

**REPORT FROM: CENTRAL AND REGENERATION SERVICES  
ENGINEERING AND SPECIAL PROJECTS MANAGER**

**TO: TAXI LICENSING COMMITTEE**

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## **AGE LIMIT OF LICENSED VEHICLES**

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To consider the detailed breakdown of licensed vehicles failing taxi tests so that a final recommendation on the age limit of licensed vehicles can be made to the Executive

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (1) That the current age limit of hackney carriages and private hire vehicles be retained.
- (2) That the current testing procedure be followed.

### **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (1) A high percentage of licensed vehicles failing pre-booked taxi tests and unannounced spot checks.
- (2) For the safety of the public vehicles must regularly be tested by the Council's appointed garages and by unannounced spot checks.

### **BACKGROUND**

1. At a meeting of the Executive on 25 March 2014 the following recommendation from this committee was submitted to the Executive:
  - “(1) That the age limit of hackney carriages and private hire vehicles be increased from nine to twelve years.
  - (2) That the current testing procedure be followed.”
2. The reason given for the recommendation was following a request from the trade due to financial pressures and lack of business.

3. The Executive did not agree to the recommendation to increase the age limit. This decision was subsequently called in and it was agreed that before taking a final decision detailed information in respect of the statistical breakdown of vehicles failing taxi tests on age and the reason(s) for failure is submitted to this committee and any proposed changes to the age limit is then submitted to the Executive.
4. The current age limit for licensed vehicles is up to seven years when first licensed and can continue to be licensed until they reach nine years of age and for wheelchair-accessible vehicles seven through to twelve years of age.
5. Taxi tests are carried out once a year for vehicles one to three years old, twice a year for vehicles over three years old and for a vehicle failing on serious faults three times a year until it has passed three consecutive tests with no faults.
6. This age limit was introduced in 2009 due to the high number of vehicles failing spot checks. The previous age limit was eight years when first licensed through to ten years.
7. Consideration to extending the age limit has been considered many times by the Taxi Licensing Committee and the Executive on numerous occasions, with the last one being in May 2012 when it was agreed that no change be made.

#### **AGE LIMITS IN EAST LANCASHIRE AUTHORITIES**

Blackburn	No age limit
Burnley	Saloons and small MPVs – no lower age limit and licence to 8 years Large MPVs and minibuses – 5 to 10 years Wheelchair accessible, large MPVs and minibuses – 5 to 12 years Hackney carriage black cabs – 3 to 12 years
Chorley	No age limit
Fylde	Up to 12 years for all vehicles
Hyndburn	7 to 10 years
Lancaster	No age limit
Preston	No age limit
Ribble Valley	No age limit
Rosendale	8 to 10 years and purpose built up to 12 years
South Ribble	Saloons 4 to 8 years and purpose built/minibuses 6 to 12 years
West Lancashire	Private hire 6 to 15 years and HC all wheelchair-accessible 4 to 18 years
Wyre	No age limit

#### **ISSUES**

8. A detailed breakdown, for the last three years, of licensed vehicles failing the taxi test and spot check is attached as Appendices 1, 2 and 3. This shows the ages of the vehicles being tested, the number of vehicles failing and the sections of the test sheets on which they have failed.
9. A taxi test sheet which is used by the Council's appointed garages is attached as Appendix 4 which outlines categories one through to six.

## CONCLUSION

10. The breakdown shows there is a high percentage of vehicles failing the pre-booked taxi test and an even higher percentage failing the unannounced spot checks which is expected given that a vehicle owner can prepare a vehicle prior to a pre-booked test.
11. The results for vehicles failing the spot checks has increased from 51 per cent in 2011 to 66 per cent in 2013, indicating that vehicles are not being maintained in between tests.
12. The results also indicate that it is the vehicles coming towards the end of the age limit that are failing the pre-booked taxi tests and spot checks.
13. Whilst it is agreed that business is not as busy in the current economic climate, the safety of public being transported in licensed vehicles must be the Council's priority.

## IMPLICATIONS

**Policy:** The current age limit for a saloon vehicle is no older than seven years when first licensed through to nine years of age. For wheelchair-accessible vehicles no older than seven years when first licensed through to twelve years of age.

**Financial:** None arising directly from the report.

**Legal:** None arising directly from the report.

**Risk Management:** None arising directly from the report.

**Health and Safety:** None arising directly from the report.

**Sustainability:** None arising directly from the report.

**Community Safety:** None arising directly from the report.

**Equality and Diversity:** None arising directly from the report.

## APPENDICES

1. Taxi tests and spot checks results for 2011.
2. Taxi tests and spot check results for 2012.
3. Taxi tests and spot check results for 2013.
4. Copy of the taxi test sheet.

## LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

## TAXI TEST AND SPOT CHECK RESULTS FOR 2011

## PRE-BOOKED TAXI TESTS

VEHICLE AGE	NO OF TESTS	NO FAILED	% FAILURE RATE	SECTIONS VEHICLES FAILING ON					
				1	2	3	4	5	6
14	5	0	-						
13	3	2	66	1		1		1	1
12	2	0	-						
11	17	5	29	1	1	4	1		4
10	36	16	44	6	3	3	6	10	13
9	50	21	42	10	10	8	8	6	9
8	95	42	44	29	19	15	16	29	32
7	152	50	33	28	25	13	19	23	31
6	93	22	24	13	9	8	5	12	14
5	61	8	13	1				4	6
4	31	3	10	2		1		2	2
3	23	0	-						
2	2	0	-						
1	-	-	-						
<1	10	0	-						
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>580</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>112</b>

## UNANNOUNCED SPOT CHECKS

VEHICLE AGE	NO OF TESTS	NO FAILED	% FAILURE RATE	SECTIONS VEHICLES FAILING ON					
				1	2	3	4	5	6
14	-	-	-						
13	-	-	-						
12	-	-	-						
11	-	-	-						
10	1	0	-		1		1		
9	11	8	73	1	7	2	2		
8	7	6	86		5		3	3	
7	20	11	55	1	5	5	5	5	
6	5	3	60		1	1		2	
5	11	2	19	1				1	
4	2	0	-						
3	2	1	50				1		
2	1	0	-						
1	-	-	-						
<1	1	0	-						
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>0</b>

## TAXI TEST AND SPOT CHECK RESULTS FOR 2012

## PRE-BOOKED TAXI TESTS

VEHICLE AGE	NO OF TESTS	NO FAILED	% FAILURE RATE	SECTIONS VEHICLES FAILING ON					
				1	2	3	4	5	6
15	1	1	100						1
14	2	1	50					1	
13	1	0	-						
12	8	5	62		1	2		2	2
11	29	14	48	7	6	3	2	4	9
10	22	11	50	6	5	5		8	8
9	60	31	52	13	10	10	6	13	20
8	142	70	49	33	22	21	15	41	39
7	145	56	39	28	19	8	13	35	25
6	85	20	23	10	4	3	2	15	11
5	82	17	21	9	1		1	8	9
4	44	11	25	3		1	2	8	1
3	13	0	-						
2	4	0	-						
1	14	4	29						
<1	4	0	-						
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>656</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>125</b>

## UNANNOUNCED SPOT CHECKS

VEHICLE AGE	NO OF TESTS	NO FAILED	% FAILURE RATE	SECTIONS VEHICLES FAILING ON					
				1	2	3	4	5	6
14									
13									
12									
11									
10	1	1	100			1			
9	3	3	100	1				1	1
8	14	11	79	2	7	2		4	1
7	16	7	44		5	1	2	2	1
6	11	6	54	1	3	4		1	1
5	7	2	28				1		2
4	3	1	33		1				
3	1	1	100		1				
2	1	0	-						
1									
<1									
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>

## TAXI TEST AND SPOT CHECK RESULTS FOR 2013

## PRE-BOOKED TAXI TESTS

VEHICLE AGE	NO OF TESTS	NO FAILED	% FAILURE RATE	SECTIONS VEHICLES FAILING ON					
				1	2	3	4	5	6
14	-	-	-						
13	9	5	56	4	3	1	2	4	5
12	23	14	61	6	7	5	3	7	13
11	15	9	60	2	3	3	-	5	7
10	21	10	48	6	4	2	3	4	6
9	72	34	47	23	15	8	9	23	22
8	119	53	44	28	13	11	5	32	27
7	110	14	13	4	3	1	2	12	10
6	138	30	22	20	10	5	1	20	15
5	80	20	25	13	3	3	1	16	9
4	27	3	11	1	-	-	-	2	1
3	6	0	-						
2	12	0	-						
1	13	3	23	2	-	1	-	3	1
<1	2	0	-						
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>647</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>116</b>

## UNANNOUNCED SPOT CHECKS

VEHICLE AGE	NO OF TESTS	NO FAILED	% FAILURE RATE	SECTIONS VEHICLES FAILING ON					
				1	2	3	4	5	6
14									
13									
12	2	2	100		1				1
11	1	1	100		1			1	
10	-	-	-						
9	6	3	50	1	2			1	
8	11	9	82	1	5	1	1	2	
7	10	5	50	1	3	1	1		1
6	5	3	60		1		2	1	
5	4	3	75		2	1	2		
4	3	1	33		1				
3	-	-	-						
2	1	1	100					1	
1	1	1	100				1		
<1	-	-	-						
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>

**BOROUGH OF PENDLE**  
**CHECK LIST FOR TESTING OF HACKNEY CARRIAGES & PRIVATE HIRE**  
**VEHICLES**

DATE/TIME OF APPOINTMENT ..... HACKNEY CARRIAGE/PRIVATE HIRE\*

MAKE/MODEL ..... REG NO ..... MILEAGE ..... YEAR

ITEMS TO BE INSPECTED	PASS	FAIL	REMARKS
<b>SECTION 1 – LIGHTING</b>			
<b>SECTION 2 – STEERING/SUSPENSION</b> Steering controls/mechanism/power Transmission Shafts Wheel Bearings Front and rear suspension Shock Absorbers			
<b>SECTION 3 – BRAKING SYSTEM</b> ABS warning systems/controls Condition and performance of service and parking brake system			
<b>SECTION 4 – TYRES AND WHEELS</b>			
<b>SECTION 5 – GENERAL ITEMS</b> Horn Exhaust system/emissions Excessive oil/fluid leaks Fuel system Registration plates & VIN number Seat belts Speedometer Driving controls Glazing and window operation Door operation/locking Fire Extinguisher/first aid kit Door signs/insurance stickers – private hire 4" white door numbers – hackney carriage Hackney carriage meter set to correct tariff 1 & 2 Hackney carriage roof sign illumination/operation No smoking stickers in each passenger window (excluding drivers)			
<b>SECTION 6 – VEHICLE STANDARDS</b>  Complies with the Council's vehicle standards			
<b>SECTION 7 – NUMBER OF PASSENGERS TO BE CARRIED</b>			