

**19 January 2022**

<b>Report of</b>	<b>Assistant Director (Communities)</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Jon Ruder</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Hackney Carriage Unmet Demand Survey</b>		<b>☎ 282840</b>
<b>Wards affected</b>	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 the provision of better signage for the Head Street rank be investigated.
- 2.3 A further unmet demand survey be carried out in the autumn of 2024.

## **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 Option**

- 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. Detailed Considerations**

- 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 2021 and the full methodology of the survey and results are attached at Appendix 1.
- 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 notes that the existing Head Street rank is well placed to function as a suitable rank for passengers travelling to destinations north of the town centre and recommends that improved signage at this rank is implemented, to encourage intending passengers to use this rank. The survey indicates that there is support for the use of this rank from both the trade and from the public. The Council is in the process of investigating this matter together with improved signage on the High Street rank to assist in the management of queues at busy times.**
- 5.4 **The Council has worked with the trade, wardens, and the Parking Partnership to ensure the Head Street rank was kept free of private cars and to encourage its use by the public and the trade.**
- 5.5 The anticipated useful life of the current survey is three years and a further survey in the autumn of 2024 is suggested in line with current Government guidance.

## **6. Strategic Plan Reference**

- 6.1 The survey forms part of the Council's policy and statutory requirements in relation to the licensing of hackney carriage vehicles in the Borough. The Council's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy has targets in place to support the Council's strategic priority of responding to the climate emergency.

## **7. Consultation and Publicity Considerations**

- 7.1 Extensive consultation was undertaken by LVSA as part of the hackney carriage unmet demand survey, details of this are set out in the survey. No further publicity is considered necessary at this time.

## **8. Financial Implications**

- 8.1 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.
- 8.2 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. 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.

**9. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights, Community Safety & Public Health, Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications**

- 9.1 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.
- 9.2 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.

**10. Environmental and Sustainability Implications**

- 10.1 There are no known environmental and sustainability implications in relation to the results of this survey.