

# WIRRAL COUNCIL

## LICENSING HEALTH AND SAFETY AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

21 MARCH 2011

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>APPLICATION TO ALLOW A FIXED STEP TO BE FITTED TO HACKNEY CARRIAGE VEHICLES</b>
<b>WARDS AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF LAW HR AND ASSET MANAGEMENT</b>
<b>RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:</b>	<b>COUNCILLOR SUE TAYLOR – COMMITTEE CHAIR</b>
<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	<b>NO</b>

### 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is for Members to consider an amendment to the conditions of fitness for Hackney Carriage Vehicles to permit a fixed step to be fitted to Hackney Carriage Vehicles where the top tread for the entrance exceeds 38cm in height from ground level.

### 2.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

- 2.1 That Members consider whether to amend the conditions of fitness for Hackney Carriage Vehicles to permit a fixed step to be fitted as an alternative to the moveable intermediate step where the entrance to a Hackney Carriage Vehicle exceeds 38cm.

### 3.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 3.1 It is a requirement for this Committee to determine any change in policy.

### 4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 The current Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence conditions of fitness state that where the top tread for the entrance to a Hackney Carriage exceeds 38cm then a moveable intermediate step must be provided at each entrance into the passenger compartment. The intermediate step must be encased beneath the vehicle. When not in use and whenever the vehicle is in motion the step must not extend outwards beyond the vertical line of the bodywork. The step must be covered with a suitable non-slip surface with the edges of the step highlighted yellow. The purpose of the condition is to assist access into and egress out of the vehicle.

4.2 The following vehicles are currently required to comply with this condition:

- Cab Direct Peugeot E7
- Patons Fiat TW200
- JAG VW Eurocab
- JAG Mercedes T1 Eurocab

These vehicles all have a top tread for the entrance to the vehicle exceeding 38cm and they are currently fitted with moveable intermediate steps.

4.3 It has been reported to the Licensing Service by a Proprietor who owns a number of these vehicles and also undertakes repairs on such vehicles, that a number of these type of vehicles have required new steps to be fitted due to damage and failure of the retraction mechanism. It is reported that this is a common problem due to dirt clogging the mechanism and damage from driving over speed bumps. The availability of replacement steps is limited and delays are experienced in making repairs and getting the vehicle back on the road.

4.4 The Proprietor has also reported that a fixed step can be fitted to these vehicles to allow the same assistance with access and egress. Members are therefore requested to consider an amendment to the conditions of fitness as referred to in paragraph 2.1.

4.5 A fixed step, when fitted, does not protrude any further out from the bodyline than the wing mirrors of the vehicle. The position of the fixed step does not interfere with the ramps when they are deployed.

4.6 There are over 90 licensed Hackney Carriage Vehicles which are required to be fitted with intermediate steps. This represents more than 30% of the fleet.

4.7 A vehicle will be available for Members to inspect prior to the start of the meeting and photographs of 2 examples of fixed steps fitted to vehicles are attached to this report.

## **5.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

5.1 A change in policy should not provide additional risk to passengers.

## **6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

6.1 The Committee can elect not to change the current policy.

## **7.0 CONSULTATION**

7.1 Other neighbouring local authorities who license this type of vehicle do not have specific requirements regarding the type of step fitted to them.

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

8.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report.

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

9.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report.

## **10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 A decision of this Committee may be subject to legal challenge.

## **11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report.

## **12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report.

## **13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

13.1 There are no planning implications arising from this report.

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

## **REFERENCE MATERIAL**

Photographs of vehicle fitted with a fixed step