

## **Spare Wheel and Tyre Inflation Kits**

### **Purpose**

- 1.1 Committee have previously considered changes to the Council's Specification for Private Hire Vehicles in relation to spare wheel provision. This was last done during 2015.
- 1.2 As part of these changes, Committee considered the alternative use of 'space saver' tyres, 'run flat' tyres and 'temporary seal & inflation gas products'.
- 1.3 This reports sets out information in relation to a further review of the use of these alternative options.

### **Recommendation(s)**

- 2.1 To amend Paragraph 8 of the Council's Specification for Private Hire Vehicles to read:

8.1 The spare wheel and tyre must be identical to the size of the four road wheels unless the vehicle's original manufacturer's specification includes provision of a space saver tyre or a temporary seal & inflation gas product kit. The use of any space saver wheel or temporary seal & inflation gas product must be for emergency purposes only. A space saver wheel or tyre containing a temporary seal & inflation gas product must be replaced with a full size wheel or new tyre at the earliest opportunity and in any event, immediately after the fare-paying journey, if any, during which it was fitted to the vehicle has been completed. Whilst the space saver wheel or temporary seal & inflation gas product is in use, the driver must observe the vehicle manufacturer's recommendations in relation to its usage, in particular those relating to speed and loading. The vehicle proprietor and/or operator, as appropriate, must ensure that the driver is made aware of these recommendations.

8.2 For the avoidance of doubt, use of a space saver wheel or temporary seal & inflation gas product on a vehicle is solely at the discretion of the driver and the condition in paragraph 8.1 is not to be regarded as an instruction by the Council, to the driver, to use a space saver wheel or temporary seal & inflation gas product.

## **Reason(s)**

- 3.1 To ensure the Council remains satisfied that the scope of the specifications maintains the right balance between the statutory obligation to safeguard the public interest and the legitimate interference with licence holders' discretion.

## **Supporting information**

- 4.1 All licensed private hire vehicles must comply with the Council's Specification for Private Hire Vehicles.

- 4.2 Paragraph 8 of the Specification relates to the provision of a spare wheel.

Currently the provision makes reference to the spare wheel being identical to the size of the four road wheels unless the vehicle's original manufacturer's specification includes provision of a space saver.

It sets out that the use of any space saver wheel must be for emergency purposes only and must be replaced with a full size wheel at the earliest opportunity and in any event, immediately after the fare-paying journey, if any, during which it was fitted to the vehicle has been completed.

Whilst the space saver wheel is in use, the driver must observe the vehicle manufacturer's recommendations in relation to its usage, in particular those relating to speed and loading. The vehicle proprietor and/or operator, as appropriate, must ensure that the driver is aware of these recommendations.

For the avoidance of doubt, the use of a space saver wheel on a vehicle is solely at the discretion of the driver and the condition is not to be regarded as an instruction by the Council, to the driver, to use a space saver wheel.

- 4.3 Increasingly, more and more new vehicles no longer include the provision of a full size spare tyre as standard, although some manufacturers will offer it as an optional extra. Some new vehicles are still supplied with a space saver tyre but many new vehicles now are being supplied as standard with a gas product that is designed to temporarily seal and inflate a tyre.
- 4.4 This is even more apparent in electric/hybrid vehicles as the space usually set aside in the boot for a spare wheel is now typically being used for battery storage.
- 4.5 Members will be aware of the Council's commitment to improve the condition of the licensed fleet and this will involve more electric/hybrid cars being used as private hire vehicles in the future.
- 4.6 It is proposed that Paragraph 8 of the Private Hire Vehicle Specifications is amended to include a provision for the use of temporary seal & inflation gas products where they are provided as part of the vehicle's original manufacturer's specification.

- 4.7 It is important to point out that notwithstanding the recommendation; drivers and proprietors retain the right to exercise their discretion to retain a full size spare wheel within the vehicle. Most manufacturers now sell these as after-market products including harnesses to safely mount full sized spares within a vehicles boot. The Council would expect proprietors, operators and drivers to have regard to this in exercising their discretion.

### **Public/stakeholder engagement**

- 5.1 The acceptance of temporary seal & inflation gas products has been raised by the trade again in the recent consultation exercise on the proposed Taxi and Private Hire Vehicles Strategy 2020.

### **Other options**

- 6.1 None recommended.

### **Financial and value for money issues**

- 7.1 None arising from the report.

### **Legal implications**

- 8.1 Changes to policy need to be approved by the Licensing Committee as the appropriate body set out in the Council's constitution.

### **Other significant implications**

- 9.1 None.

**This report has been approved by the following people:**

<b>Role</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Date of sign-off</b>
<b>Legal</b>	Olu Idowu	12/08/19
<b>Finance</b>	-	
<b>Service Director(s)</b>	-	
<b>Report sponsor</b>	Richard Antcliff	12/08/19
<b>Other(s)</b>	-	