

Greater Manchester Combined Authority

Date: 30 July 2021

Subject: GM Minimum Licensing Standards for Taxi and Private Hire

Report of: Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester and Portfolio Lead for Transport; and
Eamonn Boylan , Chief Executive of the GMCA and GM Lead on Minimum Licensing Standards for Taxi and Private Hire

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To update on the progress made on the development of a set of minimum licensing standards relating to taxi and private hire in Greater Manchester. To outline the recommendations officers will be making for Stage 1 of the standard proposals.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The GMCA is requested to:

1. Note the progress of the Minimum Licensing Standards workstream and endorse the proposals at Stage 1 of the recommendations.

CONTACT OFFICERS:

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BOLTON
BURY

MANCHESTER
OLDHAM

ROCHDALE
SALFORD

STOCKPORT
TAMESIDE

TRAFFORD
WIGAN

Equalities Impact, Carbon and Sustainability Assessment:

Results of the [Sustainability Decision Support Tool](#) to be included here:

Legal Considerations:

No legal considerations for GMCA. Legal considerations rest with local authorities.

Financial Consequences – Revenue:

Each of the ten Licensing Authorities have agreed to contribute £5000 towards the development of Minimum Licensing Standards

Financial Consequences – Capital:

N/A

Number of attachments to the report:

Two

Comments/recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Committee

N/A

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

- 25 June 2021, report to GMCA: MLS Update
- 31 July 2020, report to GMCA: MLS Consultation
- 29 May 2020, report to GMCA: Clean Air Plan Update

TRACKING/PROCESS		
Does this report relate to a major strategic decision, as set out in the GMCA Constitution		No
EXEMPTION FROM CALL IN		
Are there any aspects in this report which means it should be considered to be exempt from call in by the relevant Scrutiny Committee on the grounds of urgency?		n/a
GM Transport Committee	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	
n/a	n/a	

1. INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In 2018, Greater Manchester's ten local authorities agreed to collectively develop, approve and implement a common set of minimum licensing standards (MLS) for taxi and private hire services. At that time, the primary driver for this work was to ensure public safety and protection, but vehicle age and emission standards in the context of the Clean Air and the decarbonisation agendas are now also major considerations.
- 1.2 The collaborative approach that the MLS represents will ultimately help achieve the vision of a strong, professional and healthy taxi and private hire sector providing safe and high quality services to residents and visitors across the whole of Greater Manchester. This vision sees Taxis and Private Hire as a crucial part of the overall transport offer, that can consistently deliver safe and high-quality services for the public. The proposed MLS, together with funding from the GM Clean Air Plan, will help deliver improved safety, customer focus, higher environmental standards and accessibility.
- 1.3 The GMCA received a progress report on 25 June 2021, summarising the public consultation outcomes and seeking endorsement of an approach to consider the final standards recommendations in two stages; Stage 1 (Drivers, Operators and Local Authorities) and Stage 2 (Vehicles). An outline programme of key project milestones was endorsed as follows:

Activity	Target Date
MLS recommendations report (Stage 1) to Combined Authority seeking endorsement of final recommendations	30 July 2021
MLS recommendations report (Stage 1) taken through District Governance	Sept – Oct 2021
MLS recommendations report (Stage 2) to Combined Authority – seeking endorsement of final recommendations	24 Sept 2021
MLS recommendations report (Stage 2) taken through District Governance	Oct 2021 onwards

- 1.4 This report provides a progress update and final recommendations at Stage 1.

2 STAGE 1 – RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Appended to this report at **Appendix 1** is the template to be used by districts, which sets out the final recommendations for the 17 standards included at Stage 1 for Drivers, Operators and Local Authorities.
- 2.2 The recommendations were finalised following GM Licensing Managers considering all the consultation feedback both at a GM and district level and further to additional discussions held during consultation summary briefings presented at district level to Members and trade representatives at the end of June 2021. Additional detailed discussions also took place with Members of District Licensing Committees to help officers finalise a set of recommended Standards at Stage 1.
- 2.3 Of the 17 Standards in total proposed at Stage 1; all but 4 of the standards are recommended to be confirmed as proposed. The following 4 standards have been amended in response to the consultation and further discussions as follows:

Standard Proposal	Amendment
Driver Proposed Standard 1: DBS checks and certificates of good conduct	The DBS certificate and checks requirement remains as proposed, but it was considered that there are serious concerns with regards to the lengthy bureaucratic processes involved and the ability to determine the veracity of such documents using current systems. As the burden of the substantial costs of such a requirement would be reflected in the licence fees and the wider risk this presented, it is proposed at this stage that we reflect and engage with government further on this requirement.
Driver Proposed Standard 5: Driving Proficiency Tests (for new drivers only)	It is proposed that this standard is introduced as an outcome where applicable for licence reviews, and that it is introduced both for new and existing drivers in 2022 (in acknowledgement of the significant financial impacts on the trade during the pandemic - allowing time to adjust and recover and reducing the risk of licence holders going elsewhere)
Driver Proposed Standard 7: Dress Code	The appended Dress Code was tweaked in response to the consultation and Members to provide further clarity on what would be deemed acceptable.
Local Authority Proposed Standard 6: Excellence in Licensing Award	Not to be introduced at this time to allow time to reflect on how the scheme would be operated and funded, with further direction from Members.

3 DISTRICT GOVERNANCE

- 3.1 The Stage 1 reports will be formally presented to Committees responsible for Taxi and Private Hire licensing following the Summer recess.

4 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The vision to produce a collaborative set of minimum standards has evolved over a lengthy process of engagement, proposals and following an extensive public consultation. This report outlines the final recommendations for the 17 Standards for Drivers, Operators and Local Authorities at Stage 1 of the project and seeks the collective support of the Combined Authorities.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 Note the progress of the Minimum Licensing Standards workstream and endorse the proposals at Stage 1 of the recommendations.