

GM CLEAN AIR PLAN: CONSULTATION

Report of the Corporate Director of Place and Regeneration

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To share consultation information for the statutory consultation on the Clean Air Plan (CAP) and the taxi and private hire common minimum licensing standards (MLS) asking Members to encourage people to participate in the consultation process.

2 THE GM CLEAN AIR PLAN

- 2.1 Government has instructed many local authorities across the UK to take quick action to reduce harmful Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) levels following the Secretary of State issuing a direction under the Environment Act 1995 to undertake feasibility studies to identify measures for reducing NO₂ concentrations to within legal limit values in the “shortest possible time”. In Greater Manchester, the 10 local authorities, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM), collectively referred to as “Greater Manchester” or “GM”, are working together to develop a Clean Air Plan to tackle NO₂ Exceedances at the Roadside, referred to as GM CAP.
- 2.2 The OBC outlining these proposals and the supporting evidence was submitted to Government at the end of March 2019. Ministerial feedback was received in July 2019 along with a further direction under the Environment Act 1995 requiring all ten of the Greater Manchester local authorities to take steps to implement a plan to deliver compliance with the requirement to meet legal limits for nitrogen dioxide in the shortest possible time.
- 2.3 The 2019 Ministerial Direction and accompanying letter included the requirement for the GM authorities to implement a charging Clean Air Zone Class C.
- 2.4 The zone will be enforced using cameras a [Stockport map](#) of the ANPR and CAZ signs in your area is available as part of the consultation.

3 MINIMUM LICENSING STANDARDS

- 3.1 In 2018, GM’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 that cover the whole of GM. At that time, the primary driver for this work was to improve public safety, but vehicle age and emission standards in the context of the Clean Air agenda are now also a major consideration.
- 3.2 Officers have been working to develop policy proposals that can meet these needs as far as possible, which is why parallel consultation is happening for MLS and GM CAP, and that charging, funding, and licensing policy positions are coherent and joined-up.

3.3 There are four areas of focus for the MLS:

- 3.3.1 Drivers: Criminal Records Checks; Medical Examinations; Local knowledge test; English language; Driver training; Driving Proficiency; Dress Code.
- 3.3.2 Vehicles: Vehicle emissions (diesel Euro 6 and above, petrol Euro 4 and above); Vehicle ages (under 5 years at first licensing, no older than 10 years); Vehicle colour (Black for Taxi/Hackney, white for PHV); Vehicle livery (common GM design with Council logo incorporated); Accessibility (all Taxis to be wheelchair accessible); Vehicle testing; CCTV; Executive Hire; Vehicle design and licensing requirements.
- 3.3.3 Operators: Private Hire Operators / staff will require basic criminal record check; more stringent requirements in relation to booking records; Operators to take more responsibility for the behaviour of their drivers.
- 3.3.4 Local Authorities: Applications may be submitted up to 8 weeks in advance of licence expiry; Once determined, licence issued within 5 working days; Agree to develop common enforcement approach and a framework to which licensing fees are set; and, Councillors to receive training before they hear applications.

4 THE CONSULTATION

- 4.1 We are now consulting on key elements of the proposals regarding the CAP, including the proposed Clean Air Zone boundary, daily charges for non-compliant vehicles, discounts and exemptions, and support funding. At the same time we are consulting on the proposed minimum licensing standards. The consultation is taking place between Thursday 8 October and 23:59hrs Thursday 3 December 2020.
- 4.2 Due to government guidance around social distancing, and with public gatherings being limited, the majority of the consultation will be online at cleanairgm.com and gmtaxistandards.com.
- 4.3 For the CAP and MLS there will be a virtual engagement space which is open 24 hours a day during the consultation. The virtual engagement area includes all the consultation materials and we'll be running online drop-in sessions where you can ask questions about the proposals from your computer, tablet or mobile phone. TfGM will also be running live chat drop in sessions where anyone can ask questions about the proposals.
- 4.4 As part of the consultation the attached presentation is being shared at the Area Committees of the Council.

5 RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 The Forum is recommended to note the report and presentation.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

There are none.

Anyone wishing to inspect the above background papers or requiring further information should contact Sue Stevenson on telephone number Tel: 0161-474-4351 or alternatively email sue.stevenson@stockport.gov.uk