

PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE: 15 July 2020

Report of the Head of Shared Regulatory Services

DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY FOR THE DESIGNATION OF PRESTIGE STATUS OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES

1. Purpose of Report.

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to determine whether to give delegated authority to an Operational Manager of the Shared Regulatory Services for the assessment and approval of a vehicle requesting to be granted 'prestige status'. This would allow an individual make and model of vehicle to be licenced up to 10 years old from first registration. It is anticipated that a decision on granting prestige status could be given at the same time a vehicle is measured to determine whether it is suitable for licensing. This would help minimise the delay between application for prestige status and the decision for vehicles owners.

2. Background

- 2.1 At present, the maximum age a vehicle can be licensed at first application is 25 months old and may be licensed up to 6 years old, at which point it must comply with the Council's Exceptional Use Policy in order to continue to be licensed. However, licence holders can apply for prestige status of their vehicle which enables the vehicle to be up to 10 years old at first licence.
- 2.2 The table below details the maximum age and size requirements for licensed vehicles in Cardiff:

Specification	Saloon Car	Prestige Vehicle	Purpose Built
Maximum age at first application	25 months	<10 years	<10 years
Maximum permitted age	6 years	10 years	10 years
Age at which it may be annually tested	Until 4 years	Until 4 years	10 years
Headroom	> 32 inches	> 32 inches	N/A
Rear Leg room	> 30 inches	> 30 inches	N/A
Rear Seat Depth	> 18 inches	> 18 inches	N/A
Rear Seat Width	> 54 inches	> 54 inches	N/A

- 2.3 At present, on application for prestige status, the Public Protection Committee inspects and determines whether to award the vehicle prestige status. This status then applies to all vehicles of that make and model. The licensing department maintains a list of the vehicles that have received prestige status. A full list of prestige vehicles is attached at **Appendix A**.

3. Classifying Prestige Vehicles

- 3.1 The prestige classification was introduced by the Licensing Authority to provide an incentive to proprietors to licence more distinctive and robust vehicles in the interests of passenger comfort and convenience.

- 3.2 A prestige vehicle type has not been defined other than by the fact that they are the more desirable, better-equipped models in a manufacturers' range. Committee members currently exercise their judgement, on a case-by-case basis, inspecting vehicles to determine if they are of a type suitable for classification as prestige. The Committee adopts a point scoring system to assist in assigning prestige status. Factors such as quality, appearance, interior space and layout, equipment levels and the manufacturer's reputation for quality influence the decision.

- 3.3 The majority of vehicle manufacturers produce vehicles ranging from smaller models to larger more executive models that are generally priced to reflect the cost of production. The list of vehicles approved as prestige by the Committee includes, but is not limited to, most manufacturers' superior models.

- 3.4 Considerations as to whether a vehicle meets this standard include but are not limited to cost, reputation, specification, appearance, perception and superior comfort levels. Examples of such vehicles include:

Mercedes Benz E/S Class, Audi A6/A8, BMW 5/7 Series, Tesla Model S;
High specification MPV type vehicles, such as the Mercedes Benz V Class or Volkswagen Caravelle.

This is not an exhaustive list but gives an indication as to the type of vehicle that may be accepted (higher specification executive type vehicles from other manufacturers may also be considered).

- 3.5 The classification of a vehicle type as prestige is clearly an important issue for members of the trade as it enables a vehicle to be used for a further 4 years. However, there is only the point's based system for members currently used when deciding on a vehicle being granted prestige status. It is anticipated moving forward that a decision on granting prestige status could be considered if necessary at the time for measuring the vehicles suitability for licensing. This would ensure that any such requests for prestige status could be dealt with efficiently, avoiding the requirement for Members to physically view the vehicle. This is particularly relevant as it is anticipated that an increasing number of requests for electric vehicles to be licensed will be received.

4. Achievability

4.1 This report contains no equality personnel or property implications.

5. Legal Implications

5.1 It is desirable that the delegated authority would still adopt a systematic and rational approach to the classification of prestige vehicles in order that its decisions may be legally defensible.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 A full Equality Impact Assessment has not been undertaken as there are no implications in relation to age; disability; gender and transgender; race; religion or belief and non-belief; sexual orientation on this matter.

7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 implications

7.1 An assessment has been carried out in consideration of the Cardiff Well-being Objectives. As this report does not seek to change the prestige vehicle policy, there are no implications for the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

8. Financial Implications

8.1 There are no financial implications for the Council arising directly from this report.

9. Recommendation

9.1 The Committee is asked to consider the details of the report and determine whether to delegate the responsibility for approving vehicles for prestige status to an Operational Manager of the Shared Regulatory Services.

Dave Holland
HEAD OF SHARED REGULATORY SERVICES

07 July 2020

This report has been prepared in accordance with procedures approved by Corporate Managers.

Background Papers:

None