

# RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO LICENSING COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No.

meeting date: TUESDAY, 6 SEPTEMBER 2011  
 title: AUDIT OF THE VEHICLES LICENCE BY THE COUNCIL TO ESTABLISH  
 LEVEL OF PROVISION FOR DISABLED USERS  
 submitted by: DIANE RICE – HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES  
 principal author: DIANE RICE – HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

## 1 PURPOSE

1.1 To inform Committee about the level of provision for disabled users in the existing licensed hackney and private hire fleet, and to ask Committee to consider revising the current practice relating to ELAP seats.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Council Ambitions – }
  - Community Objectives – }
  - Corporate Priorities – }
  - Other Considerations – }
- The Council seeks to ensure its services promote accessibility for all groups, whilst recognising the effect on licence holders of the costs associated with vehicle adaptations.

## 2 BACKGROUND

2.1 On the 14 June 2011, Committee considered a report relating to licensing additional hackney vehicles to provide a wheelchair and scooter accessible vehicle. The proposed licence holder's business model sought to provide a service transporting customers from nursing homes to hospital to fulfil hospital appointments etc.

2.3 Committee decided not to review the current policy of retaining the restriction on the number of hackney vehicle licences until Committee had established exactly what provision existed for disabled people within the fleet of licensed vehicles.

2.4 Since Committee considered this matter, a request has been received to review whether or not the use of ELAP seats in hackney vehicles is the most cost effective way to ensure access for users of wheelchairs. ELAP seats cost in the region of £980.00 plus VAT.

2.5 The ELAP seat is an adaption to a vehicle, details are attached (document 1) and is for use in vehicles where the wheelchair user is not able to remain in their wheelchair, instead the seat makes transfer easier.

2.6 Since the decision to require ELAP seats in some vehicles was taken, additional hackney vehicles have been licensed which are fully wheelchair accessible.

2.7 It has been suggested by licence holders that the use of a transfer board, similar to that used in the NHS would be as efficient as an ELAP seat.

2.8 Attached at document 2 is a summary of the current provision for disabled users.

### 3 ISSUES

- 3.1 Members should be aware that the Equality Act 2010 has provisions which relate to taxi and private hire vehicles. The Act will allow Authorities to compile a list of wheelchair accessible vehicles, additional obligations will be imposed on the drivers of vehicles on the list. A brief summary of the relevant provisions is attached as document 3.
- 3.2 Department for Transport Guidance suggests that Councils should begin to consider how they will decide which vehicles should be on a list of accessible vehicles.
- 3.3 Members are therefore asked to note the information provided at document 2, and to consider whether or not they wish to make any changes in relation to the ELAP seat system. Members should take into account that the current provision is relatively modest in the context of the number of vehicles the Council licenses, namely 179 private hire and 47 hackney carriage.
- 3.4 The use of a transfer board as an alternative to the ELAP seat, whilst appropriate in an NHS context, would be difficult for a local authority to administer due to the requirement for training eg in manual handling etc.

### 4 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:
  - Resources – N/A
  - Technical, Environmental and Legal – N/A.
  - Political – N/A.
  - Reputation – N/A.

### 5 **RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE**

- 5.1 Note the current level of provision for disabled service users.
- 5.2 Retain the current requirement for ELAP seats to be reviewed when the Council considers compiling a list for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010.
- 5.3 Reject the use of transfer boards.

### HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

### BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 1 None.

For further information please ask for Diane Rice, extension 4418.