

**TO: LICENSING AND SAFETY COMMITTEE  
11 OCTOBER 2012**

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**AGE OF VEHICLE AT FIRST REGISTRATION  
Director of Environment, Culture and Communities**

**1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 This report seeks agreement from the Committee to vary the existing condition relating to the maximum age for the first licensing of a vehicle such that a “prestige car” can be first licensed up to 9 years subject to the vehicle meeting other requirements.

**2 RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 That the Committee agrees that a “prestige car” can be first licensed if it is less than 9 years old as long as it meets the “exceptional condition” requirement and has travelled less than 150,000 miles.**

**3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 Prestige vehicles used exclusively for corporate work are often very expensive, are high quality vehicles with high specification safety features. It is believed that the first licensing of these vehicles beyond 5 years will not impact adversely upon the safety of those travelling within the vehicle.

**4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1 The maximum age restriction for first licensing a vehicle could be removed for all vehicles. It is officer opinion that this would remove a safety element that the Committee considered important when first introducing this requirement.

**5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 5.1 It is currently a condition on the first issue of a private hire vehicle licence that the vehicle must be less than 5 years old from date of first registration (Section 10.1 Guidance Notes). This condition together with the maximum age was introduced to ensure that modern vehicles with the latest innovations were brought onto the fleet on a regular basis but this takes no account of the type and quality of the vehicle presented. There is a rapid pace of innovation within the car industry in terms of safety, handling and emissions and it was felt right and proper that users of licensed vehicles should benefit from that innovation in terms of their safety and environment.
- 5.2 ‘Prestige Vehicles’ (see Appendix G of Guidance Notes) are frequently expensive top of the range, luxury cars from manufacturers such as BMW, Lexus, Jaguar and Audi. These vehicles incorporate the latest safety and emission technology which is often not incorporated into the cheaper mass production cars for many years. There is therefore a distinct difference in the safety, comfort and environmental characteristics of ‘prestige cars’ in comparison to normal mass production vehicles.

- 5.3 Officers have been approached on a number of occasions particularly by vehicle owners working solely within the corporate only market who wish to first licence a 'prestige car' which is older than 5 years old. The vehicles presented are generally in exceptional condition and often have low mileages. Due to the present licence conditions officers have to refuse their application. Officers are of the opinion that such vehicles do not present an increased risk to passengers because they are over 5 years old in comparison to mass produced vehicles which are less than 5 years old. These vehicles when they reach 10 years old are required to meet the exceptional condition and abnormally low mileage requirements (see Appendix G of Guidance notes) and they often continue to be licensed beyond 12 years old as they frequently meet the exceptional condition and abnormally low mileage criteria.

## **6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS**

### Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 The legal implications are identified within the report

### Borough Treasurer

- 6.2 There are no financial implications within this report

### Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 There are no equality issues raised within the report.

### Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 There are no risk management issues identified.

## **7 CONSULTATION**

### Principal Groups Consulted

- 7.1 None.

### Method of Consultation

- 7.2 None.

### Representations Received

- 7.3 None.

### Background Papers

Guidance notes & conditions for hackney carriage & private hire owners, operators & drivers

### Contact for further information

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### Doc Ref

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