

Taxis in Winchester

A WinACC response to the city council Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Review January 2017

WinACC is grateful for the opportunity to respond to this review. The initial section focusses on the specific proposals in the redrafting of the Statement of Licensing Policy. Numbers refer to the numbers of the paragraphs to which the comments refer. The second section looks more generally at the strategic role of taxis in transport provision in Winchester

The Redrafted Statement

Hackney Carriages (Taxis)

Air quality and global warming means newer vehicles

- 5.1 This policy needs to be redrafted to ensure taxi policy makes a substantial contribution to air quality and global warming emissions reduction.

We would like the current age limit for first time vehicles to remain at three years old, or to be reduced to one year old. We do not agree with the proposal to accept vehicles up to five years old. Emissions standards have been made more rigorous, but it has only recently been realised that 'real life' performance is often up to ten times worse than laboratory tests indicate. Only new vehicles are likely to benefit from these revelations. If vehicles that are five years old are acceptable, Winchester will begin to benefit from this recent understanding only by the year 2020. Winchester cannot wait for this; it is the deadline for complying with air quality standards.

Smaller vehicles

- 5.3 We welcome the reduction in minimum size of the accommodation. The current rules have led to unnecessarily large vehicles and unnecessary emissions.

Smaller engines and more specifications

- 5.10 We would like the minimum engine size criterion to be reduced. This would reflect the revised rules on seating provision. A schedule of specifications needs to be provided to include:
- An immediate prohibition of diesel engines
 - Positive encouragement for electric or other zero tailpipe technologies
 - A maximum for engine power the equivalent of 2000cc (the use of cc should be superseded by more technology neutral standards to encourage zero tailpipe technologies)
 - A lower minimum for engine power to encourage mini electric taxis, and taxi bikes
 - Maxima for harmful emissions using Next Green Car type methodology for CO₂ NO_x and PM10 per km.

Private Hire Vehicles

Air quality and global warming means newer vehicles

- 6.1 This policy needs to be redrafted to ensure taxi policy makes a substantial contribution to air quality and global warming emissions reduction.

We would like the current age limit for first time to be reduced to one year old. We do not agree with the proposal to continue to accept vehicles up to five years old, nor with the removal of the requirement for renewal. The redraft mentions 'on renewal' without saying when that will be necessary.

Emissions standards have been made more rigorous, but it has only recently been realised that 'real life' performance is often up to ten times worse than laboratory tests indicate. Only new vehicles are likely to benefit from these revelations. If vehicles that are five years old are acceptable, Winchester will begin to benefit from the recent understanding only by 2020. Winchester cannot wait for this; it is the deadline for complying with air quality standards. This paper needs to be redrafted to ensure taxi policy makes a substantial contribution to air quality and global warming emissions reduction.

Smaller engines and more specifications

- 6.3 We would like the minimum engine size criterion to be reduced and a maximum size specified. A schedule of specifications urgently needs to be provided to include:

- An immediate prohibition of diesel engines
- Positive encouragement for electric or other zero tailpipe technologies
- A maximum for engine power the equivalent of 2000cc (the use of cc should be superseded by more technology neutral standards to encourage zero tailpipe technologies)
- A lower minimum for engine power to encourage mini electric vehicles, and private hire bikes
- Maxima for harmful emissions using Next Green Car type methodology for CO₂ NO_x and PM10 per km.

All Vehicles

Idling must be prohibited

- 10.1 To reduce tailpipe emissions and global warming it should be a penalisable offense to leave a vehicle engine running while stationary, or loading. Currently it is not healthy to stand outside the station in the evening.

Strategic role of taxis in transport provision

Inevitable High Carbon Footprint and Emissions

In our view hackney carriages and private hire cars should be used sparingly as a last resort to provide only for unmet transport need. The long lines of taxis each evening at the station should not be necessary, and the council should actively seek to work with bus operators to reduce demand.

Not only are emissions per passenger kilometre extremely high, but most operations involve a return journey for the vehicle, thereby doubling emissions for each journey made by the passenger(s). We would welcome

the development of 'journey matching technology' to link outgoing and incoming journeys, but In Winchester this is unlikely to make much difference because most journeys will be difficult to match.

Integral part of a Movement Strategy

An environmental movement strategy gives priority to (in this order):

- Pedestrians
- Cyclists
- Public transport
- Taxis and hire cars
- Private cars.

We would like to see this policy revised again in a year in the light of the coming movement strategy. Taxis and hire cars should not be allowed to reduce the viability of public transport, nor interfere with cycling and pedestrian movement, and their role needs to be defined more precisely, and facilities designed specifically, to ensure this does not happen.