

**Committee:** LICENSING & REGULATORY

**Date of Meeting:** 18<sup>th</sup> January 2010

**Title of Report:** HACKNEY CARRIAGE & PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE COMPLIANCE TESTING – APPOINTMENT OF ADDITIONAL FACILITY

**Report of:** Mr Peter Moore  
Environmental Protection  
Director

**Contact Officer:** Mr John Thompson  
(Telephone No.) 0151 934 2842

This report contains	Yes	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b> information/		✓
<b>EXEMPT</b> information by virtue of paragraph(s)..... of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, 1972		✓
Is the decision on this report <b>DELEGATED?</b>	✓	

### **Purpose of Report**

To advise the Licensing & Regulatory Committee of the request from the licensed trades for the appointment of an additional testing facility.

### **Recommendation(s)**

1. That the Committee approve the request from the Joint Trades Consultation Group for the appointment of an additional Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Compliance Testing Facility, and;
2. That the Committee requests a further report following a review the Council's testing scheme and facilities to be carried out during 2010/11.

### **Corporate Objective Monitoring**

<u>Corporate Objective</u>		<u>Positive Impact</u>	<u>Neutral Impact</u>	<u>Negative Impact</u>
1.	Creating a Learning Community		✓	
2.	Creating Safe Communities	✓		
3.	Jobs and Prosperity	✓		
4.	Improving Health and Well-Being		✓	
5.	Environmental Sustainability		✓	
6.	Creating Inclusive Communities	✓		
7.	Improving the Quality of Council Services and Strengthening local Democracy	✓		
8.	Children and Young People		✓	

### **Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications as a result of this report.

<b><u>CAPITAL EXPENDITURE</u></b>	<b>2009/ 2010 £</b>	<b>2010/ 2011 £</b>	<b>2011/ 2012 £</b>	<b>2012/ 2013 £</b>
Gross Increase in Capital Expenditure	-	-	-	-
Funded by:	-	-	-	-
Sefton Capital Resources	-	-	-	-
Specific Capital Resources	-	-	-	-
<b><u>REVENUE IMPLICATIONS</u></b>				
Gross Increase in Revenue Expenditure	-	-	-	-
Funded by:	-	-	-	-
Sefton funded Resources	-	-	-	-
Funded from External Resources	-	-	-	-
Does the External Funding have an expiry date? N	When?			
How will the service be funded post expiry?				

### **Departments consulted in the preparation of this Report**

N/A

### **List of background papers relied upon in the preparation of this Report**

N/A

## **Background**

1. In respect of hackney carriage & private hire vehicle licensing, the Council is currently authorised by the DfT Vehicle Inspectorate Agency to test vehicles under a Compliance Testing Scheme in accordance with the Motor Vehicles (Test) Regulations 1981 (as amended). The current certification was obtained on 8<sup>th</sup> July 1998.
2. The authorisation requires Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council to only appoint testing facilities which are Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA) approved "MOT" facilities. In addition the Local Government (Misc. Provisions) Act 1976 requires the Council to only appoint facilities that are based within the political boundary as the Council can only require vehicles to be tested at facilities which are within the area of the Council.
3. The use of this compliance scheme means that, in addition to the standard "MOT" test, the Council can specify additional items which it considers necessary to safeguard the best interests of the travelling public of Sefton.
4. In 1998 the Council licensed a total of 1673 hackney carriages and private hire vehicles. At that time, there were three testing facilities, Virginia Street, Southport, Hilderley's, Bootle and Beach Garage, Seaforth. For reasons of consistency of testing, the Council then determined that only in the event that undue delays in obtaining a test appointment were encountered would other facilities be required.
5. In 2002 the Council's own facility at Pine Grove in Bootle was added to the list of appointed facilities making a total of four stations. However since that facility moved to Hawthorne Road in 2006 the "MOT" authorisation has lapsed. Thus the original three facilities have dealt with all of Sefton Council's motor vehicle compliance tests since 2006.
6. There are currently approximately 2910 licensed private hire and hackney carriage vehicles which are licensed by Sefton. This is an increase of 74% over the earlier 1998 figure of 1673 vehicles. The burden of coping with this increased demand for compliance testing has fallen on the existing testing facilities.
7. Consequently the trade is reporting there are now delays on up to four days in putting vehicles through a test which is leading to some commercial disadvantage. There have also been longstanding requests from Stakeholders requesting another facility in the North of the Borough

## **Application From Tyre Express Tyre Services Ltd**

8. At the Trade Stakeholder Meeting, 8th December 2009, the group discussed the current facilities for the testing of hackney carriage and private hire vehicles. The discussion focused on the current inadequacy of the current testing provisions and highlighted the delays now being experienced by

vehicle licence applicants. It was suggested that a three to four day delay was now becoming common.

9. One of the Trade Stakeholders present, Mr Johnson, the owner of Tyre Express Garages Services Ltd, 22 Berry Street, Bootle L20 8AT indicated that he owned an authorised "MOT" testing facility and wished to apply to test vehicles prior to licensing.
10. The group also considered whether any limitation should be placed on Tyre Express Garages Services Ltd in respect of being able to test Mr Johnson's own fleet of hackney carriage / private hire vehicles. The Group agreed that should Tyre Express Garages Services Ltd submit an application for test station status, the Group would support the application without condition because of the immediate need for more testing capacity.

### **Issues For Consideration**

11. On the 9<sup>th</sup> December 2009 Tyre Express Garages Services Ltd submitted an application to act as a Council testing facility as attached at Annex A to this report.
12. The appointment of the Council's testing facilities has historically been reserved to the Licensing & Regulatory Committee and the determination of the Committee is requested.