

TO: REGULATORY COMMITTEE – 6 JUNE 2006

SUBJECT: WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE HACKNEY CARRIAGES

FROM: MEMBERS' SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider the list of approved wheelchair accessible vehicles.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In 1999 the then Licensing Sub-Committee agreed to remove the limit on the number of taxi licenses issued for Warwick, Leamington and Kenilworth.

The Sub-Committee did, however, introduce a requirement that all additional licences would only be granted in respect of new vehicles which have facilities for carrying a disabled person in a wheelchair within the vehicle. It was agreed that vehicles complying with the London conditions of fitness (i.e. FX4's TX1's and Metro Crabs be accepted as suitable vehicles plus other vehicles, whether converted or not, which have been approved by the Council.

- 2.2 The Sub-Committee delegated authority to officers in consultation with the Council of Disabled People to approve types of vehicles for licensing. In cases where the officers used their delegated authority to refuse to accept the type of vehicle an appeal was allowed to the Sub-Committee.

- 2.3 When applications for approval of a type of vehicle have been received a representative of the Council for Disabled has been asked to inspect the vehicle and report on whether he considers it suitable for the carrying of wheelchairs. Following this procedure a number of vehicles have now been approved.(see list attached)

- 2.4 One type of vehicle approved, the Fiat Doblo, has the loading facility for wheelchairs at the rear of the vehicle. The representative from the Council of Disabled People did not raise this as an issue. However, concern has recently been expressed in various quarters as to the safety of rear loading wheelchair accessible vehicles. A copy of a letter from National Taxis Association, with enclosures, which explains the concerns, is attached.

- 2.5 Fears have also been expressed about the use of the Vauxhall Vivaro as the main passenger access is on the offside of the vehicle, causing danger when entering and exiting the vehicle.

3. DECISIONS REQUIRED

- 3.1 Members are asked to consider whether they would wish to amend the list of wheelchair accessible vehicles approved as suitable for licensing as hackney carriages by excluding all rear loading vehicles.

- 3.2 Members are also asked to consider whether they wish to consider removing the Vauxhall Vivaro from the approved list.
- 3.3 As mentioned above there are nineteen Fiat Doblos and one Vauxhall Vivaro already licensed and it is not intended that they should be removed immediately but, when they are replaced, they should be replaced by a vehicle which is not rear or off side loading.

Colin Tubbs
Licensing and Committee Services Manager

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL

Areas and the District Affected:	All
Key Decision:	Yes
Included in Forward Plan:	No

For further information about this report please contact:

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