

AA1

THE CABINET

MEETING, 27TH MARCH, 2023

Councillor Cox	Leader's Portfolio
Councillor Mrs. Fairclough	Deputy Leader's Portfolio
Councillor Haslam	Highways and Transport
Councillor Dean	Stronger Communities
Councillor Muslim	Environmental Service Delivery
Councillor Hewitt	Strategic Housing and Planning
Councillor Warren	Regeneration
Councillor Morgan	Adult Social Care

Other Members in Attendance

Councillor Walsh
Councillor Radcliffe
Councillor Peel
Councillor Mrs. Thomas
Councillor Khurram (as deputy for Councillor Donaghy)
Councillor Haworth
Councillor Hayes
Councillor Sanders
Councillor Grant
Councillor Heslop

Officers

Ms. S. Johnson	Chief Executive
Ms. H. Gorman	Borough Solicitor
Mr. J. Dyson	Director of Place
Mr. G. Parker	Assistant Director Environment and Regulatory Services
Mr. T. Glennon	Borough Treasurer

AA2

Ms. P. Clyne	Licensing Manager
Mrs. V. Ridge	Democratic Services Manager

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Baines, Donaghy and Galloway.

Councillor Cox in the Chair.

26. MINUTES

The minutes of the proceedings of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 6th February, 2023 were circulated and signed as a correct record.

27. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

The minutes of the meeting of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority held on 10th February, 2023 were submitted for information.

Resolved – That the minutes be noted.

28. GREATER MANCHESTER LICENSING STANDARDS FOR TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE – STAGE 2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Director of Place submitted a report which set out the proposed Greater Manchester 'Minimum Licencing Standards' (MLS) for Vehicles (referred to as Stage 2) for taxi and private hire services and also sought approval for each of the ten proposed MLS standards, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, with local amendments.

Members were reminded that, in 2018, Greater Manchester's ten local authorities agreed to collectively develop, approve and implement a common set of Minimum Licensing Standards (MLS) for taxi and private hire services. At that time, the primary driver for this work was to ensure public safety and

AA3

protection, however, vehicle age and emissions standards, within the context of the Clean Air Plan and wider decarbonisation agendas were now also major considerations. In addition, by establishing standards around common vehicle specifications, MLS would be an important mechanism that permitted systematic improvements to taxi and private hire service across Greater Manchester (GM) and improved their visibility.

The report advised that this collaborative approach sought to establish a basic and common minimum standard in key areas of regulation, whilst allowing Districts to exceed these minimums where they considered this to be appropriate. As licensing was a local authority regulatory function, the MLS had been devised by the Greater Manchester Licensing Managers Network who work in partnership across GM to drive innovation, partnership and transformational change.

Members were informed that the MLS were divided into four distinct sections as follows:-

1. Licensed Drivers: including criminal records checks, medical examinations, local knowledge test, English language requirements, driver training including driving proficiency and common licence conditions;
2. Licensed vehicles: including vehicle emissions, vehicle ages, common vehicle colour and livery, vehicle testing, CCTV, Executive Hire and vehicle design common licence conditions;
3. Licensed private hire operators: including common licence conditions, DBS checks for operators and staff every year, fit and proper criteria for operator applications and common licence conditions; and
4. Local Authority Standards: including application deadlines and targets, GM Enforcement Policy, Licensing Fee Framework, annual councillor training requirements and Officer delegations.

Members were also reminded that a GM wide public consultation on the proposed MLS took place between 8th October and 3rd December, 2020. The consultation yielded a

AA4

total of 1,683 responses and the response breakdown for Bolton was detailed in the report.

Having regard to the consultation exercise, the following Minimum Licensing Standards for Vehicles were proposed by the Greater Manchester Licensing Managers Network for approval be each District, viz:-

Vehicle Standards	
No.	Proposed Standard
1	Hackney Carriages
2	Vehicle Age
3	Vehicle Emissions
4	Vehicle Colour
5	Vehicle Livery
6	Vehicle Testing
7	CCTV
8	Executive Hire
9	Vehicle design
10	Vehicle Licence Conditions

It was explained that the definition of each standard and extent to which this Council met the minimum requirements was detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

Members were also advised that in relation to Standard 5 (Vehicle Livery Standards), specific livery was proposed, the details of which, were attached in Appendix 2 to the report. The purpose of having a clear and consistent specification for livery was to help identify and distinguish properly licensed vehicles as either Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Vehicles.

With regards to Standard 10 (Vehicle Licence Conditions Standards), a specific set of Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence Conditions was proposed and details of these were set out in Appendix 4 to the report. The conditions covered a comprehensive set of expectations with regards to the condition of the vehicle, livery and requirements on reporting accidents and convictions.

AA5

Members were advised that the recommendations were also endorsed by the Combined Authority at their meeting on 29th October, 2021 and it was expected that all Districts would have completed Stage 2 governance by mid-January, 2022. It was stated that all Districts, with the exception of Bolton and Stockport, did approve MLS Stage 2 by this milestone. However, some Districts had since agreed adjustments to implementation dates linked to the opening of the Clean Air Taxi Fund whilst Rochdale had paused implementation and Bury had delayed implementation on part of the livery, namely the bonnet sticker. Details on the timetable for approval (including key milestones) were provided in the report.

In terms of the financial implications, members were informed that Hackney carriage and private hire services were based on a cost recovery model and the fees charged by Bolton Council for a licence reflected the cost of providing the service. Any cost associated with developing and promoting the ten standards would be reflected in the fees charged when they were re-calculated at the end of the year. However, there had been agreement that the 10 Local Authorities would contribute £5,000 from their hackney carriage and private hire budget to cover the cost of developing the MLS across the 10 Districts and the dedicated administrative support across the entire piece. It was also important to note that the costs associated with the 10 standards would be met by the applicant or licence holder and would not be reflected in Bolton Councils fees and charges.

Furthermore, the Clean Air Plan and Clean Taxi Fund (over £20 million), as detailed in the report, was expected to support Standard 3 (Vehicle Emissions), by offering grants to the industry in Greater Manchester to upgrade vehicles.

Members were also advised that on 26th February, 2022 an electronic petition was submitted to the Council from a representative of the Private Hire trade which was a formal petition in respect of the proposed Stage 2 MLS for Bolton's licensed private hire and taxi driver/vehicles and full details of this was provided in the report.

The relevant Equality Impact Assessment had been undertaken and was detailed in Appendix 5 to the report.

Resolved – (i) That each of the ten proposed Minimum Licensing Standards, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved subject to the following amendments:-

- **Standard 2 – ‘All licensed vehicles are under 5 years old at first licensing’. There will be no maximum age requirement in respect of vehicles ‘on to fleet’; and**
- **Standard 2 – ‘All licensed vehicles are under 5 years old at first licensing’. The transition period shall be extended to the 1st April, 2028 and all licensed vehicles are to be compliant by this date; and**
- **Standard 3 – ‘All licensed vehicles must comply with the current Euro standard when they are first licensed with an ambition for a zero-emission capable fleet by 2028’. The transition period is extended to the 1st April, 2028 and all licensed vehicles are to be compliant by this date; and**
- **Standard 5 – ‘Livery’. The proposed livery, attached as Appendix 2 to this report, be approved with the exception of the GM approved bonnet sticker which is not supported.**

(ii) That the proposed ‘Private Hire Vehicle Conditions’, as detailed in Appendix 3 to the report, be approved.

(iii) That the proposed ‘Hackney Carriage Vehicle Conditions’, as detailed in Appendix 4 to the report, be approved.

(iv) That the Director of Place be authorised to implement the same.

(In accordance with Article 5 of the Council’s Constitution this decision was subsequently called in by Councillor Peel for consideration by the Place Scrutiny Committee at a date to be determined)

AA7