

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

TO: TAXI LICENSING COMMITTEE

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TAXI TESTING PROCEDURES

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider a request for the taxi testing procedure used by Reigate and Banstead Council to be adopted by Pendle.

RECOMMENDATION

That the current arrangements for taxi testing continue.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

To maintain control over the standard and safety of licensed vehicles.

ISSUE

1. At a meeting of this Committee in November 2011, a request was made for this Council to adopt the taxi testing procedures used by Reigate and Banstead Council.
2. Reigate's procedures are set out below:
 - An MOT certificate, which has been issued within 28 days of the vehicle being licensed, is accepted in lieu of a separate taxi test.
 - Officers carry out additional checks regarding meters, signage, bodywork, etc. This is carried out by 1.5 members of staff, by appointment only, and an additional charge is made.
 - They currently have 80 hackney carriages and approximately 700 private hire vehicles.

- The age limit for their vehicles is less than four years old at first licensing and can continue until seven years old if in an immaculate (factory showroom condition). Wheelchair accessible can continue until nine years old with the same conditions.
 - Due to staffing implications, they are about to start the process of changing to inspections at their depot. This will release one licensing officer position so as to free up time to deal with drivers and enforcement.
3. The issue of replacing the taxi test with an MOT test has previously been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel in 2007, which agreed that the testing arrangements should continue, with approved garages carrying out the tests.
 4. As from 1 January 2012, the approved garages are P & M Motors and Norfolk Street Garage, both based in Nelson.

CONCLUSION

5. The system currently in place works well and to adopt Reigate's procedures would require additional staff for which there is no funding.
6. This request has been considered previously in 2007 and 2009 and both times it has been agreed to carry on with the testing of vehicles at the appointed garages.

IMPLICATIONS

Policy: Tests are carried out once a year for vehicles less than three years old and twice a year for vehicles over three years old.

Financial: The Reigate and Banstead scheme could not be implemented within existing resources. Should members wish to pursue this option, then further work would be required to determine the operational and financial implications. This would be the subject of a further report to this Committee.

Legal: The contract was awarded to P & M Motors and Norfolk Street Garage for two years as from 1 January 2012. Three months' notice must be given by either side to terminate the contract.

Risk Management: None arising directly from the report.

Health and Safety: A suitable building to carry out additional checks on vehicles would be required.

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

None.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

2007 Scrutiny Review of Taxi Age Limit And testing Arrangements.