

HACKNEY CARRIAGES - ACCEPTANCE OF CARD PAYMENTS

<u>Report of the:</u>	Head of Housing & Environmental Services
<u>Contact:</u>	Rachel Jackson
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	No
<u>Annexes/Appendices</u> (attached):	None
<u>Other available papers</u> (not attached):	Report to the LPPC on 21 April 2016 (Agenda Item 4)

REPORT SUMMARY

Following the decision of the LPPC on 21 April 2016, the Committee is asked to consider if it should be mandatory for all Epsom & Ewell Borough Council licensed Hackney Carriages to have the facility to accept card or other cashless payments for fares.

RECOMMENDATION (S)

- (1) That the Committee agree that it is not necessary to introduce a mandatory requirement for Hackney Carriages licensed by Epsom & Ewell Borough Council to have the facility to accept payment by card or other cashless methods.

Notes

1 Implications for the Council's Key Priorities, Service Plans and Sustainable Community Strategy

- 1.1 None applicable for the purpose of the report.

2 Background

- 2.1 In April 2016, this Committee were asked to note that from October 2016 all Hackney Carriages licensed by Transport for London (TfL) would be required to have a mechanism to accept card payments for fares. The Committee will be aware that this Authority has a long standing agreement with the TfL that enables certain drivers the right to be dual licensed, and therefore to avoid confusion, the Authority accepts the tariffs set by the TfL.

- 2.2 The Committee agreed that a period of monitoring be undertaken, and a further report be brought to this meeting for determination.
- 2.3 Officers have undertaken frequent visits to the Hackney Carriage ranks in the town and engaged with drivers and the majority of the trade continue to believe that they see no reason to impose a mandatory requirement that all drivers accept cashless payments. Arguments have been that the main ranks are all situated within very close proximity to ATM cash dispensers and this has not been proven to be a burden for passengers. On what the trade label “extremely rare” occasions when passengers wish to pay by card, they would refer the passenger to the next available cab behind them on the rank, again this has not caused any known tension on the rank either between the customer and driver.
- 2.4 The Authority has not received any complaints from members of the public regarding any potential inconvenience of not all cabs being able to accept card payments.
- 2.5 The Committee may also wish to note that in April 2016, there were a total of 14 dual, and 44 Borough only licensed Hackney Carriages, this figure has since changed to 10 and 42 respectively.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 The Committee is asked to consider in light of the above, if it considers it necessary to introduce a condition requiring all Hackney Carriages to have a cashless/card payment system.

4 Financial and Manpower Implications

- 4.1 Should the Committee consider it appropriate to implement a, mandatory cashless payment system, there would be additional burden on staff resources as Licensing Officers would have to undertake compliance checks, which would have to be absorbed within existing resources.
- 4.2 **Chief Finance Officer's comments** Any additional cost burden for the Council would be in compliance checks if it was decided to implement a mandatory cashless payment system.

5 Legal Implications (including implications for matters relating to equality)

- 5.1 Section 47(1) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 empowers a Borough Council to attach to the grant of a Hackney Carriage under the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 such conditions as the Borough Council may consider reasonably necessary.
- 5.2 The powers conferred by section 47(1) would enable the Council to impose a requirement on all Epsom & Ewell licensed Hackney Carriages be fitted with a credit/debit card or other cashless payment facility if it is considered appropriate. There are no implications for matters relating to equality.

6 Sustainability Policy and Community Safety Implications

6.1 None for the purposes of this report.

7 Partnerships

7.1 None applicable.

8 Risk Assessment

8.1 None applicable.

9 Conclusion and Recommendations

9.1 That the Committee decide if they wish to recommend to Council a requirement that all Epsom & Ewell licensed Hackney Carriages are fitted with a credit/debit card payment facility in line with TfL requirements, or if they are satisfied with the current arrangement.

9.2 After taking into account the responses received from the consultation and local factors, namely; the majority of taxi journeys are under £10, and each taxi rank is located within very easy reach of an ATM cash machine, and there has never been a complaint received from taxi users regarding a lack of facility, Officers still consider that it is not necessary to implement a mandatory cashless payment facility at this time.

WARD(S) AFFECTED: (All Wards);