

Committee:	Licensing & Environmental Health	Date:	01 February 2023
Title:	Review of Licensed Vehicle Emissions Policy		
Report Author:	Jamie Livermore, Senior Licensing & Compliance Officer, 01799 510326	Item for decision:	Yes

Summary

1. Members will be aware that the Committee adopted the current Licensed Vehicle Emissions Policy - **attached as Background Paper A** - on 20 March 2020, which subsequently came into effect on 1 April 2020, and was last revised on 10 February 2021.
2. In brief, the Policy requires vehicles licensed by Uttlesford District Council to meet or exceed a prescribed European Emission standard – which is a guide on the level of pollution produced by the vehicle. The prescribed standard differs depending on the type of fuel, whether the vehicle is wheelchair accessible (WAV), and whether the vehicle is currently licensed by the Council or is being applied for as new.
3. This report is being presented following a request by Uttlesford's licensed trade to revise the existing Policy to permit 8 passenger seat vehicles to be licensed without meeting the current Euro Emission 6 requirement.

Recommendations

4. Members are asked to determine whether the request referenced in paragraph 3 should either be accepted or rejected. If accepted, Members may consider adopting one of the following options;
 - A. All 8-passenger seat multi-person vehicles must meet or exceed Euro Emission 6 standard from 01/04/2025
 - B. All Private Hire 8-passenger seat multi-person vehicles must meet or exceed Euro Emission 6 standard from 01/04/2025.

Financial Implications

5. Any relaxation of the minimum requirements of the Policy would in practice make the availability and licensing of vehicles more affordable to the trade.

Background Papers

6. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report.
 - A. Licensed Vehicle Emissions Policy
 - B. Uttlesford Air Quality Plan 2017-22

Impact

7.

Communication/Consultation	None
Community Safety	None
Equalities	None
Health and Safety	None
Human Rights/Legal Implications	None
Sustainability	None
Ward-specific impacts	None
Workforce/Workplace	None

Situation

8. The current Licensed Vehicle Emissions Policy requires any vehicle being applied for as a new Hackney Carriage or Private Hire licence to be of a minimum Euro Emission 6 standard, with the exception of wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAV) which must conform to this standard as of 1 April 2025.
9. Whilst new vehicle licence applications, bar WAV's, must meet Euro Emission 6 standard, currently licensed vehicles must meet a minimum of Euro Emission 5 Standard. This is due to change on 1 April 2023 when any vehicle renewed from this date must meet Euro Emission 6.
10. For the assistance of the Committee, the Euro Emission Standard 6 became mandatory for new passenger vehicles registered from September 2015. It is currently the highest standard and remain so until 2025 when Euro 7 is due to be introduced.
11. The Licensing Team has been approached by licensed Operators with concerns arising from the availability of new Euro Emission 6 compliant 8-seater multi-person vehicles. We understand that a number of manufacturers, including; Vauxhall, Peugeot, Citroen and VW, are building less numbers of such vehicles due to the cost of production and the significant demand for commercial vans as opposed to passenger vehicles. In short, it is difficult to source these vehicles and those which can be sourced carry lengthy lead times.
12. It should be noted that the existing policy does not prevent the purchase of and licensing of existing Euro 6 compliant vehicles, and while this may not fit in with

the corporate image of a number of the Uttlesford licensed operators and therefore be a business decision, Licensing Officers understand that the sourcing of these vehicles is equally challenging.

13. Furthermore, members of the trade believe that, generally speaking, the current cost of living crisis is making the sustainability of a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire business challenging, and any move to temporarily reduce the level of restriction on vehicle Euro Emission standard would help to maintain fleets and cater for demand. Whilst this affects any size or type of vehicle, the vast costs of purchasing new or existing larger multi-person vehicles is more so relevant.
14. Members may wish to consider the Council’s latest Air Quality Action Plan – **attached as Background Paper B** – which reflects on the difference between Hackney Carriages which operate predominately within the district and mostly carrying out shorter journeys, and Private Hire vehicles which commonly operate outside of the district and cover longer journeys such as home to school transportation. It may therefore be an option to introduce different standards for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles, and this is suggested as **option b** at **paragraph 4**. This option would relax the requirements for 8-seater Private Hire vehicles, but maintain the standards of Hackney Carriages which operate within the district, thus continuing to promote the reduction of air pollution within Uttlesford.
15. By way of comparison, Chelmsford City Council require all new vehicles to comply with Euro 6, and all existing vehicles to comply with Euro 6 by 1 April 2024. Colchester Borough Council require all diesel fuel vehicles to comply with Euro 6 and petrol fuel vehicles to comply with Euro 4.
16. It is expected that this Policy will require further assessment by the latest of 2025 if not sooner, as further developments of the new Euro 7 standards and ultra-low emission and electric vehicles progress. It is for this reason that officers are not proposing the need to amend the existing catchment date of April 2025 at this time, regardless of the decision taken.
17. Members are asked to determine the recommendation in paragraph 4.

Risk Analysis

18.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
The Licensed trade are unable to licence the number of vehicles required to cater for the demand of the public.	Possible	2	The Committee should carefully consider whether the Policy requirements should supersede any significant potential of the public struggling to access suitable transport.

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.