

# WIRRAL COUNCIL

## LICENSING PANEL

14 FEBRUARY 2014

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE LICENCE – MERCEDES VITO – APPLICATION TO LICENSE TWO FRONT SEAT PASSENGERS</b>
<b>WARD/S AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT</b>
<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	<b>NO</b>

### 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider an application to license a Mercedes Vito as a private hire vehicle to carry eight passengers, two passengers being carried in the front.

### 2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 2.1 Council policy, which is reflected in the Private Hire Vehicle Licence Conditions, allows non-standard vehicles (ie MPV's, people carriers) to be licensed as private hire vehicles subject to the standard Private Hire Vehicle Licence Conditions and the following additional conditions:-
- (1) There must only be the number of passengers seats fitted in the vehicle for which the vehicle is licensed.
  - (2) Two fire extinguishers must be kept in the vehicle, one to be in the front and the other in the rear.
  - (3) Vehicles to be fitted (in addition to the front drivers and passengers doors) with at least two side/rear opening doors and all doors must be easily accessible to all passengers and capable of being opened from inside.
  - (4) A step (which must be approved by the Council) must be available for use at all times.
  - (5) A sign on the rear of the seats in the vehicle must be displayed indicating there is a step available for use and indicating exit doors.
  - (6) Seat belts shall be provided for every passenger the vehicle is licensed by this Council to carry.
- 2.2 The standard private hire vehicle conditions specify that the proprietor shall only allow one person to be carried in the front of the vehicle apart from the driver.

- 2.3 Members have previously considered applications to license a Volkswagen Caravelle, a Volkswagen Transporter, a Ford Tourneo and a Renault Trafic to carry two front seat passengers. These applications were granted by the Licensing Health and Safety and General Purposes Committee.
- 2.4 Members have also previously considered two applications to license a Mercedes Vito to carry two front seat passengers. These applications were refused.
- 2.5 In determining previous applications Members considered the following:
- Whether there was sufficient space for two adult passengers to sit comfortably and safely in the front of the vehicle
  - Access to passenger seatbelts
  - Whether passengers could exit the vehicle safely in an emergency
  - The position of the gearstick/handbrake, and the effect this would have on the comfort of the middle passenger.
- 2.6 A vehicle will be available for inspection at the meeting. Members should note that the specification of the vehicle has changed since the original applications in 2001.

### **3.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

- 3.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

### **4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1 There is no provision for other options to be considered.

### **5.0 CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 This is not a matter which requires consultation.

### **6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS**

- 6.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report.

### **7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS**

- 7.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report.

## **8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 A decision of this Panel can be subject to appeal.

## **9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 Has the potential impact of the proposal been reviewed with regard to equality?

9.2 No because there is no relevance to equality.

## **10.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 There are no specific carbon reduction implications arising from this report.

## **11.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are community safety implications arising out of this report due to the safety aspects of private hire vehicles.

## **12.0 RECOMMENDATION**

12.1 That the Panel consider whether or not to license a Mercedes Vito to carry eight passengers, two passengers being carried in the front.

## **13.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION**

13.1 It is a delegated function of this Panel to determine applications for Private Hire Vehicle Licences in circumstances when an officer does not have such delegated powers.

**REPORT AUTHOR:** **Margaret Calvert**  
Licensing Team Leader  
telephone: 0151 691 8476  
email: [margaretcalvert@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:margaretcalvert@wirral.gov.uk)