

LICENSING COMMITTEE (NON LICENSING ACT 2003 FUNCTIONS)

Agenda Item 25

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject:	Blue Book Amendment – Cashless Payment Facilities		
Date of Meeting:	12 March 2020		
Report of:	Interim Executive Director of Housing, Neighbourhoods and Communities		
Contact Officer:	Name: <i>Martin Seymour</i>	Tel: 29-6659	
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Wards Affected:	All		

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 Members are asked to consider whether there should be a condition that all Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles must have a functioning cashless payment facility available for passengers.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 Members agree that all Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles have a functioning cashless payment facility available for passengers to pay any fare due from 1st September 2020. Proprietors may also have a receipt printing facility should they wish to do so **or**;
- 2.2 Members do not make cashless payments compulsory at this time but encourage all proprietors/drivers to make cashless payment facilities available.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 Following a recent request by the Independent Drivers Brighton & Hove (IDBH) at a Taxi Forum meeting, the Hackney Carriage Office consulted the Trade on a proposal to make all Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles have a functioning cashless payment facility available for passengers. The current position is that cashless payment facilities are voluntary.
- 3.2 With the growth of cashless payments and the UK having the highest revenue in cashless payments in the European Union, and most of the population not carrying cash, it is reasonable to ensure that hackney carriage and private hire vehicles have facilities to offer cashless payments if required by the passenger. By carrying less cash drivers will at less risk from losing takings including theft and the public protected by there being a record of payment.

- 3.3 Transport for London (Tfl) has required taxis to have cashless payment facilities since October 2016 and Liverpool Council has recently made it mandatory for all vehicles to have cashless payment facilities available from 7th April 2020 following a 6-month lead in period.
- 3.4 There is much anecdotal evidence that passengers have to ask several drivers before they find a driver willing to take a card payment. Having cashless payments in all vehicles will make it easier for people to find a taxis in an increasingly cashless society, where it is clear that card payments are the preferred option for many people in shops, supermarkets, cafes and bars. With many visitors to the City each year who do not carry cash, it is important that we move with the times and give the customer what they want. This proposal also plays a big role in public safety because it means that late-night travellers will be able to get home safely without the worry of not having any cash on them.
- 3.5 It should be noted that cashless payment facilities are in addition to existing payments and not a replacement for existing payment methods. Operators that operate apps often have payment systems built into their systems which will continue to be the case but for others there is a small cost in purchasing a card reader and processing transactions. Any vehicles found not providing cashless payment facilities by officers may have their vehicle licence suspended, refused, or not renewed until compliance.
- 3.6 The taxi forum and drivers were consulted on the 17th October 2019 regarding this proposed change of policy with responses due by the 30th November 2019. A copy of the consultation can be found at Appendix A. 17 responses were received from the trade 12 of which were supportive of cashless payment facilities. See Appendix B. A joint response from the Sudanese Taxi Forum, United Taxi Driver Association, City Cabs, Radio Cabs, Streamline, IDB&H, Unite & GMB was submitted which included 161 objection letters from drivers. The Joint Submission can be found at appendix C. An unsigned copy of the objection letter can be found at Appendix D.

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

- 4.1. This matter was discussed at the Brighton & Hove Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Consultation Forum and a formal consultation was undertaken with the trade.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1. There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendation made in this report.

Finance Officer Consulted: Michael Bentley Date: 17.01.2020

Legal Implications:

5.2. The power to impose conditions on Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Vehicle licences derives from Sections 48 (2) and Section 47 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. Such conditions should be reasonably necessary.

Lawyer Consulted: Rebecca Sidell

Date: 16.01.2020

Equalities Implications:

5.3 Licensing authorities must ensure that a safe hackney carriage and private hire vehicle service is freely available to meet the demand across all sectors of the public, especially those vulnerable groups to whom a taxi or private hire vehicle is often the only means of completing a journey

Sustainability Implications:

5.4 None.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

5.5 Contained in the body of the report.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

6.1. Option 1

Keep existing Policy.

6.2. Option 2

Consider that all Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles have a functioning cashless payment facility available for passengers

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1. To ensure all Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles have a functioning cashless payment facility available for passengers to pay any fare due.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Consultation Document

2. Trade Responses

3. Objection Letter

