

REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

REGULATORY COMMITTEE – 28 OCTOBER 2013

THE UNDERTAKING OF A SURVEY TO REVIEW THE CURRENT POLICY IN RELATION TO QUANTITY CONTROL OF HACKNEY CARRIAGES

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1** To request Members to approve the undertaking of a survey in order to determine whether it is in the interest of the travelling public in Sunderland to continue to restrict hackney carriage numbers and, if so, to determine whether there is any unmet demand for hackney carriages in the city.

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF DECISION

- 2.1** The Committee is recommended to approve the undertaking of a survey to determine the following issues:-
- (a) Is it in the interest of the travelling public in Sunderland for the Council to continue to restrict hackney carriage numbers; and
 - (b) Is there any unmet demand for hackney carriages in the city?

3.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 3.1** The Council has a policy of limiting the number of hackney carriages licensed. By virtue of Section 16 of the Transport Act 1985 local authorities may refuse an application for a hackney carriage licence in order to limit the number of hackney carriages if, but only if, they are satisfied there is no significant unmet demand for hackney carriage services in their area.
- 3.2** In order to determine this issue local authorities may utilise the services of independent consultants to undertake surveys of demand. The last survey in the City was undertaken in 2011.
- 3.3** The Department of Transport's Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing: Best Practice Guidance document advises all Councils that restrict hackney carriage numbers to review such restrictions, by undertaking a survey, every three years. If it is determined that such restrictions are in the public interest the survey must determine if there is any unmet demand for hackney carriages in the City.
- 3.4** So in order to follow this advice, a further survey must be undertaken in 2014.

4.0 CURRENT POSITION

- 4.1** The number of hackney carriages currently licensed by the Council is 349. This number reflects the recommendations of the consultant who undertook a survey in 2011.

5.0 REASONS FOR THE DECISION

- 5.1** To enable the Council to follow the advice issued by the Government in relation to the restricting of the number of hackney carriages.

6.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 6.1** None submitted.

7.0 RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1** None submitted.

8.0 GLOSSARY

- 8.1** No acronyms or abbreviations have been used in this report.

9.0 APPENDICES

- 9.1** None.

10.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1** Department for Transport Best Practice Guidance dated March 2010.