

**REPORT:** Regulatory Committee

**DATE:** 11 March 2026

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Director – Legal and Democratic Services

**PORTFOLIO:** Resources

**SUBJECT:** Taxi Ranks

**WARDS:** Borough-wide

## **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1. To seek approval for the appointment of one hackney carriage stand as part of the Runcorn High Street Connectivity Scheme and to remove two existing hackney carriage stands from The Halton Borough Council (Various Hackney Carriage Stands, Widnes and Runcorn) Order 2018.

## **2. RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1. That the Committee considers the contents of this report and the information detailed in the attached appendices;
- 2.2. That the proposals detailed in **Appendix A** (showing proposed amendments in red, in respect of the proposed removal of Stands 16 and 20 and the proposed appointment of Stand 23) be referred to the Executive Board with the recommendation that the Executive Board authorise the Director - Legal and Democratic Services to carry out the required public consultation in accordance with Section 63 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 taking into consideration any representations which may be made by the Regulatory Committee in respect thereof;
- 2.3. That the Executive Board further authorise the Director - Legal and Democratic Services to fulfil all procedural requirements relating to the proposals detailed in Appendix A in accordance with Section 63 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 including the making of and affixing of the Council seal to the appropriate Order in the event that the public consultation does not produce any objections.

## **3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1. The Council's current taxi rank provision is attached to this report at **Appendix B**.
- 3.2. The proposed amendments to the Taxi Rank Orders are set out below

## RUNCORN

Stand Number	Location	Current times/proposed time	Amended Proposals
16	High Street (opposite side of road from Chambers)	Anytime	Revoke
20	High Street lay-by immediately east of entrance to Co-op	20.00 to 06.00	Revoke
23	Alcock Street (behind the current bus station)	Anytime	New

- 3.3 The removal of stand 16 and 20 and the proposed new taxi rank stand 23, is part of Runcorn High Street Connectivity Scheme which forms part of the Runcorn Town Deal which was agreed in 2021, this scheme will include improvements to the public realm including walking and cycling facilities, bus station improvements and a new taxi rank facility. Stand 16 is no longer required due to reduction in footfall following the recent closure of a licensed premises and because the remaining businesses and licensed premises are located further into the town. Stand 20 will be revoked and replaced with proposed new stand 23 with a proposal to increase operating times.
- 3.4 The revocation of taxi ranks at stands 16 and 20 and the appointment of a new taxi rank stand 23, shall provide additional waiting spaces for taxis in a new location closer to town centre facilities and busy licensed premises. Stand 23 is proposed to be located alongside the bus station, which will provide an important transport hub for the residents of Halton.
- 3.5 Stand 20 is currently a time restricted taxi rank (operating at night between the hours of 20.00 and 06.00). The proposed new taxi rank (at Stand 23) shall provide increased operation times, thereby improving the service to the customers due to the central and busy location. The location of the proposed taxi rank can be found at **Appendix C** of this report.
- 3.6 Attached at **Appendix D** are the current ranks which are proposed to be revoked, stand 16 (High Street opposite side of road from Chambers) and stand 20 (High Street lay-by immediately east of entrance to Co-op car park)
- 3.7 New signage will be erected advising the public of the new transport hub which will include the new taxi rank.
- 3.8 Although the proposal is to remove two taxi ranks in the town centre, there are still a number of official taxi ranks in the town, below are the details of the current and remaining ranks in Runcorn Town Centre.

Stand Number	Location	Current times	Number of vehicles
14	Public Hall Street	Anytime	8
18	Bridge Street (outside of the Wilsons Public House)	22.00 to 06.00	4
19	High Street (outside Bargain Booze and Mersey Road)	Anytime	8

3.9 Previous consultations have been undertaken with the trade in mid-2023 to make them aware of the proposed changes. The details of the project have been shared via the Councils website and an event at the Brindley, following comments received from the consultation they were passed on the Councils Transport and Planning Policy Team who reviewed all the comments/suggestions, a further email correspondence was shared with the trade at the end of 2023, requesting any further comments to the proposal to be sent to the team by the 20<sup>th</sup> January 2024. The comments and suggestions that have been received have been incorporated into decisions made in relation to the new taxi rank (stand 23) in Runcorn and the design of the rank.

3.10 Attached at **Appendix E** is section 63 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 which provides the details for stands for hackney carriages and the powers the Licensing Team has in relation to appointing and revoking stands.

#### 4. **JURISDICTION OF THE COMMITTEE**

4.1. The Committee is responsible for determining the Council's policies in connection with the grant, variation, suspension or revocation of licences relating to taxi and private matters (see Terms of Reference of the Regulatory Committee part 17B Council Constitution).

4.2. The Constitution must now be interpreted in accordance with the case of R (on the application of 007 Stratford Taxis Limited v Stratford on Avon District Council 2011. This Court of Appeal decision interpreted the meaning of the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 in respect of matters which must be dealt with by a Council's Executive or by a Committee of its Council. Essentially, the Court held that; (1) It was clear that individual applications relating to taxi matters must be dealt with by the equivalent of this Council's Regulatory Committee and (2) matters calculated to facilitate, or be conducive or incidental to such applications must also be dealt with in the same way but (3) any 'plan or strategy' associated with

such a function would be an executive function and therefore have to be determined by a Council's Executive. The Stratford case concerned the introduction of a wheelchair access policy. The decision was taken by the Council's Cabinet rather than its Licensing Committee. The challenge from the taxi trade was that the Licensing Committee should have adopted the policy. This element of the challenge was rejected by the court.

- 4.3. Consequently, any decision of the Regulatory Committee on matters contained in this agenda will be by the recommendation to the Executive Board.

## **5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1. If approved by the Executive Board, the Director – Legal and Democratic Services shall be authorised to conduct a public consultation under Section 63 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 with a view to amending the present Taxi Rank Order in due course, depending on the outcome of the public consultation. If the consultation produces objections, the matter will be referred back to the Regulatory Committee (and subsequently the Executive Board) for final decision.

## **6. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- 6.1. The cost of implementing the recommended changes, by way of providing new signage to be displayed at the site of each amended hackney carriage rank, must be met through the Taxi Licensing budget.

## **7. IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCILS PRIORITIES**

- 7.1. **Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence**

None

- 7.2. **Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy**

None

- 7.3. **Supporting Children, Young People and Families**

None

- 7.4. **Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need**

None

- 7.5. **Working Towards a Greener Future**

None

#### 7.6 Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community

None

### 8. RISK ANALYSIS

8.1. None

### 9. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

9.1. There are no equality or diversity issues related to the review.

### 10. CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

10.1. There are no climate change implications since the decision will have no effect on the environment.

### 11. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

<b>Document</b>	<b>Place of Inspection</b>	<b>Contact Officer</b>
Taxi Rank Orders	Legal Services	Kim Hesketh

#### Appendices

Appendix A – Draft Taxi Rank Order with proposed amendments

Appendix B – List of Hackney Carriage Stands

Appendix C – Plan showing proposed new taxi rank as Stand 23

Appendix D – Plan showing taxi ranks at Stands 16 and 20

Appendix E – Extract of section 63 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976