Purpose of Report

To advise Committee of the difference between emission reduction systems that will achieve Euro III compliance and particulate emissions traps.

Recommendations

That the Committee note the report.

Financial Consequences for the Revenue Budget

None.

Financial Consequences for the Capital Budget

None.

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Wards Affected

All.

Implications for:  
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<th>Anti-Poverty</th>
<th>Equal Opportunities</th>
<th>Environment</th>
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Employment and Anti Poverty Implications

None
1. Background

On 4 June 2007 the Licensing and Appeals Committee agreed that, with effect from 1 January 2008, no hackney carriage vehicle licence will be issued or renewed for a vehicle more than 10 years old, since the date of its first registration, unless the vehicle has been manufactured to Euro III or higher specification or has fitted either a Public Carriage Office (PCO) or Energy Saving Trust (EST) approved emissions reduction system, such that the vehicle meets Euro III emission standards. Euro III compliant vehicles can remain licensed up to 12 years of age from date of first registration.

The main driver for this initiative was a reduction in the level of emissions of nitrogen dioxide because nitrogen dioxide is the pollutant for which Manchester has declared an Air Quality Management Area. This is because Manchester has identified areas, particularly in the City Centre, where measurements exceed the Government's air quality objective.

2. Euro III Compliant Systems

Over recent years vehicles have been required to meet increasingly strict emission limits known as Euro standards. Euro standards set limits for the following pollutants: Carbon Monoxide (CO), Oxides of Nitrogen (Nox), Hydrocarbons (HC) and Particulates. These pollutants are a risk to health and are known to irritate the lungs and lower resistance to respiratory infections, especially in the elderly and young children. As the primary source of these pollutants is transport, the pollutants are emitted at ground level with relatively slow dispersal.

There are a number of emissions reductions systems and particulate traps on the market.

As Committee agreed that vehicles had to meet the Euro III standard, only emissions reductions systems that could achieve this would be permitted. To ensure that only satisfactory systems are used, the systems have to be approved by either the PCO in London or the EST to confirm that the system, once fitted, will ensure the vehicle meets Euro III emission standards.

3. Particulate Emissions Traps

Committee asked for details of why a particulate emission trap - the Per Tec Device - produced by a Manchester based company could not be approved as one of the emission reduction systems that could be fitted to hackney carriages vehicles to enable vehicles to meet the Euro III emissions standards.

The Per Tec particulate trap is an effective device and has a role to play in improving air quality by reducing emissions of particulates from vehicles. Indeed the device has recently been formally approved for use by Transport
for London as part of their move towards a Low Emission Zone for Greater London in 2008. While it is recognised as an efficient pollution control system for particulates, which is a current priority in Greater London, it is not able to deal with nitrogen dioxide which is the key concern at the present time in Manchester and the city centre in particular. It should be noted that the prioritisation of nitrogen dioxide stems from a comparison of the levels in the atmosphere against the Government's national air quality standards.

Unfortunately fitting the Per Tec device would not make a vehicle Euro III compliant as it does not reduce the other emissions i.e. Carbon Monoxide (CO), Oxides of Nitrogen (NOx), and Hydrocarbons (HC) that would be required to make a vehicle Euro III compliant.

4. Conclusion

Manchester City Council’s policy requires that emissions reduction systems fitted to hackney carriage vehicles in Manchester make the vehicles compliant with Euro III emissions standards. Furthermore only systems approved by the PCO or EST will be approved for fitting to Manchester hackney carriages to achieve Euro III compliance.

Particulate emission traps whilst effective at reducing emissions of particulates will not enable a vehicle to become Euro III compliant and as such will not meet the requirements of Manchester City Council’s policy.