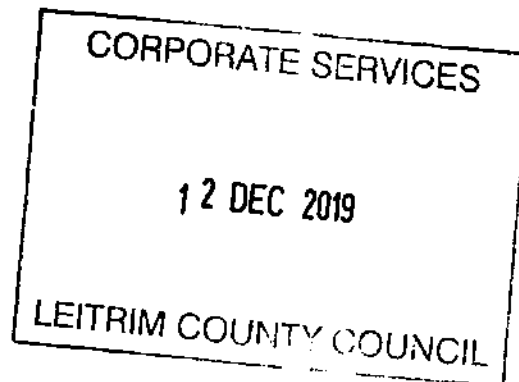


**Kieran Brett
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10th December 2019

Dear Mr Brett

I refer to your letter dated 3 December last concerning the Local Area Hackney Scheme.

The Local Area Hackney Scheme was first introduced in December 2013 to enable a part-time hackney service to be provided in rural areas which are too small to support a full time taxi or hackney operations.

Experience to date of the Local Area Hackney Scheme is that take up is low. There are currently 17 local area hackneys in the fleet.

The key barriers to entry to the scheme have been identified as the cost of insurance and the level of bureaucracy in the application process. In response to these barriers it was decided to:

- pilot 15 localised hackney services nationally that will receive grant-aid in areas designated by Local Link that have no hackney or taxi service operating currently. This funding is designed to provide a contribution towards the insurance costs associated with providing the service, and
- simplify the administration involved in the Local Area Hackney application process by giving Local Link offices responsibility for carrying out the needs assessment for each pilot area.

Last August the NTA announced details of the Designated Local Area Hackney Service Pilot Programme 2019, which provides for the implementation of one pilot project in each of the 15 Local Link areas, at a cost of €6,000 per project for a 12-month period.

The NTA received applications for 12 areas. At this stage two applicants are fully licensed, with other applicants in the process of completing licensing. We have offered continued assistance to all applicants, most of whom are new to the small public service vehicle sector.

It is important to point out that the objective of the Local Area Hackney Scheme and the current Pilot Programme is not to replace or displace current small public service vehicle operators. Accordingly, there are no plans to extend the operating area for the holders of Local Area Hackney licences.

Yours sincerely


Anne Graham
Chief Executive