

23 January 2019

Report of	Assistant Director (Communities)	Author	Jon Ruder ☎ 282840
Title	Hackney Carriage Unmet Demand Survey		
Wards affected	Not applicable		

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The report details the unmet demand survey for hackney carriage vehicles, produced by LVSA on behalf of the Council, and recommends the adoption of its recommendations.

2. Recommended Decisions

- 2.1 That the current number of hackney carriage vehicle licences be maintained at 131.
- 2.2 That, as opportunities are presented by redevelopment and change within the Borough, consideration be given to the creation of new taxi ranks in appropriate locations.
- 2.3 A further unmet demand survey be carried out in the autumn of 2021.

3. Reason for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 As a Local Authority which regulates the number of hackney carriage vehicle licences that it grants in accordance with Section 16 of the Transport Act 1985, the Council is required by the Department of Transport to regularly review its policy of limiting the numbers of hackney carriages and to make such a review public.
- 3.2 The recognised method of undertaking such a review is for the Council to commission an independent unmet demand survey of the number of hackney carriage vehicles that it licences. An interval of three years is commonly regarded by the Department of Transport as the maximum reasonable period between each survey being carried out.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 There is no alternative option. The survey fulfils the requirements of Section 16 of the Transport Act 1985 and addresses the questions raised in the Department of Transport 2010 Best Practice Guidance.

5. Supporting Information

- 5.1 In order to comply with the requirements of the current guidance issued by the Department of Transport and also to determine whether or not there is any significant latent unmet demand for the services of hackney carriage vehicles in Colchester, an unmet demand survey has been carried out by LVSA. The survey was carried out at the end of 2018 and the full methodology of the survey and results are attached at Appendix
- 5.2 Analysis of rank observation data together with public and stakeholder consultation indicates that there is no unmet demand which is significant and therefore no need to increase the number of Hackney Carriage licences to cater for existing levels of demand. It is therefore recommended that the current number of hackney carriage vehicle licenses be maintained at 131.
- 5.3 The survey recommends that consideration should be given to the creation of new taxi ranks but in doing so regard should be given to the nearby land uses to ensure that they generate demand at a sufficient level to support such ranks. North Hill is suggested as a possible location for a new rank. Improvements to the Head Street rank in terms of enforcement and use by the trade are also suggested. It is recommended that these matters should be considered as the opportunities presented by redevelopment and changes within the Borough occur.
- 5.4 The anticipated useful life of the current survey is three years and a further survey in the autumn of 2021 is suggested in line with current Government guidance.

6. Strategic Plan References

- 6.1 The Policy aims to contribute to the Council's vision of the Borough by ensuring that the licensed trade plays a significant role not only in the Borough's transport strategy but also in helping to promote Colchester and thereby enhancing our reputation as a destination and encouraging further investment.

7. Consultation

- 7.1 Extensive consultation was undertaken by LVSA as part of the hackney carriage unmet demand survey which included passenger and users of taxi services, on street public attitude and written questionnaires, mobility groups, transportation groups and transportation providers, the leisure industry, disability groups, business organisations, hospitals, tourism and visitor services and also the taxi and private hire trades.

8. Publicity Considerations

- 8.1 Primarily it will be the hackney carriage trade that could be the most affected by any decision taken in relation to the unmet demand survey and the recommendations that it contains.

9. Financial Implications

- 9.1 The cost of carrying out the hackney carriage unmet demand survey will be met from within the existing hackney carriage budgets and hackney carriage vehicle licence fee structure.
- 9.2 Any decisions taken by the Licensing Committee in relation to the survey and the recommendations it contains, could be challenged through the Magistrates' or Crown Courts by any interested party or by way of seeking a judicial review of the survey and/or

the Council's policy to regulate the numbers of hackney carriage vehicle licences that it issues.

- 9.3 The costs of any challenge brought against the unmet demand survey or the Council's policy of regulating the number of hackney carriage vehicle licences that it issues, could be awarded against the Council in the event of any challenge in Court or judicial review being successfully mounted against it.

10. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights, Community Safety, Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications

- 10.1 All relevant implications will have been considered by the survey provider LVSA when undertaking the mechanics of the survey itself and also when preparing the final draft of the survey report and the recommendations that it contains.
- 10.2 In relation to hackney carriage vehicle licences specifically, a licence is to be regarded as the property of the licence holder, but their right to the use of that property must also be balanced against any other public interest in this matter.