



**TAXI LICENSING AND APPEALS
COMMITTEE
4 October 2012**

ITEM 6

Report of the Strategic Director of
Neighbourhoods

HACKNEY CARRIAGE SINGLE COLOUR POLICY

SUMMARY

- 1.1 A request has been received from a local hackney carriage trade association for Committee to relax the requirement for all hackney carriages in Derby to be the colour yellow.

RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To maintain the current requirement relating to a 'single colour policy' for all hackney carriages licensed by the authority to be in the specified colour (AA yellow).
- 2.2 To refuse the request to relax the requirement for all hackney carriages in Derby to be the colour yellow.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 As a 'transit city' (see paragraph 4.5), the existing single colour policy confers a significant public safety benefit that otherwise would be lost if the policy is reversed.
- 3.2 There is no public interest benefit to be derived from acceding to the request, the primary purpose behind the stated request being to safeguard the economic well-being of individual licence holders.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 4.1 At a recent meeting with officers, representatives from the Derby Area Taxi Operators Association (DATOA) requested the Committee to consider the relaxation of the requirement for all hackney carriages in Derby to be the colour yellow.

4.2 The information below sets out the reasons why they felt this was necessary:

“Due to the current economic climate the necessity to re-spray a new vehicle purchased for hackney carriage work in Derby is placing undue financial strain on the drivers. Currently drivers have to produce an extra £1500 to re-spray a new vehicle on top of all the testing fees. We don’t see why it is necessary to have them all painted yellow when all hackney carriages already have the illuminated signs to distinguish them from private hire vehicles.”

4.3 At its meeting on 8 November 2000, the Council’s Policy Committee approved a ‘single colour policy’ for all hackney carriages licensed by the authority. The policy required that:

- all vehicles licensed as hackney carriages for the first time (in Derby) from 1 April 2001 must be in the specified colour (AA yellow), and
- all currently licensed hackney carriages (in Derby) must comply with the single-colour policy by 1 April 2006.

4.4 Amongst the justifications for the introduction of the single colour policy were:

- To protect public safety by ensuring that members of the public could easily identify a licensed hackney carriage. A single colour would differentiate them from hackney carriages licensed in other areas, private hire vehicles, commercial vehicles, and private vehicles
- The hackney carriage trade had requested that vehicles other than ‘London style taxis’ be approved for use as hackney carriages in Derby (before this only taxis produced by London Taxis International met the Council’s specification for hackney carriages). Two vehicles, a Peugeot and a Mercedes, were subsequently approved for licensing but this was dependent on the single-colour policy because of the need to ensure that these vehicles, which resembled both commercial and private versions of these vehicles, could be easily identified by the public
- The colour chosen (AA yellow) is highly visible and is particularly valuable to members of the public with impaired vision. The policy was supported at the time by the Disabled Peoples’ Forum which was consulted as part of the process
- As a progressive and growing city it was appropriate that Derby’s hackney carriages were easily identifiable for both local people and for visitors to the city
- Following consultation with the taxi trade it was evident that most hackney carriage proprietors supported the introduction of the policy and that their preferred colour choice was yellow

Each of these justifications remains valid today.

The introduction of the single-colour policy was widely discussed in the local media and it was clear from feedback from members of the public that they fully supported the Council’s decision.

- 4.5 Derby is a 'transit city' which means that a number of hackney carriages from different neighbouring administrative districts will come in to the City to drop customers off, and/or pass through the city as they connect from their starting location to their destination. Some of these are saloon types hackney carriage vehicles registered in neighbouring district authority areas, and others are 'London-style' cabs of varying colours, licensed by neighbouring authorities. These 'visiting' hackney carriages are not allowed to be hailed and so the provision of an illuminated roof-top sign by itself should not be considered sufficient to distinguish those hackney carriages from those licensed in Derby. The single colour policy secures that Derby licensed vehicles are easily identifiable by Derby residents. It also ensures that the Council's Enforcement Officers are able to readily identify which vehicles it is they have authority over, from other transiting vehicles. Both of these significant public safety benefits would be lost if the request is acceded to.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 Not applicable

This report has been approved by the following officers:

Legal officer Financial officer Human Resources officer Service Director(s) Other(s)	Olu Idowu John Tomlinson
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For more information contact: Background papers: List of appendices:	Michael Kay 01332 641940 e-mail michael.kay@derby.gov.uk None Appendix 1 – Implications
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IMPLICATIONS

Financial

- 1.1 None.

Legal

- 2.1 As the licensing authority, the Council is obliged to ensure that its licensing policies and related terms and conditions effectively safeguard the public interest.

Personnel

- 3.1 None.

Equalities Impact

- 4.1 The recommendations set out in this report will apply to all hackney carriage vehicles.

Health and Safety

- 5.1 None.

Carbon commitment

- 6.1 None.

Value for money

- 7.1 None.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 8.1 The proposal supports the corporate priorities to ensure the people in Derby will enjoy **good quality services that meet local needs** and **being safe and feeling safe**.