

Air Quality and the Euro Emissions Standard

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1. Summary

- 1.1 European Directive 2008/50/EC on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe sets out the maximum concentrations of key pollutants in ambient air. The Directive places legal obligations on the UK to improve air quality and reduce health impacts.
- 1.2 In response the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) have introduced a new programme of Clean Air Zones (CAZ) across the UK.
- 1.3 DEFRA have set minimum emissions standards for vehicles to be allowed entry to Clean Air Zones.
- 1.4 In the Midlands Birmingham, Leeds, Southampton, Nottingham and Derby have been all identified as CAZ's. The aim of a CAZ is to discourage the most polluting diesel vehicles - old polluting buses, coaches, taxis and lorries from entering the town/city centres.
- 1.5 Birmingham City Council are currently consulting with their Hackney Carriage proprietors, Private Hire owners, drivers and operators in relation to the replacement of vehicles in order to meet the European Directive and the requirements of the CAZ.
- 1.6 This report provides details on what Shropshire Council's Licensing Service have already done to help improve the air quality in Shropshire.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That members note the position as set out in the report.

REPORT

3. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 3.1 This is an information report giving Members information on Clean Air Zones, Air Quality and the Euro Emission requirements in regard to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Trade and therefore a risk assessment and opportunities appraisal have not been carried out.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

5. Background

- 5.1 European Directive 2008/50/EC on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe sets out the maximum concentrations of key pollutants in ambient air, i.e. the air that we all breathe.
- 5.2 This European Directive requires the UK to reduce concentrations of nitrogen dioxide below 40 µg/m³.
- 5.3 The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) are committed to improving the UK's air quality, reducing health impacts, and fulfilling the legal obligations as set out by the European Directive. As part of their commitment they undertook a forty day public consultation (September 2015) on the draft plans of how they were going to achieve compliance with the European Directive.
- 5.4 In response to the consultation DEFRA have, in order to meet their goals, set out a plan of introducing a new programme of CAZ's across the UK.
- 5.5 By 2020 the most polluting diesel vehicles - old polluting buses, coaches, taxis and lorries - will be discouraged from entering the centres of Birmingham, Leeds, Southampton, Nottingham and Derby. These Zones will cover old diesel buses, coaches, taxis and lorries, newer vehicles that meet the latest emission standards, and private cars, will be unaffected.
- 5.6 The Zones will reduce the pollution in city centres and encourage the replacement of old polluting vehicles with modern cleaner vehicles.
- 5.7 Local Authorities are responding to the requirements and introducing additional constraints on the types of vehicles that can be used in the city centres, some bus and utility companies have already introduced modern cleaner vehicles to their fleets.

5.8 Shropshire Council's Environmental Health Team monitor the air quality across Shropshire and as part of this work have identified four 'Hotspots' within the administrative area that do not meet the requirements of the European Directive;

- Castlegates/Caste Foregates around the train station in Shrewsbury
- Raven Meadows/Smithfield Road junction Shrewsbury
- Whitburn Street/Pound Street junction in Bridgnorth
- Mill Street/St Johns Street junction Bridgnorth

In addition, the junction where Mill Street meets High Street in Wem is closely monitored because there is concern that this may also become a 'Hotspot' without any measures being put in place to improve the air quality in that area.

5.9 In 2014, as part of the ongoing commitment to improve the air quality in Shropshire, Shropshire Council's Environmental Health Team made a request for additional conditions to be put onto the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles being licenced by the authority to reduce air pollution.

5.10 After a lengthy consultation process with trade representatives on the 1 April 2015 Shropshire Council introduced additional conditions to the licensing of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles in Shropshire. These conditions were part of the revised Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy 2015 to 2019 (the Policy) and included a phasing in period for cleaner vehicles. Proprietors of vehicles were required to prove that the European Emissions Standard of the vehicles they wanted to licence met the standard outlined in the Policy.

5.11 The chart below shows how many vehicles were licenced and the European Emissions Standard since the new conditions were introduced and the shift from lower rated emission standards to higher rated emission standards.

Euro Emissions Standard Rating (Euro)	Total number of vehicles licenced between 1 April 2015 and the 31 March 2016	Total number of vehicles licenced between 1 April 2016 and the 10 March 2017
Euro 3	280	22
Euro 4	437	371
Euro 5	315	465
Euro 6	46	91

(The higher the European Emissions Rating the cleaner the vehicle is.)

- 5.12 From 1 April 2016 the Licensing Service will no longer renew a vehicle licence for a vehicle with a Euro 3 rating and from 1 April 2018 no Euro 4 rated vehicles will be renewed. All new vehicles must be a Euro 5 Rating before they will be licenced as a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Vehicle.
- 5.13 Since the policy came into force the phasing in process has resulted in a shift towards higher European Emission Standard Rated vehicles and the standard of vehicles will continue to improve over the next two years.
- 5.14 It is unlikely that the CAZ's being introduced across the Midlands will have implications for Shropshire Council i.e. older vehicles applying to be licenced from the CAZ areas, because the current Policy prohibits older more polluting vehicles from being licenced.

6. Additional Information

- 6.1 Shropshire Council's Licensing Service will continue to work closely with the Environmental Health Service and Trade representatives to improve the air quality in our County.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

Shropshire Council Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy 2015 to 2019

DEFRA Improving air quality in the UK - *Tackling nitrogen dioxide in our towns and cities, December 2015*

DEFRA Air Quality Plan for the achievement of EU air quality limit value for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) in West Midlands Urban Area (UK0002), December 2015

Birmingham City Council's *Proposals to introduce Emission Standards for Taxi and Private Hire Vehicles*, <https://www.birminghambeheard.org.uk/place/proposals-to-introduce-emission-standards-for-taxi/>

Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)

Councillor Malcolm Price – Portfolio Holder for Regulatory Services, Housing and Commissioning (Central)

Local Member

Cover all areas of Shropshire

Appendices

None