

Limit on Numbers – This limit should be kept in place

Removing the limit would act as a disincentive to investment in the Public Hire Fleet.

The job of being a Hackney Carriage driver in North East Lincolnshire is not the bonanza that many think. The sector is under increasing pressure from rising costs and the upcoming Autumn Statement and next year's Budget from the Chancellor may have a further impact.

Having a limit on numbers does encourage drivers to invest for the long term and this has been reflected in the rising standards of the vehicles that drivers have provided to the fleet in recent years.

Knowing that the proportion of work (income) available to each driver will reduce as numbers rise will act against the provision of and investment in better quality vehicles, including any new WAV's that may be required.

Mobile phones, ride hailing apps and Private Hire customer apps have all impacted the fares available to the Hackney Fleet. The practice of hailing a taxi in the street has completely disappeared (another loss of revenue source).

Then there is the spectre of Uber operating in our area adding uncertainty and further pressure on incomes.

Overcrowding on Ranks – There are too many taxis already

It can be very difficult to find a place to wait on the allocated rank spaces as things stand. More taxis will only exacerbate the problem and lead to road congestion, increased air pollution, possible conflict with other road users and unpleasant interaction with traffic wardens, police and council officials; none of which is in anybody's interest.

Waiting times on ranks has increased as footfall to ranks has dropped.

The borough is oversubscribed with Taxis and there is no need to allow the numbers to increase in an uncontrolled way.

Unmet Demand Survey

This periodical survey has served the Borough well since it was first implemented in 2010 for the reasons given above.

It has always shown that there is an adequate number of taxis to serve the needs of the areas' population.

A survey conducted now will confirm the absence of any significant unmet demand and a limit can and should be retained.

Costs

The cost of the survey has always been borne wholly or in part by the trade.

We are willing to pay for the direct costs of the survey as before and may be prepared to cover part or all the indirect costs, if these can be identified.

Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAV's)

There is now a shortage of WAV's.

This has been brought about by drivers obtaining medical exemption from carrying out wheelchair work. At the time the current policy was introduced, the trade predicted that this would happen, so it is no surprise to us that WAV numbers have fallen.

The policy of allowing medical exemptions which impact on WAV numbers should be stopped.

Manual Handling and Lifting Course

Although manual handling and lifting is covered in the current NVQ qualification that new drivers must have, the Council might like to consider introducing the need to obtain a specific **Manual Handling and Lifting Certificate**. This can be obtained by completing a short online course at minimal cost to the individual (about £30).

This would help to prevent new WAV drivers developing a bad back.

Please note that it is the sole responsibility of the driver to load and secure the wheelchair user into the vehicle, so any mention of assistance from carers is irrelevant and should be discounted.

Recommendations

- Commission an Unmet Demand Survey
- Set a new limit of 230 Hackney Carriages
- Plates 221 to 230 to be WAV's (must be EV or plug-in hybrid) giving 20% WAV's
- Mitigate against further reduction in WAV numbers through medical exemptions
- Introduce Manual Handling & Lifting Certification as a requirement for new drivers

From: NEL Hackney Carriage Association

To: Community Protection Committee

TRANSFER 'PREMIUM' ON HACKNEY CARRIAGE LICENCE PLATES

The draft report for the meeting scheduled for 06/11/2024 states that:

'licence plates command a premium, often of tens of thousands of pounds.'

This must be clarified as it is misleading to the uninitiated.

25 years ago, a plate would be transferred for about £10,000

Nowadays, a similar amount would apply, i.e. in the order of £10,000

There was period 10 to 15 years ago when the amount went up to £15,000

Therefore, there has been zero appreciation in the value of licence plates in the past 25 years.

Licence plate holders do not gain from plate transfers

The above figures only apply to non-Wheelchair Vehicle licence plates.

A Wheelchair Vehicle plate will be transferred for between £500 and £2,000.

We hope this gives a clearer understanding of the situation.

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