in 1999 by Halcrow Fox and this revealed that a further 14 licences were needed to be issued to meet the then unmet demand and, following consultation with the trade,

Cambridge City Council made the decision to de-limit the number of hackney carriage vehicle licences issued as from the 1st July 2001 with the continued condition that any new licence issued had to be a wheelchair accessible vehicle (WCA).

4.7 Table of number of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Licences issued to date

Year	HCV	% of HCV which are WCA	PHV	South Cambridgeshire Licensed Vehicles
1994	120			
1997	125		4	
1999	147	17	26	
2001	175	30	54	
2004	235	48	114	
2005	257	53	136	
2007	282	57	161	546
2009	298	59	177	555
2010	302	60	181	564
2011	303	60	182	623
2012	301	60	180	701

4.8 In 2012, at the request of CCLT Ltd, a demand survey was commissioned by Cambridge City Council to establish the demand for Hackney Carriages within the City of Cambridge; whether this was met by the existing fleet and, if so, how many Hackney Carriages are required to meet this demand. The survey report was completed in September 2012 and is attached as Appendix A.

4.9 Complaints have been received from members of the public and the licensed trade regarding the prohibition on wheelchair passengers travelling sideways in a vehicle because drivers were not always able to turn a wheelchair once in the vehicle (particularly with larger wheelchairs). This means that if passengers were carried, they contravened the Council's policy or that, otherwise, drivers refused to carry the passengers.

4.10 The Hackney Carriage Survey sought to obtain views from the licensed trade and service users on the appropriateness of the Council's accessibility criteria for Hackney Carriages.

4.11 The taxi trade within Cambridge has regularly raised the issue of the shortage of space on the taxi ranks in the city but Cambridge City Council is not able to resolve these matters unilaterally. The final part of the Hackney Carriage Survey therefore sought to establish whether the provision of Hackney Carriage ranks within the City of Cambridge is sufficient for the number of Hackney Carriages that are needed to meet the demand for Hackney Carriage services within the city. This information can be presented to the County Council for its consideration.

5. CONSULTATIONS

5.1 A limited amount of consultation was undertaken with licensed drivers, service users and other key stakeholders as part of the survey. The responses form part of the report attached as Appendix A.

5.2 This report is proposing that more detailed consultation and community engagement should be undertaken, so as to form a sound basis for decision-making.

5.3 The proposal is to engage an external consultant to carry out a full community consultation for a 12 week period with a view to reporting the findings of the consultation to a future Licensing Committee.

6. OPTIONS

6.1 The Committee may consider that the report prepared by CTS Traffic & Transportation Ltd provides sufficient evidence to determine that:

6.1.1 With regard to the demand for Hackney Carriages:

i) The demand for the services of Hackney Carriages within the City of Cambridge is met by the existing fleet and consider whether a limit should be imposed on the number of Hackney Carriages that are licensed by the Council; or

ii) A limit should not be imposed on the number of Hackney Carriages that are licensed by the Council.

6.1.2 With regard to the Council's accessibility criteria for Hackney Carriages:

i) The policy needs to be revised; or

ii) The policy does not need to be revised

6.1.3 With regard to the provision of taxi ranks within the City of Cambridge:

i) A recommendation should be made to Cambridgeshire County Council on the provision of taxi ranks; or

ii) No recommendation should be made to Cambridgeshire County Council on the provision of taxi ranks

6.2 The Committee may consider that the report prepared by CTS Traffic Transportation Ltd provides evidence to suggest that a full consultation and community engagement should be undertaken to inform Members about making significant policy decisions that meet the needs of the wider community.

7. CONCLUSIONS

7.1 The Hackney Carriage trade has paid for a survey to be undertaken to establish if there is any unmet demand for the services of Hackney Carriages within Cambridge, whether the Council's accessibility criteria are appropriate for the city and whether the provision of taxi ranks within the city is sufficient.

7.2 The results of the survey are being presented to the Committee for consideration.

7.3 Officers consider that, before a significant policy decision can be made, there should be full consultation and community engagement to ensure that any policy meets the needs of the wider community.

8. IMPLICATIONS

(a) Financial Implications

The Hackney Carriage Survey has been financed by the Hackney Carriage trade.

If members resolve for this public consultation to be carried out it would involve costs in the region of £10,000 to appoint an external consultant. The funds for this will be found from the existing budget of the Head of Refuse and Environment

(b) Staffing Implications

If members resolve for this public consultation the work involved could be absorbed within existing staff resources

(c) Equal Opportunities Implications

The survey sought to investigate the accessibility of Hackney Carriages by the service users. The outcome of the survey will enable the Council to address any shortcomings. Once the full consultation has been carried out a full Equality Impact Assessment will be carried out for each of the options

(d) Environmental Implications

There are no apparent environmental implications that result from the report.

(e) **Community Safety**

There are no apparent community safety implications that result from the report.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Hackney Carriage Survey Report prepared by CTS Traffic & Transportation.

Appendix B

CTS Traffic & Transportation Presentation to Members

BACKGROUND PAPERS: The following are the background papers that were used in the preparation of this report:

§ [Town Police Clauses Act 1847](#)

§ [Transport Act 1985](#)

§ [Cambridge City Council's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy](#)

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