

Vehicle Plates for Scrap Metal Collectors

Meeting	4th October 2022 - 10am
Report Author	Alison Stocker - Senior Licensing Officer
Portfolio Holder	Cllr D Saunders, Cabinet Member for Finance
Status	For Decision
Classification:	Unrestricted
Key Decision	N/A
Reasons for Key (if appropriate)	N/A
Previously Considered by	N/A
Ward:	N/A

Executive Summary:

To consider the introduction of vehicle identification plates for Scrap Metal vehicles.

Recommendation(s):

The instructions of the Board are requested.

Corporate Implications

Financial and Value for Money

An application fee is charged to process and issue a Scrap Metal Licence and the costs associated with supplying physical plates will be included within that application fee. Fees and Charges will be revised from April 2023 to reflect any changes.

Legal

The Licensing Board must pay proper attention to the applicant's rights under the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998, which gives further effect in the United Kingdom to the fundamental rights and freedoms contained in the European Convention on Human Rights. The Licensing Board must have proper regard to the rights of the individual applicant when making decisions that affect them. However, it also has to have regard to the safety and protection of the public and therefore to ensure that the right balance is found and think hard about how it can cause the least possible harm to individuals, bearing in mind its duty to ensure the protection of the public.

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 states: "Without prejudice to any other obligation imposed on it, it shall be the duty of each authority to which this section applies to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those function on, and the need to do all that is reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area"

Risk Management

There is a risk in not introducing the Scrap Metal Plates. Members of the public will be made aware of vehicles that are licenced under the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 through a dedicated media campaign, allowing for greater visibility of licensed scrap metal vehicles which will enable Licensing Officers to take forward a greater number of prosecutions for unlicensed scrap metal vehicles.

Corporate

The Council's Core Business Objectives set out the direction of travel for the Council until 2023 laying the strong foundations that will benefit, shape and grow the district. By taking this approach, the Council's resources will be focused on what matters most, service delivery will be strengthened and both staff and partners will be working towards a common goal - ensuring prosperity and improved quality of life for our residents and the community.

These Core Business Objectives are:

Growth

We will continue to ensure we work to consider new ways to generate income and invest our current resources. Delivering a Council that is financially strong to discharge its services and invest in the growth of the District.

Environment

Having a clean and well-maintained environment remains important to us. We will be clear with our residents on what we do and what our asks of residents are - cultivating a shared responsibility approach. Delivering a clean and accessible living environment, maintaining an emphasis on prevention but where necessary we will use an enforcement approach.

Communities

Through effective partnership working with both the public sector agencies and the community, we will provide leadership and direction across the district and the region to ensure everyone is working to the same goal. Delivering high-quality housing, safer communities and enhancing the health and wellbeing of our residents.

Equality Act 2010 & Public Sector Equality Duty

Members are reminded of the requirement, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard to the aims of the Duty at the time the decision is taken. The aims of the Duty are: (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it, and (iii) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Protected characteristics: age, sex, disability, race, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief and pregnancy & maternity. Only aim (i) of the Duty applies to Marriage & civil partnership.

In considering this application it is appropriate to consider the rights of both the applicant and other parties, such as “responsible authorities” and/or “other persons” (objectors). The procedure for determining licences has a prescribed format to ensure fair representation of the relevant facts by all parties.

This report relates to the following aim of the equality duty: -

This policy will be applied equally to all licensed scrap metal collectors, with new plates issued free of charge. This will allow greater visibility of licensed scrap metal vehicles, ensuring the public at large ready access to relevant information and protection against inadvertently using unlicensed Scrap Metal Collectors; which in contravention of the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013.

Corporate Priorities

This report relates to the following corporate priorities: -

- Growth
- Communities

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Scrap metal collectors currently have no identifying features on the rear of their vehicles stating that they are licensed by Thanet District Council to collect scrap.

At present, a blue card is placed inside the front window which can be difficult for residents and Officers to identify at a distance without approaching the driver. See Annex 1.

At this time we have 14 licensed scrap metal collectors operating within the Thanet District.

2.0 Background

2.1 Blue badge identification cards only are currently issued to drivers to be placed in the front windscreen of the vehicle.

2.2 Identification plates that are displayed on the rear of the vehicle have been introduced by other local authorities as they increase the visibility of licensed scrap metal vehicles and deter unlicensed activities. Having rear plates displayed will greatly assist officers and residents in readily identifying which vehicles are licensed, having a greater impact on unlicensed Scrap Metal Collectors.

2.3 Although it is not a legal requirement to display a plate, some licensed Scrap Metal Operators have welcomed the idea. A template of the new proposed plate is attached at Annex 2. This mirrors existing Private Hire and Hackney Carriage licence plates

issued by Thanet District Council; and will utilise existing software and printing to minimise the costs of these plates. The initial plates will be provided to the sector free of charge, with a nominal fee for a replacement plate being added to TDC's fees and charges in April 2023 which will mirror the replacement fee for the Private Hire and Hackney Carriage plates.

- 2.4 A media campaign will take place alongside the introduction of the new plates, to help with messaging and information for residents; and to improve compliance across the district.

3.0 Options

- 3.1 To agree the introduction of Scrap Metal Identification Plates
- 3.2 To refuse the introduction of Scrap Metal Identification Plates

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Reporting to: *Morgan Sproates (Regulatory Services Manager)*

Annex 1: Blue Scrap Metal Card

Annex 2: New Scrap Metal number plate template.

Background Papers

Scrap Metal legislation:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2013/10/enacted>

Corporate Consultation

CMT not required as not relevant to other departments agreed by the Neighbourhood director and circulated to the Portfolio holder.

Finance: There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Legal: No change to legislation.