

Title of Report:	Taxi Roof Signs
Report to be considered by:	Licensing Committee
Date of Meeting:	20 March 2013
Forward Plan Ref:	n/a

Purpose of Report: To report further to a decision taken by the Committee on the 5 December 2012

Recommended Action: To approve the content of the report

Reason for decision to be taken: Formal request from the trade

Other options considered: None

Key background documentation: Hackney Carriage Proprietor's (Vehicle) Licence Conditions

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the following Council Strategy priority:

☒ **CSP4 – Protecting the environment**

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Council Strategy priority by:

Reducing CO2 emissions from taxis

Portfolio Member Details	
Name & Telephone No.:	Councillor Hilary Cole - Tel (01635) 248542
E-mail Address:	hcole@westberks.gov.uk
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	7 March 2013

Contact Officer Details	
Name:	Brian Leahy
Job Title:	Team Manager Licensing
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Implications

Policy: The Council has had a policy for the use of taxi roof signs for many years

Financial: None

Personnel: None

Legal/Procurement:	If adopted, the condition relevant to roof signs will be changed to reflect the new design and signage.
Property:	None
Risk Management:	None
Equalities Impact Assessment:	Completed and attached as Appendix A

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report supplements a report on the same subject discussed by Members at the Licensing Committee meeting held on the 5th December 2012.
- 1.2 Whilst the subject of the report was in consultation an objection was received from two taxi proprietors,

2. Basis of Objection

- 2.1 One proprietor objected on the grounds that insufficient testing had been carried out on the new and current signs and that the fuel and emission savings were spurious, and the second objection related to the size of the dimensions of the sign being too small.
- 2.2 After taking legal advice and consulting with the Chairman of the Licensing Committee, it was decided to commission further independent testing to determine the exact scientific results for any fuel saving and reduction in CO2 emissions thus suspending the introduction of the condition. This involved a comparison between the current sign, which has been in use for some 12 years, and the sign approved by Members at the December 2012 meeting. This decision was in accord with the provisions provided for such an eventuality, in the report.

3. Equalities Impact Assessment Outcomes

- 3.1 The matter has been discussed with the taxi trade at all levels and the EIA has been completed.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 The results of the testing have now been received.

Executive Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 At the meeting on the 5th December 2012, Members resolved to approve a new roof sign with the condition being implemented after the 14th January 2013 or at the latest, on renewal of a licence. The decision was made whilst still in the consultative period with officers being reasonable assured that previous non formal consultation with the trade. Due to the objections received during consultation, it was decided not to implement the introduction of the sign until Members had had an opportunity to consider this supplementary report.
- 1.2 Officers commissioned an independent company to test the old and new signs for fuel consumption and emissions.
- 1.3 Test results have now been received and have been carried out on 2 types of vehicle which are deemed to be reasonably representative of those used in the fleet. The Ford Mondeo and the Fiat Doblo were both tested.
- 1.4 The data is both lengthy and complex. Appendix B shows a report synopsis from the consultant which demonstrates that by using the sign approved by Members at the meeting in December there is a small fuel saving over the use of the old sign. This would have a significant effect on CO2 emissions over the fleet of taxis which currently stands at 190 vehicles.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 Officers recommend that the new design roof sign approved by Members in December be confirmed, with officer discretion to be the deciding factor where slight variations in size etc occur. This would only be where there are very slight differences in the dimensions, not the design itself. The design of the sign would be consistent with that shown to Members at the December meeting.
- 2.2 Officers would anticipate acceptable variations to be no more than ½ inch on any aspect of the signs length or width. This would allow vehicle owners to shop around for the best value sign. Further discussions with vehicle owners have indicated that there is strong support for the introduction of the new sign regardless of the outcome of the tests.
- 2.3 If Members decide to confirm the decision made previously, the condition would come into force from the 25th March 2013. This would allow for those who wish to display the new sign immediately, to do so, with all others having to comply no later than the next renewal of licence date.

Appendices

Appendix A – Equality Impact Assessment – Stage 1

Appendix B – Report on fuel consumption of taxi roof signs by TRL

Consultees

Local Stakeholders: Taxi Trade Liaison meeting members and trade, in general.

Officers Consulted: Paul Anstey Joint Service Delivery Manager, Julia O'Brien Principal Officer Licensing, Phil Newton Senior Energy Efficiency Officer. Full consultation with Hackney Carriage Proprietor's Licence holders.

Trade Union: None

APPENDIX A

Equality Impact Assessment – Stage One

Name of item being assessed:	Taxi Roof Signs
Version and release date of item (if applicable):	V1 12 th November 2012
Owner of item being assessed:	Steve Broughton
Name of assessor:	Brian Leahy
Date of assessment:	12 th November 2012

1. What are the main aims of the item?
To request a change in design for taxi roof signs.

2. Note which groups may be affected by the item, consider how they may be affected and what sources of information have been used to determine this. (Please demonstrate consideration of all strands – age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation)		
Group Affected	What might be the effect?	Information to support this.
None	None	None
Further comments relating to the item:		
None		

3. Result (please tick by clicking on relevant box)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	No Relevance - This does not need to undergo a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment

For items requiring a Stage 2 equality impact assessment, begin the planning of this now, referring to the equality impact assessment guidance and Stage 2 template.

4. Identify next steps as appropriate:	
Stage Two not required:	

Name: Brian Leahy

Date: 12 November 2012