



Regulatory and General Purposes Committee

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| Date: | Thursday, 13 June 2024 |
| Time: | 6.00 p.m. |
| Venue: | Council Chamber, Wallasey Town Hall |

Contact Officer: Mike Jones, Principal Democratic Services Officer
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Website: www.wirral.gov.uk

Please note that public seating is limited therefore members of the public are encouraged to arrive in good time.

Wirral Council is fully committed to equalities and our obligations under The Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty. If you have any adjustments that would help you attend or participate at this meeting, please let us know as soon as possible and we would be happy to facilitate where possible. Please contact committeeservices@wirral.gov.uk

AGENDA

- 1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**
- 2. APOLOGIES**
- 3. MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members of the Committee are asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests, in connection with any item on the agenda and state the nature of the interest.

- 4. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 4)**

To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 31 January 2024.

- 5. PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS**

- 5.1 Public Questions**

Notice of question to be given in writing or by email by 12 noon, Monday 10 June 2024 to the Council's Monitoring Officer via this link: [Public Question Form](#) and to be dealt with in accordance with Standing Order 10.

For more information on how your personal information will be used, please see this link: [Document Data Protection Protocol for Public Speakers at Committees | Wirral Council](#)

Please telephone the Committee Services Officer if you have not received an acknowledgement of your question by the deadline for submission.

5.2 Statements and Petitions

Notice of representations to be given in writing or by email by 12 noon, Monday 10 June 2024 to the Council's Monitoring Officer (committeeservices@wirral.gov.uk) and to be dealt with in accordance with Standing Order 11.1.

Petitions may be presented to the Committee if provided to Democratic and Member Services no later than 10 working days before the meeting, at the discretion of the Chair. The person presenting the petition will be allowed to address the meeting briefly (not exceeding three minute) to outline the aims of the petition. The Chair will refer the matter to another appropriate body of the Council within whose terms of reference it falls without discussion, unless a relevant item appears elsewhere on the Agenda. If a petition contains more than 5,000 signatures, it will be debated at a subsequent meeting of Council for up to 15 minutes, at the discretion of the Mayor.

Please telephone the Committee Services Officer if you have not received an acknowledgement of your statement/petition by the deadline for submission.

5.3 Questions by Members

Questions by Members to dealt with in accordance with Standing Orders 12.3 to 12.8.

- 6. MINUTES OF THE LICENSING PANEL (Pages 5 - 46)**
- 7. HONORARY FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGH – DAVID ARMSTRONG (Pages 47 - 52)**
- 8. APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE LICENSING PANEL AND THE CHARITABLE TRUSTS SUB-COMMITTEE (Pages 53 - 58)**

- 9. REQUEST BY TRANMERE ROVERS FOOTBALL CLUB TO REGISTER AS A TRADEMARK THE TRANMERE ROVERS CLUB BADGE (Pages 59 - 62)**
- 10. HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE CRITERIA (Pages 63 - 366)**

Terms of Reference

The terms of reference for this committee can be found at the end of this agenda.

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REGULATORY AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 31 January 2024

Present:

Councillor A Hodson (Chair)

| | | |
|-------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Councillors | S Bennett | K Murphy |
| | C Cooke | M Redfern |
| | G Davies | K Stuart |
| | B Hall | M Sullivan |
| | M Jordan | E Tomeny |
| | L Luxon-Kewley | T Laing (In place of |
| | C McDonald | J Stewart Laing) |

32 **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and those watching the webcast.

33 **APOLOGIES**

The Chair confirmed apologies for absence had been received from Councillors James Stewart Laing and Richie Pitt.

34 **MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Mike Sullivan declared a personal interest in agenda item 8, as a member of Unite the Union.

35 **MINUTES**

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2023 be approved.

36 **PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS**

The Chair reported that there had been no public questions, statements, petitions or questions by members.

37 **WIRRAL AWARD 2023**

The Civic and Elections Manager introduced a report of the Director of Law and Corporate Services which sought agreement from the Committee that the Wirral Award be conferred on the nominees as recommended by the Wirral Award Working Party.

The Wirral Award is intended to confer civic recognition upon individuals or organisations resident or located in Wirral for an outstanding achievement within the previous twelve months, or for distinguished service to the Borough over a period of twenty years or more. Members were advised that the nominations were considered annually by a working party of senior Councillors, and the Working Party's recommendations with regard to possible recipients of the Wirral Award.

Resolved – That

(1) the Wirral Award be conferred upon the 11 nominees recommended by the Wirral Award Working Party.

(2) appropriate arrangements be made for the recipients of the Award to be invited to a special ceremony.

With the consent of the Committee, the Chair altered the order of the business

38 **POLLING PLACE REVIEW**

The Civic and Elections Manager introduced a report of the Director of Law and Corporate Services which set out the findings following a review undertaken in respect of the use of a polling station venue in the Moreton West & Saughall Massie Ward, which is currently used as a polling place for the purposes of Local Authority, Parliamentary and other elections. The report detailed a proposal to move the Polling Station from Moreton Community Centre to Moreton Methodist Church.

Resolved – That the relocation of the Polling Station at Moreton Community Centre to Moreton Methodist Church be agreed.

39 **BOROUGH ELECTION FEES & CHARGES**

The Civic and Elections Manager introduced a report of the Director of Law and Corporate Services which detailed the proposed fees to be paid to the Returning Officer and his staff employed to undertake duties at the elections held within the Borough.

Members were advised that the cost of a Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Election was met from a Central Government funding grant and the Government would provide a Fees & Charges order that would detail fees to be paid. The cost of the Combined Authority Mayoral (CAM) Elections were met from the funding provided by the Combined Authority, provisional agreement had been provided by the Combined Authority that the fees to be paid would be in line with the PCC Fees & Charges Order.

Resolved – That the decision of the Returning Officer pertaining to the fees as outlined in Appendix 1 be endorsed.

40 REVIEW OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARES

The Licensing Manager introduced a report of the Director of Law and Corporate Services which set out objections received in respect of a proposed increase to the Hackney Carriage Fares as proposed by Unite the Union on behalf of members of the Hackney Carriage trade. Members were reminded that at their meeting on 23 November 2023, they had resolved that the proposed increase to the Hackney Carriage Fares be approved subject to any objections being received as part of the consultation process. It was reported that 9 objections had been received and the Committee was therefore asked to consider the objections and make a determination on whether to implement the proposed increases.

Members discussed the nature of the objections received and the consultation process at length, noting that the legislation required the authority to seek objections only as opposed to general feedback. The Committee was advised that any amendment to the revised table of fares must come into effect no later than 21 February 2024.

It was moved by Councillor Stephen Bennett, seconded by Councillor Tom Laing, that in respect of the proposed fare increases contained in Appendix 2 of the report –

- The Tariff 1 Day Rate remain the same as the current scheme as set out at Appendix 1 of the Report
- Tariff 2 (Night Rate) and Tariff 3 (Public & Bank Holiday) fares be increased in line with the proposal, with the exception that the initial rate be calculated over the first 350 yards as opposed to the proposed 300 yards;
- The tariff 4 (Christmas) fare initial rate be increased in line with the proposal, with the exception that the initial rate be calculated over the first 880 yards as the current scheme;
- Tunnel fees be chargeable but the £5.00 surcharge for journeys to Liverpool be removed

Members debated the proposal where it was outlined that the rationale was to ensure that tariff 1 remained competitive with the availability of public transport in the day and took account of the objections received, whilst still providing a significant increase for tariffs 2 to 4. It was argued that the Committee had heard from representatives of Unite the Union who spoke of the challenges taxi drivers faced and that the Committee should give account of that representation.

After a considerable debate, the motion was put to the vote and carried (10:4).
It was therefore –

Resolved – That in respect of the proposed fare increased contained in Appendix 2 of the report:

- **The Tariff 1 Day Rate remain the same as the current scheme as set out at Appendix 1 of the Report**
- **Tariff 2 (Night Rate) and Tariff 3 (Public & Bank Holiday) fares be increased in line with the proposal, with the exception that the initial rate be calculated over the first 350 yards as opposed to the proposed 300 yards;**
- **The tariff 4 (Christmas) fare initial rate be increased in line with the proposal, with the exception that the initial rate be calculated over the first 880 yards as the current scheme;**
- **Tunnel fees be chargeable but the £5.00 surcharge for journeys to Liverpool be removed**

LICENSING PANEL

Friday, 10 November 2023

Present: Councillors A Hodson (Chair)
S Bennett
G Davies
J Stewart Laing

82 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Panel were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in connection with any application on the agenda and state the nature of the interest.

No such declarations were made.

83 PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE LICENCE APPLICATION - AUDI A4, REGISTRATION NUMBER OV13 NYS

The Director of Law and Governance reported upon an application received to license an Audi A4, registration number OV13 NYS, outside the current age policy for licensing Private Hire Vehicles. The vehicle had first been licensed as a Private Hire Vehicle on 17 November 2022 and the current licence was due to expire on 14 November 2023. The date of first registration of the vehicle was 14 May 2013. The vehicle had been examined at one of the Council's authorised testing stations and the MOT and Compliance pass certificates had been provided to Members.

The proprietor of the vehicle attended the meeting with the vehicle which Members of the Panel inspected.

Resolved – That the application to license the Audi A4, registration number OV13 NYS, as a Private Hire Vehicle be granted for six months.

84 PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE LICENCE APPLICATION - MERCEDES E300, REGISTRATION NUMBER FP63 EHL

The Director of Law and Governance reported upon an application received to license a Mercedes E300, registration number FP63 EHL, outside the current age policy for licensing Private Hire Vehicles. The vehicle had first been licensed as a Private Hire Vehicle on 14 July 2022 and the current licence was due to expire on 27 November 2023. The date of first registration of the vehicle was 28 November 2013. The vehicle had been examined at one of

the Council's authorised testing stations and the MOT and Compliance pass certificates had been provided to Members.

The proprietor of the vehicle attended the meeting with the vehicle which Members of the Panel inspected.

Resolved – That the application to license the Mercedes E300, registration number FP63 EHL, as a Private Hire Vehicle be granted for six months.

85 **PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE LICENCE REQUEST - MERCEDES-BENZ E220, REGISTRATION NUMBER S2 MTU**

The Director of Law and Governance reported upon an application received to exempt a Mercedes-Benz E220, registration number S2 MTU from displaying Private Hire Vehicle Licence Plates and from displaying door signs which provide details of the Private Hire Operator.

The proprietor of the vehicle did not attend the meeting.

Resolved – That the applicant attend a future meeting of the Licensing Panel should they wish to pursue the application.

86 **PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE LICENCE REQUEST - MERCEDES-BENZ E220, REGISTRATION NUMBER Y5 APX**

The Director of Law and Governance reported upon an application received to exempt a Mercedes-Benz E220, registration number Y5 APX from displaying Private Hire Vehicle Licence Plates and from displaying door signs which provide details of the Private Hire Operator.

The vehicle was first licensed as a Private Hire Vehicle on 3 November 2022 and the current licence was due to expire on 2 May 2024 and was therefore subject to the conditions attached to that licence. The date of first registration of the vehicle was 19 June 2017.

The proprietor of the vehicle attended the meeting with the vehicle which was inspected by Members.

The proprietor of the vehicle outlined his business model to Members of the Panel in that he provides an executive travel service. The proprietor of the vehicle has held a Private Hire Driver Licence since 2 August 2017 and a Private Hire Operator Licence since 1 July 2019.

Resolved – That the application to exempt the Mercedes-Benz E220, registration number Y5 APX from displaying Private Hire Vehicle

Licence Plates and from displaying door signs which provide details of the Private Hire Operator be granted with the following conditions:

- **All bookings must be made at least 24 hours in advance.**
- **Payment for all bookings must be requested through an invoicing system.**
- **The operator must communicate with customers for each booking taken, by text or email, with the following information:**
 - **Private Hire Driver name**
 - **Private Hire Driver photograph**
 - **Private Hire Driver badge number**
 - **Private Hire Vehicle registration number**

For the avoidance of doubt, the above conditions also apply in respect of drivers and vehicles undertaking work for bookings subcontracted to other private hire companies.

87 PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE LICENCE APPLICATION - MERCEDES-BENZ E220, REGISTRATION NUMBER PE20 PGZ

The Director of Law and Governance reported upon an application received to license a Mercedes-Benz E220, registration number PE20 PGZ, as a Private Hire Vehicle outside the current criteria which states that side and rear windows must allow at least 70% of light to be transmitted through.

The report also included a request by the proprietor of the vehicle namely a Mercedes-Benz E220 to be granted an exemption from the current requirement to display Private Hire Vehicle Licence Plates and from displaying door signs which provide details of the Private Hire Operator.

The current criteria that vehicles must comply with before being granted a Private Hire Vehicle Licence as set out in the Statement of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy states that: The front windscreen must let at least 75% of light through and all other windows must let at least 70% of light through.

It was reported that the date of first registration of the vehicle was 16 March 2020 and that should the application be granted it would be necessary for the vehicle to be examined at one of the Council's authorised testing stations in order for it to receive a valid MOT and Compliance certificate.

The proprietor of the vehicle was unable to attend the meeting therefore a representative attended the meeting on their behalf with the vehicle which was inspected by Members.

The representative outlined the business model to Members of the Panel in that he provides an executive travel service and wanted to be able to offer a discreet service to his customers. The proprietor of the vehicle has held a Private Hire Driver Licence since 15 April 2013 and a Private Hire Operator Licence since 2 February 2015.

Resolved –

- (1) That the application to license a Mercedes-Benz E220, registration number PE20 PGZ as a Private Hire Vehicle, outside the current criteria which states that side and rear windows must allow at least 70% of light through be granted.**

- (2) That the application to exempt the Mercedes-Benz E220, registration number PE20 PGZ from displaying Private Hire Vehicle Licence Plates and from displaying door signs which provide details of the Private Hire Operator be granted with the following conditions:**
 - **All bookings must be made at least 24 hours in advance.**
 - **Payment for all bookings must be requested through an invoicing system.**
 - **The operator must communicate with customers for each booking taken, by text or email, with the following information:**
 - **Private Hire Driver name**
 - **Private Hire Driver photograph**
 - **Private Hire Driver badge number**
 - **Private Hire Vehicle registration number**

For the avoidance of doubt, the above conditions also apply in respect of drivers and vehicles undertaking work for bookings subcontracted to other private hire companies.

88 PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE LICENCE APPLICATION - RENAULT CAPTUR, REGISTRATION NUMBER LB66 WXZ

The Director of Law and Governance reported upon an application received to license a Renault Captur, registration number LB66 WXZ, outside the current criteria for licensing Private Hire Vehicles which states that the vehicle must be capable of carrying at least 4 and not more than 8 passengers in addition to the driver and that where bench seats are fitted to the rear of the vehicle one person will be counted for each complete length of 16 inches measured in a straight line lengthwise along the front of the seat.

It was reported that in accordance with the above criteria the vehicle must be capable of carrying 3 passengers in the rear of the vehicle providing each passenger with a minimum length of 16 inches. A Licensing Officer who had inspected the vehicle had identified that the top tread entrance to the vehicle measured 42 centimetres and the criteria states that any vehicle with a top tread for the entrance which exceeds 38cm must be fitted with a step to allow easy access and egress from the vehicle and any vehicle that does not have a step fitted must carry a portable step to be available for use by all passengers.

The date of first registration of the vehicle was 31 January 2017. The proprietor of the vehicle has held a Private Hire Driver Licence since 12 November 2019 and the current licence was due to expire on 11 November 2025. Should the application be granted it would be necessary for the vehicle to be examined at one of the Council's authorised testing stations for it to receive a valid MOT and Compliance certificate.

The proprietor of the vehicle attended the meeting with the vehicle which Members of the Panel inspected.

Resolved – That the application to license the Renault Captur, registration number LB66 WXZ, as a Private Hire Vehicle outside the current criteria which states that the vehicle must be capable of carrying at least 4 and not more than 8 passengers in addition to the driver and that where bench seats are fitted to the rear of the vehicle one person will be counted for each complete length of 16 inches measured in a straight line lengthwise along the front of the seat, be refused.

89 **PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE LICENCE APPLICATION - FORD TRANSIT, REGISTRATION NUMBER GY17 NXP**

The Director of Law and Governance reported upon an application received to license a Ford Transit, registration number GY17 NXP, as a Private Hire Vehicle outside the current criteria which states that side and rear windows must allow at least 70% of light to be transmitted through.

The current criteria that vehicles must comply with before being granted a Private Hire Vehicle Licence as set out in the Statement of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy states that: The front windscreen must let at least 75% of light through and all other windows must let at least 70% of light through.

It was reported that the date of first registration of the vehicle was 21 August 2017 and should a licence be granted, the vehicle would be used to undertake work exclusively under and in strict accordance with the terms and conditions

of a contract issued by the Council to transport children to and from educational establishments.

It was further reported that should the application be granted, it would be necessary for it to be examined at one of the Council's authorised testing stations in order for it to receive a valid MOT and Compliance certificate.

The Fleet Manager attended the meeting with the vehicle which was inspected by Members.

In determining the application, Members took into consideration that the vehicle would be used to undertake work exclusively under and in strict accordance with the terms and conditions of a contract issued by the Council to transport children to and from educational establishments.

Resolved – That the application to license the Ford Transit, registration number GY17 NXP, as a Private Hire Vehicle outside the current criteria which states that the side and rear windows must allow at least 70% of light to be transmitted through be granted subject to the vehicle being fitted with CCTV and the following condition:

- **There must always be a pupil escort/carer travelling in the vehicle whilst it is undertaking work subject to the contract issued by Wirral Council to transport children to and from educational establishments.**

90 **EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Resolved - That, under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 1 of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act. The Public Interest Test had been applied and favoured exclusion.

91 **HACKNEY CARRIAGE DRIVER LICENCE APPLICATION (LST)**

The Director of Law and Governance submitted a report for Members to consider whether LST should be granted a Hackney Carriage Driver Licence.

LST attended the meeting and made representations in respect of the application. LST responded to questions from Members of the Panel and the legal advisor to the Panel.

Members gave due consideration to the representations made and exercised their rights to consider each case on its individual merits in light of the representations made.

Resolved - That LST's application for a Hackney Carriage Driver Licence be granted for 12 months.

92 **PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER LICENCE REVIEW (BAM)**

The Director of Law and Governance submitted a report for Members to consider whether BAM should continue to hold a Private Hire Driver Licence.

It was reported that BAM had surrendered their Private Hire Driver Licence therefore this matter was not considered.

93 **HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER LICENCE REVIEW (SMA)**

The Director of Law and Governance submitted a report for Members to consider whether SMA should continue to hold a Hackney Carriage Driver Licence and a Private Hire Driver Licence.

SMA attended the meeting with their legal representative and made representations. SMA and their legal representative responded to questions from Members and the legal advisor to the Panel.

A complainant attended the meeting virtually and made representations. The complainant responded to questions from the legal representative, Members of the Panel and the legal advisor to the Panel.

Members considered carefully the responses made by SMA and their legal representative.

Members gave due consideration to all of the representations made and exercised their rights to consider each case on its individual merits in light of the representations made.

Resolved – That SMA's be allowed to continue to hold a Hackney Carriage Driver Licence and a Private Hire Driver Licence subject to the successful completion of both the Level 2 National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) course for the Taxi and Private Hire Industry and the English proficiency test.

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Public Document Pack

LICENSING PANEL

Wednesday, 13 December 2023

Present: Councillor A Hodson (Chair)
S Bennett
L Luxon-Kewley
K Murphy

94 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Panel were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in connection with any application on the agenda and state the nature of the interest.

Councillor A Hodson declared a personal interest in item 5 – Private Hire Vehicle Licence Application – Skoda Superb, Registration Number DF13 GUW, by virtue of being acquainted with the applicant (minute 98 refers) and item 8 – Ford Tourneo Custom, Registration Number GO52 JET, by virtue of having previously met the applicant's wife (minute 101 refers).

95 PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE LICENCE APPLICATION - IVECO-FORD DAILY, REGISTRATION NUMBER GN09 MUP

The Director of Law and Governance reported upon an application received to license an Iveco Ford Daily, registration number GN09 MUP, outside the current age policy for licensing Private Hire vehicles. The vehicle had first been licensed as a Private Hire Vehicle on 24 January 2019 and the current licence was due to expire on 5 January 2024. The date of first registration of the vehicle was 29 July 2009. It was reported that should the application be granted, the vehicle would be used to undertake work exclusively under and in strict accordance with the terms and conditions of a contract issued by the Council to transport children to and from educational establishments. The vehicle had been examined at one of the Council's authorised testing stations and the MOT and Compliance pass certificates had been provided to Members.

The proprietor of the vehicle was present at the meeting with the vehicle which Members of the Panel inspected.

The applicant described how the vehicle was maintained.

Resolved – That the application to license the Iveco Ford Daily, registration number GN09 MUP, as a Private Hire Vehicle be granted for six months.

96 **PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE LICENCE APPLICATION - FORD TRANSIT, REGISTRATION NUMBER GY61 VLL**

The Director of Law and Governance reported upon an application received to license a Ford Transit, registration number GY61 VLL, as a Private Hire Vehicle, outside of the current age policy for licensing Private Hire vehicles.

The vehicle had first been licensed as a Private Hire Vehicle on 3 September 2020 and the current licence was due to expire on 29 December 2023. The date of first registration of the vehicle was 30 December 2011. It was reported that should a licence be granted, the vehicle would be used to undertake work exclusively under and in strict accordance with the terms and conditions of a contract issued by the Council to transport children to and from educational establishments. The vehicle had been examined at one of the Council's authorised testing stations and the MOT and Compliance pass certificate had been provided to Members.

The proprietor of the vehicle was present at the meeting with the vehicle which Members of the Panel inspected.

The applicant described how the vehicle was maintained.

Resolved – That the application to license the Ford Transit, registration number GY61 VLL, as a Private Hire Vehicle be granted subject to the vehicle being re-tested to demonstrate that the advisory on the current MOT had been attended to and that there be no advisories on the MOT.

97 **PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE LICENCE APPLICATION - PEUGEOT BOXER, REGISTRATION NUMBER YF13 XTW**

The Director of Law and Governance reported upon an application received to license a Peugeot Boxer, registration number YF13 XTW, outside of the current age policy for licensing Private Hire Vehicles. The vehicle had first been licensed as a Private Hire Vehicle on 14 November 2022 and the current licence was due to expire on 19 December 2023. The date of first registration of the vehicle was 20 June 2023. It was reported that should the application be granted, the vehicle would be used to undertake work exclusively under and in strict accordance with the terms and conditions of a contract issued by the Council to transport children to and from educational establishments. The vehicle had been examined at one of the Council's authorised testing stations and the MOT and Compliance pass certificates had been provided to Members.

The proprietor of the vehicle was present at the meeting with the vehicle which Members of the Panel inspected.

The applicant described how the vehicle was maintained.

Resolved – That the application to license the Peugeot Boxer, registration number YF13 XTW, as a Private Hire Vehicle be granted for six months.

98 **PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE LICENCE APPLICATION - SKODA SUPERB, REGISTRATION NUMBER DF13 GUW**

Councillor A Hodson declared a personal interest in this matter and left the room during its consideration (minute 94 refers).

The Director of Law and Governance reported upon an application received to license a Skoda Superb, registration number DF13 GUW.

The vehicle was first licensed as a Private Hire Vehicle on 12 July 2018 and the current licence was due to expire on 29 December 2023. The date of first registration of the vehicle was 29 June 2013

The proprietor of the vehicle was present at the meeting which Members of the Panel inspected. In response to questions from Members of the Panel and the legal advisor to the Panel, the applicant described how the vehicle was maintained.

Resolved – That the application to license the Skoda Superb, registration number DF13 GUW, as a Private Hire Vehicle be granted for six months.

99 **PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE LICENCE APPLICATION - RENAULT MEGANE, REGISTRATION NUMBER BN68 DTU**

The Director of Law and Governance reported upon an application to license a Renault Megane, registration number BN68 DTU, as a Private Hire Vehicle, outside the current criteria for licensing Private Hire Vehicles, which states that the side and rear windows must allow 70% of light to be transmitted through.

The current criteria that vehicles must comply with before being granted a Private Hire Vehicle Licence as set out in the Statement of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy states that: The front windscreen must let at least 75% of light through and all other windows must let at least 70% of light through.

It was reported that the date of first registration of the vehicle was 28 September 2018. The proprietor of the vehicle, Mr Farrell, advised the Licensing Authority that whilst it was possible for the two rear side passenger

windows and rear window to be changes to clear glass, it was not possible to replace the rear side quarter windows.

The applicant attended the meeting with the vehicle which the Panel inspected.

Members considered carefully the responses given by Mr Farrell.

Resolved – That the application to license the Renault Megane, registration number BN68 DTU be granted, subject to the rear windows being replaced with glass which allows at least 70% of light through.

100 **PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE LICENCE APPLICATION - PEUGEOT INDEPENDENCE, REGISTRATION NUMBER SF15 HFU**

The Director of Law and Governance reported upon an application received to license a Peugeot Independence, registration number SF15 HFU, outside the current criteria, which states that the side and rear windows must allow at least 70% of light to be transmitted through,

The current criteria that vehicles must comply with before being granted a Private Hire Vehicle Licence as set out in the Statement of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy states that: The front windscreen must let at least 75% of light through and all other windows must let at least 70% of light through.

It was reported that the date of first registration was 27 August 2015 and that should a licence be granted, the vehicle would be used to undertake work exclusively under and in strict accordance with the terms and conditions of a contract issued by the Council to transport children to and from educational establishments.

Resolved – That the application to license the Peugeot Independence, registration number SF15 HFU, as a Private Hire Vehicle be granted, subject to the following:

- **The damage to the passenger rear door must be repaired in order to satisfactorily pass a new Compliance Test;**
- **The livery must be removed from the body of the vehicle;**
- **A metal moveable step, which is engraved with the registration of the vehicle, must be made available in compliance with the vehicle licence conditions; and**
- **The Private Hire Vehicle Licence must have a condition that restricts the use of the vehicle to undertake a contracted journey from Bridle Road, Eastham to the Royal School for the Blind, Liverpool.**

101 **PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE LICENCE APPLICATION - FORD TOURNEO CUSTOM, REGISTRATION NUMBER GO52 JET**

Councillor A Hodson declared a personal interest in this matter (minute 94 refers).

The Director of Law and Governance reported upon an application received to license a Ford Tourneo Custom, registration number GO52 JET, as a Private Hire vehicle, outside the current criteria for licensing Private Hire Vehicles, which state that the side and rear windows must allow at least 70% of light to be transmitted through.

The current criteria that vehicles must comply with before being granted a Private Hire Vehicle Licence as set out in the Statement of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy states that: The front windscreen must let at least 75% of light through and all other windows must let at least 70% of light through.

It was reported that the date of first registration of the vehicle was 21 September 2018 and should a licence be granted, the vehicle would be used for an executive travel service.

The applicant attended the meeting with the vehicle, which was inspected by Members. The applicant responded to questions from Members.

In determining the application, Members took into consideration that the vehicle would be used for an executive travel service.

Resolved – That the application to license the Ford Tourneo Custom, registration number GO52 JET be granted, subject to the following conditions: -

Private Hire Vehicle Licence:

- **All bookings must be made at least 24 hours in advance of the journey.**
- **The vehicle must only undertake work where payment is made through an invoicing system.**
- **The vehicle must only be used in circumstances where the operator has communicated with customers for each booking taken, by text or email, with the following information:**
 - **Private Hire Driver name**
 - **Private Hire Driver photograph**
 - **Private Hire Driver badge number**

- **Private Hire Vehicle registration number.**

Private Hire Operator Licence:

- **All bookings must be made at least 24 hours in advance of the journey.**
- **Payment for all bookings must be requested through an invoicing system.**
- **The operator must communicate with customers for each booking taken, by text or email, with the following information:**
 - **Private Hire Driver name**
 - **Private Hire Driver photograph**
 - **Private Hire Driver badge number**
 - **Private Hire Vehicle registration number.**

For the avoidance of doubt, this includes drivers and vehicles undertaking work for bookings subcontracted to other private hire companies.

102 EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved – That, under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act. The Public Interest Test has been applied and favours exclusion.

103 PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER LICENCE APPLICATION (LMH)

The Director of Law and Governance submitted a report for Members to consider whether LMH should be granted a Private Hire Driver Licence.

LMH attended the meeting and made representations in respect of the application. LMH responded to questions from Members of the Panel and the legal advisor to the Panel.

Members gave due consideration to the representations made and exercised their rights to consider each case on its individual merits in light of the representations made.

Resolved – That LMH’s application for a Private Hire Driver Licence be granted.

104 **PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER LICENCE APPLICATION (DAC)**

The Director of Law and Governance submitted a report for Members to consider whether DAC should be granted a Private Hire Driver Licence.

DAC did not attend the meeting.

Resolved – That DAC attend a future meeting of the Licensing Panel should they wish to pursue their application.

105 **PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER LICENCE APPLICATION (AA)**

The Director of Law and Governance submitted a report for Members to consider whether AA should be granted a Private Hire Driver Licence.

AA attended the meeting and made representations in respect of the application. AA responded to questions from Members of the Panel and the legal advisor to the Panel.

Members gave due consideration to the representations made and exercised their right to consider each case on its individual merits in light of the representations made.

In determining the matter Members also gave serious consideration to their overriding responsibility in respect of the protection and safety of the public. The Panel applied the principle of proportionality enshrined within the Human Rights Act 1998.

Resolved – That AA's application for the grant of a Private Hire Driver Licence be refused.

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LICENSING PANEL

Thursday, 18 January 2024

Present: Councillors J Stewart Laing
G Davies
B Hall

106 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

In the absence of the Chair and the Vice Chair, it was –

Resolved – That, Councillor J Laing be appointed Chair for this meeting.

107 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Panel were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in connection with any application on the agenda and state the nature of the interest.

No such declarations were made.

108 PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE LICENCE APPLICATION - IVECO-FORD DAILY, REGISTRATION NUMBER WA60 EWB

The Director of Law and Governance reported upon an application received to license an Iveco Ford Daily, registration number WA60 EWB, outside the current age policy for licensing Private Hire vehicles. The vehicle had first been licensed as a Private Hire Vehicle on 31 October 2018 and the current licence was due to expire on 18 January 2024. The date of first registration of the vehicle was 15 December 2010. It was reported that should the application be granted, the vehicle would be used to undertake work exclusively under and in strict accordance with the terms and conditions of a contract issued by the Council to transport children to and from educational establishments. The vehicle had been examined at one of the Council's authorised testing stations and the MOT and Compliance pass certificates had been provided to Members.

The proprietor of the vehicle was present at the meeting with the vehicle which Members of the Panel inspected.

The applicant described how the vehicle was maintained.

Resolved – That the application to license the Iveco Ford Daily, registration number WA60 EWB, as a Private Hire Vehicle be granted for six months.

109 **PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE LICENCE APPLICATION - VOLKSWAGEN PASSAT, REGISTRATION NUMBER DE63 ZXL**

The Director of Law and Governance reported upon an application received to license a Volkswagen Passat, registration number DE63 ZXL, outside the current age policy for licensing Private Hire vehicles. The vehicle had first been licensed as a Private Hire Vehicle on 26 October 2022 and the current licence was due to expire on 31 January 2024. The date of first registration of the vehicle was 13 December 2013. It was reported that should the application be granted; the vehicle would be used to undertake work exclusively under and in strict accordance with the terms and conditions of a contract issued by the Council to transport children to and from educational establishments. The vehicle had been examined at one of the Council's authorised testing stations and the MOT and Compliance pass certificates had been provided to Members.

The proprietor of the vehicle was present at the meeting with the vehicle which Members of the Panel inspected.

The applicant described how the vehicle was maintained.

Resolved – That the application to license Volkswagen Passat, registration number DE63 ZXL, as a Private Hire Vehicle be granted for six months.

110 **PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE LICENCE APPLICATION - RENAULT TRAFIC, REGISTRATION NUMBER MM63 ECT**

The Director of Law and Governance reported upon an application received to license a Renault Traffic, registration number MM63 ECT, outside of the current criteria for licensing Private Hire Vehicles. The vehicle was first licensed as a Private Hire Vehicle on 11 January 2019 and the current licence is due to expire on 1 February 2024. The date of first registration of this vehicle is 12 February 2014. The vehicle had been examined at one of the Council's authorised testing stations and the MOT and Compliance pass certificates had been provided to Members.

The proprietor of the vehicle was present at the meeting with the vehicle which Members of the Panel inspected.

The applicant described how the vehicle was maintained.

Resolved – That the application to license Renault Traffic, registration number MM63 ECT, as a Private Hire Vehicle be granted for six months.

111 **PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE LICENCE - MERCEDES-BENZ E220, REGISTRATION NUMBER S2 MTU**

The Director of Law and Governance reported upon an application for exemption from the legal requirement to display licence plates on the vehicle and an exemption from the legal requirement to display licence plates on the vehicle, namely the Mercedes-Benz E220 registration number S2 MTU and a further exemption from displaying door signs on the vehicle as required by the conditions of the Private Hire Vehicle Licence.

The proprietor of the vehicle was present at the meeting with the vehicle which Members of the Panel inspected.

Resolved – That the application to for an exemption from the requirement to display Private Hire Vehicle Licence Plates and door signs providing details of the Private Hire Operator in respect of a Licensed Private Hire Vehicle namely a Mercedes-Benz E220, registration number S2 MTU may be granted.

Private Hire Vehicle Licence:

- All bookings must be made at least 24 hours in advance of the journey.
- The vehicle must only undertake work where payment is made through an invoicing system.
- The vehicle must only be used in circumstances where the operator has communicated with customers for each booking taken, by text or email, with the following information:
 - Private Hire Driver name
 - Private Hire Driver photograph
 - Private Hire Driver badge number
 - Private Hire Vehicle registration number.
- The notice exempting the vehicle from displaying private hire vehicle licence plates must be carried in the vehicle at all times.

Private Hire Operator Licence:

- All bookings must be made at least 24 hours in advance of the journey.
- Payment for all bookings must be requested through an invoicing system.

• **The operator must communicate with customers for each booking taken, by text or email, with the following information:**

- **Private Hire Driver name**
- **Private Hire Driver photograph**
- **Private Hire Driver badge number**
- **Private Hire Vehicle registration number.**

For the avoidance of doubt, this includes drivers and vehicles undertaking work for bookings subcontracted to other private hire companies.

112 EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved – That, under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act. The Public Interest Test has been applied and favours exclusion.

113 PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER LICENCE APPLICATION (DAC)

The Director of Law and Governance submitted a report for Members to consider whether DAC should be granted a Private Hire Driver Licence.

DAC did not attend the meeting.

Resolved – That DAC attend a future meeting of the Licensing Panel should they wish to pursue their application.

114 PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER LICENCE APPLICATION (CW)

The Director of Law and Governance submitted a report for Members to consider whether CW should be granted a Private Hire Driver Licence.

CW attended the meeting and made representations in respect of the application. CW responded to questions from Members of the Panel and the legal advisor to the Panel.

Members gave due consideration to the representations made and exercised their rights to consider each case on its individual merits in light of the representations made.

Resolved – That CW’s application for a Private Hire Driver Licence be granted.

115 **HACKNEY CARRIAGE DRIVER LICENCE (WMC)**

The Director of Law and Governance submitted a report for Members to consider whether WMC should continue to hold a Hackney Carriage Driver Licence.

WMC attended the meeting with his wife and made representations to the Licensing Panel. WMC and his wife responded to questions from Members of the Panel and the legal advisor to the Panel.

Members gave due consideration to the representations made and exercised their right to consider each case on its individual merits in light of the representations made.

In determining the matter Members also gave serious consideration to their overriding responsibility in respect of the protection and safety of the public. The Panel applied the principle of proportionality enshrined within the Human Rights Act 1998.

Resolved – That, in the interests of public safety WMC’s Hackney Carriage Driver Licence be revoked with immediate effect.

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LICENSING PANEL

Friday, 9 February 2024

Present: Councillor A Hodson (Chair)
G Davies
J Stewart Laing

116 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Panel were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in connection with any application on the agenda and state the nature of the interest.

No such declarations were made.

117 HACKNEY CARRIAGE VEHICLE LICENCE APPLICATION - RENAULT TRAFIC, REGISTRATION NUMBER PO62 HXF

The Director of Law and Corporate Services reported upon an application received to license a Renault Trafic, registration PO62 HXF, outside the current age policy for licensing Hackney Carriage Vehicles.

The proprietor's vehicle, licence reference HV93, registration number SF60 BYS was suspended from 8 September 2023 following a road traffic collision. The vehicle licence was due to expire on 27 February 2024, however the vehicle could not be repaired in order for the licence to be renewed. Due to these circumstances, the application was submitted to change the vehicle that was currently subject to the licence to the Renault Trafic, registration number PO62 HXF.

The date of first registration of the vehicle was 5 of September 2012. The vehicle had been examined at one of the Council's authorised testing stations and the pass certificates were available for Members.

The proprietor of the vehicle attended the meeting with the vehicle which was inspected by Members.

Resolved – That the application to license the Renault Trafic, registration number PO62 HXF as a Hackney Carriage Vehicle be granted for six months.

118 **HACKNEY CARRIAGE VEHICLE LICENCE APPLICATION - PEUGEOT EXPERT E7, REGISTRATION NUMBER SH56 KYJ**

The Director of Law and Corporate Services reported upon an application received to license a Peugeot Expert E7, registration SH56 KYJ, outside the current age policy for licensing Hackney Carriage Vehicles.

The vehicle was first licensed on 24 of November 2008. Due to a medical condition of the proprietor, the licence was suspended on 23 May 2023 and subsequently expired on 23 November 2023. The date of first registration of the vehicle was 10 of November 2006.

The vehicle had been examined at one of the Council's authorised testing stations and the pass certificates were available for Members.

The proprietor of the vehicle attended the meeting with the vehicle which was inspected by Members.

Resolved – That the application to license the Peugeot Expert, registration number SH556 KYJ as a Hackney Carriage Vehicle be granted subject to the advisories on the vehicle's MOT certificate being remedied and a clear MOT pass certificate being presented to Licensing Officers.

119 **PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE LICENCE APPLICATION - IVECO-FORD DAILY, REGISTRATION NUMBER WA60 EWG**

The Director of Law and Corporate Services reported upon an application received to license a Iveco-Ford Daily, registration number WA60 EWG, outside the current age policy for licensing Private Hire Vehicles. The vehicle had first been licensed as a Private Hire Vehicle on 31 August 2018 and the current licence was due to expire on 16 February 2024. The date of first registration of the vehicle was 20 December 2010.

The vehicle had been examined at one of the Council's authorised testing stations and the MOT and Compliance pass certificates had been provided to Members.

Representatives of the proprietor of the vehicle attended the meeting with the vehicle which Members of the Panel inspected.

Resolved – That the application to license the Iveco-Ford Daily, registration number WA60 EWG, as a Private Hire Vehicle be granted for six months.

120 **PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE LICENCE APPLICATION - RENAULT TRAFIC, REGISTRATION NUMBER LX61 DGE**

The Director of Law and Corporate Services reported upon an application received to license a Renault Trafic, registration number LX61 DGE, outside the current age policy for licensing Private Hire Vehicles. The vehicle had first been licensed as a Private Hire Vehicle on 3 September 2018 and the current licence was due to expire on 21 February 2024. The date of first registration of the vehicle was 21 February 2012.

The vehicle had been examined at one of the Council's authorised testing stations and the MOT and Compliance pass certificates had been provided to Members.

Representatives of the proprietor of the vehicle attended the meeting with the vehicle which Members of the Panel inspected.

Resolved – That the application to license the Renault Trafic, registration number LX61 DGE, as a Private Hire Vehicle be granted for six months.

121 **PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE LICENCE APPLICATION - TOYOTA AURIS ESTATE, REGISTRATION NUMBER MK14 VVO**

The Director of Law and Corporate Services reported upon an application received to license a Toyota Auris Estate, registration number MK14 VVO, outside the current age policy for licensing Private Hire Vehicles. The vehicle had first been licensed as a Private Hire Vehicle on 11 January 2022 and the current licence was due to expire on 3 March 2024. The date of first registration of the vehicle was 4 March 2014.

The vehicle had been examined at one of the Council's authorised testing stations and the MOT and Compliance pass certificates had been provided to Members.

The proprietor of the vehicle attended the meeting with the vehicle which Members of the Panel inspected.

Resolved – That the application to license the Toyota Auris Estate, registration number MK14 VVO, as a Private Hire Vehicle be granted for six months.

122 **PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE LICENCE APPLICATION - HYUNDAI I30 ACTIVE, REGISTRATION NUMBER EY14 WSX**

The Director of Law and Corporate Services reported upon an application received to license a Hyundai i30 Active, registration number EY14 WSX, outside the current age policy for licensing Private Hire Vehicles. The vehicle had first been licensed as a Private Hire Vehicle on 1 February 2023 and the current

licence was due to expire on 10 February 2024. The date of first registration of the vehicle was 4 March 2014.

The vehicle had been examined at one of the Council's authorised testing stations and the MOT and Compliance pass certificates had been provided to Members.

The proprietor of the vehicle attended the meeting with the vehicle which Members of the Panel inspected.

Resolved – That the application to license the Hyundai i30 Active, registration number EY14 WSX, as a Private Hire Vehicle be granted for six months.

123 **PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE LICENCE APPLICATION - MERCEDES-BENZ B180, REGISTRATION NUMBER WU14 SPV**

The Director of Law and Corporate Services reported upon an application received to license a Mercedes-Benz B180, registration number WU14 SPV, outside the current age policy for licensing Private Hire Vehicles. The vehicle had first been licensed as a Private Hire Vehicle on 24 July 2019 and the current licence was due to expire on 29 February 2024. The date of first registration of the vehicle was 1 March 2014.

The vehicle had been examined at one of the Council's authorised testing stations and the MOT and Compliance pass certificates had been provided to Members.

The proprietor of the vehicle attended the meeting with the vehicle which Members of the Panel inspected.

Resolved – That the application to license the Mercedes-Benz B180, registration number WU14 SPV, as a Private Hire Vehicle be granted for six months.

124 **PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE LICENCE APPLICATION - VOLKSWAGEN PASSAT, REGISTRATION NUMBER MF14 OTD**

The Director of Law and Corporate Services reported upon an application received to license a Volkswagen Passat, registration number MF14 OTD, outside the current age policy for licensing Private Hire Vehicles. The vehicle had first been licensed as a Private Hire Vehicle on 17 August 2017 and the current licence was due to expire on 16 February 2024. The date of first registration of the vehicle was 27 March 2014.

The vehicle had been examined at one of the Council's authorised testing stations and the MOT and Compliance pass certificates had been provided to Members.

The proprietor of the vehicle attended the meeting with the vehicle which Members of the Panel inspected.

Resolved – That the application to license the Volkswagen Passat, registration number MF14 OTD, as a Private Hire Vehicle be granted for six months.

125 **PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE LICENCE APPLICATION - TOYOTA AVENSIS, REGISTRATION NUMBER MX63 AKJ**

The Director of Law and Corporate Services reported upon an application received to license a Toyota Avensis, registration number MX63 AKJ, outside the current age policy for licensing Private Hire Vehicles. The vehicle had first been licensed as a Private Hire Vehicle on 8 August 2014 and the current licence was due to expire on 3 March 2024. The date of first registration of the vehicle was 4 September 2013.

The vehicle had been examined at one of the Council's authorised testing stations and the MOT and Compliance pass certificates had been provided to Members.

The proprietor and the licenced driver of the vehicle attended the meeting with the vehicle which Members of the Panel inspected.

Resolved – That the application to license the Toyota Avensis, registration number MX63 AKJ, as a Private Hire Vehicle be granted for six months.

126 **PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE LICENCE APPLICATION - TOYOTA AURIS ESTATE, REGISTRATION NUMBER DF13 KTD**

The Director of Law and Corporate Services reported upon an application received to license a Toyota Auris Estate, registration number DF13 KTD, outside the current age policy for licensing Private Hire Vehicles. The vehicle had first been licensed as a Private Hire Vehicle on 5 October 2017 and the last licence expired on 25 December 2023 as the proprietor did not apply to renew their licence before the expiry date. The date of first registration of the vehicle was 26 June 2013.

The vehicle had been examined at one of the Council's authorised testing stations and the MOT and Compliance pass certificates had been provided to Members.

The proprietor of the vehicle and their partner attended the meeting with the vehicle which Members of the Panel inspected.

Resolved – That the application to license the Toyota Auris Estate, registration number DF13 KTD, as a Private Hire Vehicle be granted for six months.

127 **PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE LICENCE APPLICATION - FORD MONDEO, REGISTRATION NUMBER LT14 JPY**

The Director of Law and Corporate Services reported upon an application received to license a Ford Mondeo, registration number LT14 JPY, outside the current age policy for licensing Private Hire Vehicles. The vehicle had first been licensed as a Private Hire Vehicle on 9 January 2020 and the current licence was due to expire on 23 February 2024. The date of first registration of the vehicle was 14 March 2014.

The vehicle had been examined at one of the Council's authorised testing stations and the MOT and Compliance pass certificates had been provided to Members.

The proprietor of the vehicle attended the meeting with the vehicle which Members of the Panel inspected.

Resolved – That the application to license the Ford Mondeo, registration number LT14 JPY, as a Private Hire Vehicle be granted for six months.

128 **EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Resolved - That, under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 1 of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act. The Public Interest Test had been applied and favoured exclusion.

129 **PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER LICENCE APPLICATION - (BVV)**

The Director of Law and Corporate Services submitted a report for Members to consider whether BVV should be granted a Private Hire Driver Licence.

BVV attended the meeting and made representations in respect of the application. BVV responded to questions from Members of the Panel and the legal advisor to the Panel.

Members gave due consideration to the representations made and exercised their rights to consider each case on its individual merits in light of the representations made.

Resolved – That BVV's application for a Private Hire Driver Licence be granted.

130 **PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER LICENCE APPLICATION - (WS)**

The Director of Law and Corporate Services submitted a report for Members to consider whether WS should be granted a Private Hire Driver Licence.

WS attended the meeting and made representations in respect of the application. WS responded to questions from Members of the Panel and the legal advisor to the Panel.

Members gave due consideration to the representations made and exercised their rights to consider each case on its individual merits in light of the representations made.

Resolved – That WS’s application for a Private Hire Driver Licence be granted.

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LICENSING PANEL

Thursday, 15 February 2024

Present: Councillor A Hodson (Chair)

Councillors G Davies
S Bennett

131 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Licensing Act Sub-Committee were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non pecuniary interests in connection with any application on the agenda and state the nature of the interest.

No such declarations were made.

132 APPLICATION FOR A PREMISES TO BE APPROVED AS A VENUE FOR CIVIL MARRIAGES AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS

The Licensing Manager presented the report of the Director of Law and Corporate services for consideration of an application for a premises to be approved as a venue for the solemnization of civil marriages and the registration of civil partnerships. The application was made by Lost Wirral Limited in respect of the upper floor of the premises at Lost Wirral, Unit 1, Claremont Buildings, Old Clatterbridge Road, Clatterbridge, CH63 4JB. Members of the Licensing Panel and officers attended a site inspection at the premises on 13 February 2024.

Members were referred to Guidance on the licensing of premises as set out in the "Registrar General's Guidance for the Approval of Premises as Venues for Civil Marriages and Civil Partnerships." In addition to national criteria within the guidance, it was noted that authorities can specify local requirements. The Licensing Manager reported that Wirral Borough Council's criteria for licensing premises for the solemnization of civil marriages and the registration of civil partnerships included a requirement that the premises must provide disabled access. Following receipt of the application, the premises was inspected by both a Licensing Officer and the Superintendent Registrar. Having inspected the premises the Superintendent Registrar was satisfied that both the ground floor and the upper floor were seemly and dignified venues in which to carry out the proceedings for the solemnization of civil marriages and the registration of civil partnerships. However, as it was identified that there was no provision for disabled access to the upper floor of premises, only the application for the lower floor could be granted under the Officer Scheme of Delegation. Members of the Licensing Panel were therefore asked to consider granting approval for the use of the upper floor.

The applicant informed the Panel that the premises had recently been converted into a wedding venue. The applicant explained to the Panel that the venue was a heritage status building which limited the types of building works which could be permitted. To provide access for individuals with a disability to the upper floor, the following options had been considered by the applicant. The installation of a lift was considered, however this had been discounted as there was not a suitable space within the venue for the installation of a lift without compromising the visual aesthetics of the building. The installation of a stairlift was also considered. The applicant advised the Licensing Panel that three companies had inspected the premises with a view to installing a stairlift however this was discounted due to the width of the staircase. The applicant further reported that it was their intention to offer customers the possibility of having ceremonies on the upper floor balcony within the premises, which would allow the congregation to view the proceedings from the lower floor. The applicant also noted that all guests would still have disabled access to the building as a whole, and therefore the proceedings for individual weddings could be catered for depending on the needs and requirements of guests.

Members of the Panel asked several questions relating to the capacity of the venue, the practicalities of installing disabled access to the upper floor and plans for future wedding proceedings. Having regard to the points raised, Members were satisfied that the venue as a whole had sufficient disabled access throughout the building and that weddings could be organised accordingly depending on the needs of guests in attendance so that individuals with disabilities could attend and participate in proceedings from the ground floor. It was therefore:

Resolved – That the application for the upper floor of Unit 1, Claremont Buildings, Old Clatterbridge Road, Clatterbridge, CH63 4JB for the solemnization of civil marriages and the registration of civil partnerships be approved.

LICENSING PANEL

Friday, 8 March 2024

Present: Councillor A Hodson (Chair)
Councillors S Bennett L Luxon-Kewley
G Davies J Stewart Laing

133 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Panel were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in connection with any application on the agenda and state the nature of the interest.

No such declarations were made.

134 PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE APPLICATION - RENAULT MASTER, REGISTRATION EX59 GNK

The Director of Law and Corporate Services reported upon an application received to license a Renault Master, registration number EX59 GNK, outside the current age policy for licensing Private Hire Vehicles. The vehicle had first been licensed as a Private Hire Vehicle on 21 March 2019 and the current licence was due to expire on 19 March 2024. The date of first registration of the vehicle was 21 September 2009.

The vehicle had been examined at one of the Council's authorised testing stations and the MOT and Compliance pass certificates had been provided to Members.

The proprietor of the vehicle attended the meeting with the vehicle which Members of the Panel inspected.

Resolved – That the application to licence the Renault Master, registration number EX59 GNK, as a Private Hire Vehicle be granted for six months.

135 PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE APPLICATION - CITROEN RELAY, REGISTRATION NUMBER GN61, JVW

The Director of Law and Corporate Services reported upon an application received to license a Citroen Relay, registration number GN61 JVW, outside the current age policy for licensing Private Hire Vehicles. The vehicle had first

been licensed as a Private Hire Vehicle on 23 October 2018 and the current licence was due to expire on 8 March 2024. The date of first registration of the vehicle was 9 January 2012.

The vehicle had been examined at one of the Council's authorised testing stations and the MOT and Compliance pass certificates had been provided to Members.

The proprietor of the vehicle attended the meeting with the vehicle which Members of the Panel inspected.

Resolved – That the application to licence the Citroen Relay, registration number GN61 JVW, as a Private Hire Vehicle be granted for six months. That the vehicle be issued with a Conditions Notice requiring the furthest rear seat on the driver's side of the vehicle to be re-upholstered and for the seatbelts to comply with the conditions of the Private Hire Vehicle licence. All work to be completed no later than 22 March 2024.

136 **PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE APPLICATION - FORD TOURNEO, REGISTRATION NUMBER AJ12 NVA**

The Director of Law and Corporate Services reported upon an application received to license a Ford Tourneo, registration number AJ12 NVA, outside the current age policy for licensing Private Hire Vehicles. The vehicle had first been licensed as a Private Hire Vehicle on 23 December 2019 and the current licence was due to expire on 8 March 2024. The date of first registration of the vehicle was 13 June 2012.

The vehicle had been examined at one of the Council's authorised testing stations and the MOT and Compliance pass certificates had been provided to Members.

The proprietor of the vehicle attended the meeting with the vehicle which Members of the Panel inspected.

Resolved – That the application to licence the Ford Tourneo, registration number AJ12 NVA, as a Private Hire Vehicle be granted for six months

137 **PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE APPLICATION - TOYOTA AURIS, REGISTRATION NUMBER DG14 AKY**

The Director of Law and Corporate Services reported upon an application received to license a Toyota Auris, registration number DG14 AKY, outside the current age policy for licensing Private Hire Vehicles. The vehicle had first been licensed as a Private Hire Vehicle on 29 November 2016 and the current licence was due to expire on 3 April 2024. The date of first registration of the vehicle was 4 April 2014.

The vehicle had been examined at one of the Council's authorised testing stations and the MOT and Compliance pass certificates had been provided to Members.

The proprietor of the vehicle attended the meeting with the vehicle which Members of the Panel inspected.

Resolved – That the application to licence the Toyota Auris, registration number DG14 AKY, as a Private Hire Vehicle be granted for six months.

138 **PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE APPLICATION - AUDI A5, REGISTRATION NUMBER KX63 ZKV**

The Director of Law and Corporate Services reported upon an application received to license a Audi A5, registration number KX63 ZKV, outside the current age policy for licensing Private Hire Vehicles. The vehicle had first been licensed as a Private Hire Vehicle on 9 June 2021 and the current licence was due to expire on 8 March 2024. The date of first registration of the vehicle was 2 September 2013.

The vehicle had been examined at one of the Council's authorised testing stations and the MOT and Compliance pass certificates had been provided to Members.

The proprietor of the vehicle attended the meeting with the vehicle which Members of the Panel inspected.

Resolved – That the application to licence the Audi A5, registration number KX63 ZKV, as a Private Hire Vehicle be granted for six months.

139 **PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE APPLICATION - TOYOTA AURIS, REGISTRATION NUMBER YS14 ESF**

The Director of Law and Corporate Services reported upon an application received to license a Toyota Auris, registration number YS14 ESF, outside the current age policy for licensing Private Hire Vehicles. The vehicle had first been licensed as a Private Hire Vehicle on 26 March 2022 and the current licence was due to expire on 25 March 2024. The date of first registration of the vehicle was 31 May 2014.

The vehicle had been examined at one of the Council's authorised testing stations and the MOT and Compliance pass certificates had been provided to Members.

The proprietor of the vehicle attended the meeting with the vehicle which Members of the Panel inspected.

Resolved – That the application to licence the Toyota Auris, registration number YS14 ESF, as a Private Hire Vehicle be granted for six months.

140 **PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE APPLICATION - TOYOTA AURIS,
REGISTRATION NUMBER SN14 UAZ**

The Director of Law and Corporate Services reported upon an application received to license a Toyota Auris, registration number SN14 UAZ, outside the current age policy for licensing Private Hire Vehicles. The vehicle had first been licensed as a Private Hire Vehicle on 6 December 2018 and the current licence was due to expire on 8 March 2024. The date of first registration of the vehicle was 1 March 2014.

The vehicle had been examined at one of the Council's authorised testing stations and the MOT and Compliance pass certificates had been provided to Members.

The proprietor of the vehicle attended the meeting with the vehicle which Members of the Panel inspected.

Resolved – That the application to licence the Toyota Auris, registration number SN14 UAZ, as a Private Hire Vehicle be granted for six months.

141 **PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE APPLICATION - HYUNDAI TUCSON,
REGISTRATION NUMBER EN70 ACZ**

The Director of Law and Corporate Services reported upon an application to license a Hyundai Tucson, registration number EN70 ACZ, as a Private Hire Vehicle, outside the current criteria for licensing Private Hire Vehicles, which states that the side and rear windows must allow 70% of light to be transmitted through.

The current criteria that vehicles must comply with before being granted a Private Hire Vehicle Licence as set out in the Statement of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy states that: The front windscreen must let at least 75% of light through and all other windows must let at least 70% of light through. It was reported that the date of first registration of the vehicle was 28 January 2021.

The applicant attended the meeting with the vehicle which the Panel inspected.

Members considered carefully the responses given by the applicant.

Resolved – That the application to license the Hyundai Tucson, registration number EN70 ACZ be refused.

142 **EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Resolved - That, under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 1 of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act. The Public Interest Test had been applied and favoured exclusion.

143 **PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER LICENCE APPLICATION - (NJ)**

The Director of Law and Corporate Services submitted a report for Members to consider whether NJ should be granted a Private Hire Driver Licence.

NJ attended the meeting and made representations in respect of the application. NJ responded to questions from Members of the Panel and the legal advisor to the Panel.

Members gave due consideration to the representations made and exercised their rights to consider each case on its individual merits in light of the representations made.

Resolved – That NJ’s application for a Private Hire Driver Licence be granted.

144 **PRIVATE HIRE LICENCE APPLICATION - (AC)**

The Director of Law and Corporate Services submitted a report for Members to consider whether AC should be granted a Private Hire Driver Licence.

AC attended the meeting and made representations in respect of the application. AC responded to questions from Members of the Panel and the legal advisor to the Panel.

Members gave due consideration to the representations made and exercised their rights to consider each case on its individual merits in light of the representations made.

Resolved – That AC’s application for a Private Hire Driver Licence be granted.

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LICENSING PANEL

Friday, 5 April 2024

Present: Councillor J Stewart Laing (Chair)

Councillors G Davies B Hall

145 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

In the absence of the Chair and the Vice Chair, it was –

Resolved – That, Councillor James Stuart Laing be appointed Chair for this meeting.

146 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests and any other relevant interest and to state the nature of the interest.

There were no declarations of interests.

147 APPLICATION FOR A MARKET RIGHTS LICENCE - LISCARD

The Licensing Manager reported that the applicant had withdrawn the application for a Markets Rights Licence to allow a short term market to take place at Liscard Way, Liscard.

148 APPLICATION FOR MARKET RIGHTS LICENCES - NEW BRIGHTON

The Licensing Manager presented the report of the Director of Law and Corporate services for consideration of applications for a Market Rights Licence submitted by RR Events Solutions Ltd to be located at Ian Fraser Walk, New Brighton. The Licensing Panel were informed that applications had been submitted for the operation of continental street markets at the proposed location on 3 to 6 May 2024 and 8 to 11 August 2024. The proposed markets would operate between the hours of 10:00 to 18:00. It was reported that the Regulatory and General Purposes Committee resolved to adopt a Market Rights Policy in September 2022 which set out several criteria for consideration when determining market rights licence applications.

The applicant on behalf of RR Events Solutions Ltd was invited to make submissions to the Panel in support of their application. The applicant reported that RR Events Solutions Ltd had previously operated a continental market at the “Dips” in New Brighton, but that this location had proven unsuccessful due to several reasons including accessibility issues at the site

hence the proposal to hold the markets at Ian Fraser Walk. It was further reported that RR Events Solutions Ltd worked with a core group of traders to operate markets providing craft and artisan produce from different countries of origin, including food and drink as well as goods such as lamps, rugs and garden furniture. The applicant explained that local traders were given the opportunity to take part in the market via advertisements on social media and a maximum of 5 free stalls were available for this. The applicant informed the Licensing Panel that in response to complaints received regarding the operation of previous markets in New Brighton, the applicant advised that there would be no stalls in operation against memorial benches, traders would not sell fish and chips which would be in particular conflict with local providers who specialised in this provision, music would be staggered throughout the day and that lessons had been learned in respect of checking the provenance of the goods to be sold by various traders. The Panel were also informed that the market would close at 4.00pm on a Sunday. The applicant advised that feedback from visitors had been positive and that the proposed markets had received no objections from businesses in the immediate vicinity of the proposed site.

The Chair exercised their discretion to invite a member of the New Brighton Coastal Community Team, who advised that they were representing 25 local businesses across four trading areas in New Brighton, to make a statement. The representative informed the Panel that the operation of a market as proposed within the applications would have an adverse impact on local businesses particularly when operating on Bank Holiday weekends. The representative explained that local traders were reliant on bank holiday trade to sustain their businesses and when events had taken place in New Brighton on Bank Holiday weekends previously, traders experienced a significant loss of trade. The representative informed the Panel that they no longer opened their own business on bank holiday weekends when events were on due to this. The representative further reported that the New Brighton Coastal Community Team considered the market offer to be a duplication of the offer local traders, such as cafes, provided and that there had been a lack of engagement with local traders in the wider New Brighton area. It was submitted to the Licensing Panel that the New Brighton Coastal Community Team would welcome the opportunity to work with the applicant in respect of the operation of a market that was not in direct competition with local traders on Bank Holiday weekends.

In determining both applications for Market Rights Licences, the Licensing Panel gave consideration to the submissions made by the applicant and the statement made by a representative of the New Brighton Coastal Community Team and had regard to the Council's Market Rights Policy, in particular paragraph 4.1 which set out the criteria to be considered when determining whether to grant a licence. The criteria was considered against both the submissions made by the applicant and those made by the representative of

the New Brighton Coastal Community Team as well as the potential impact of the operation of a market at the proposed location on Birkenhead Market.

The Licensing Panel noted that the applicant and the representative of New Brighton Coastal Community Team were willing to work together in respect of the operation of markets in New Brighton and that the primary concern regarding markets taking place in New Brighton was that they have had a negative impact on local businesses when operating on Bank Holiday weekends.

Having considered all of the above the Licensing Panel subsequently:

Resolved – That

- 1. The application for a Market Rights Licence to operate a market between 3 May to 6 May 2024 be refused.**
- 2. The application for a Market Rights Licence to operate a market between 8 August to 11 August 2024 be granted with the following hours:**
 - Thursday 8 August 2024 to Saturday 10 August 2024: 10:00 to 18:00**
 - Sunday 11 August 2024: 10:00 to 16:00**
- 3. The following conditions be attached to The Market Rights Licence between 8 August to 11 August 2024:**
 - There must be no stall selling ready to eat fish and chips which would conflict with local speciality businesses.**
 - Music must not be heard playing from market stalls.**
 - The organiser must check the provenance of products to be sold at the market.**

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REGULATORY & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 5 June 2024

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| REPORT TITLE: | HONORARY FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGH – DAVID ARMSTRONG |
| REPORT OF: | DIRECTOR OF LAW & CORPORATE SERVICES (MONITORING OFFICER) |

REPORT SUMMARY

Under the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to grant the title of Honorary Freeman or Freewoman of the Borough to persons of distinction who have rendered eminent Service to the Borough.

This is a very significant step for the Council to take. It should only be awarded to someone who has made an exceptional contribution to the Borough. David Armstrong is considered to be within this category.

Past recipients of this award are:

- 1993 Lt. Commander Ian Fraser, VC
- 1996 Mr. Joseph Lynch, GC, BEM (GAL)
- 2005 Mr. Ray Holmes
- 2006 The Right Reverend David Urquhart
- 2006 Lord Chan of Oxton
- 2010 Mr. Stephen Maddox, OBE
- 2016 PC David Phillips
- 2016 The Hillsborough 96
- 2019 Doctor Nunzia Bertali
- 2019 2nd Lt. Jay Frederick Simpson USAF
- 2022 Baron Frank Field of Birkenhead
- 2022 Andrew Devine
- 2023 Paul O'Grady
- 2023 Glenda Jackson
- 2023 Sue Higginson

The proposals contained in the report support all themes within the Council Plan: Wirral Working Together 2023 – 27.

If recommended to Council and subsequently approved, a scroll will be presented to David Armstrong by the Mayor.

This matter affects all Wards within the Borough.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Regulatory and General Purposes Committee is requested to recommend to Council that:

- (1) in pursuance of the provisions of Section 249 (5) of the Local Government Act 1972 and in recognition of his dedicated service to the Borough, David Armstrong be admitted as Honorary Freeman of this Borough at an Extraordinary Council Meeting to be held on 22 July 2024; and
- (2) the Director of Law and Corporate Services be requested to:
 - (a) take all the necessary actions associated with (1) above; and
 - (b) arrange for a small civic reception for family representatives of David Armstrong, and ~~some~~ invited guests on a mutually agreeable date following the extraordinary meeting of Council.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 To honour David Armstrong for his eminent public service to the Borough and the people of Wirral.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The alternative option is for this Committee not to recommend to Council that David Armstrong be admitted as an Honorary Freeman of this Borough.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The origin of the Freedom of the Borough goes back to early medieval times, when with the growth of the great English towns, there emerged a class of citizen known as Freemen, who enjoyed important privileges in the government of their own and in the matter of corporate property, as opposed to strangers and the rest of the inhabitants.
- 3.2 With the passing of the Honorary Freedom of the Boroughs Act 1885, the dignity attached to the Office of Freeman was revived and enhanced. This Act conferred upon all Municipal Corporations the power to admit as Honorary Freeman of the Borough “persons of distinction and any persons who have rendered eminent services to the Borough”. This can only be achieved by the Council voting at a specially called meeting. The Freedom of the Borough is the highest award the Council can bestow.
- 3.3 David Armstrong was born and raised in a village near Workington on the West Cumbrian coast. He remains very proud of his West Cumbrian roots. David trained to teach in Manchester and after four years in the city sought his first job there as a Scale 1 Primary School Teacher on a Manchester overspill estate in 1975. He subsequently worked in three other primary schools including a small rural primary school at Great Budworth, near Northwich in Cheshire, where he was Headteacher for 5 years.
- 3.4 In 1990 David Armstrong joined the Council in the Education Department as General Inspector, Development. This was a post which combined works supporting schools generally as well as being responsible for school building matters. The post brought together his two passions in work, children and schools and buildings and construction.
- 3.5 In his 34 years at the Council, David Armstrong undertook a variety of roles, consistently demonstrating his flexibility and willingness to do whatever was asked of him. A series of events in the Council, led in June 2012 to him being asked to cover the Chief Executive role for a period and then from late 2012 to cover a number of other senior roles as needs arose. He took on the role of Acting Chief Executive again in 2015 for a short time. He has never shied away when times at the Council have been most challenging, stepping up for the Council, its staff and local residents when it was needed the most. He is recognised by past and present Members and

officers to be 100% committed to the Borough of Wirral, and its residents, through his career as a true public servant.

3.6 During his time at the Council, David Armstrong held many different roles. Each and every day, he strived to make a positive difference for the borough. Examples of his work and approach included:

- mentoring staff in his own time;
- making sure that colleagues who had gone above the call of duty were themselves recognised;
- being the first person at the site of an emergency
- using his own money to support people in their time of crisis;
- spending many hours negotiating and supporting community groups through times of change;
- driving difficult, lengthy and complex issues through to resolution;
- ensuring there was support and cooperation to see Wirral through to a successful future,

3.7 When proposing him for the honour of Freeman of the Borough, The Leader of the Council, Councillor Paul Stuart described David Armstrong as the “Council’s organisational memory, its conscience and its heart.”

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The modest financial implications can be met from within existing budgets.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Council in accordance with section 249(5), of the Local Government Act 1972 may by a resolution passed by not less than two-thirds of the Members voting thereon at a meeting of the Council specifically convened for the purpose admit David Armstrong to be an Honorary Freeman ~~Freewoman~~ of the borough on the basis of being a person of distinction and who has in its opinion rendered eminent services to the Borough.(.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

6.1 There are no implications associated with staffing, ICT or assets.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 There are no known risks associated with this report.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 Political Group Leaders have been consulted and support the proposals.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision, or activity. Measuring the impact of equality implications and mitigating any negative impact where possible is embedded into the core principles of good governance. There are no equality implications arising from this report.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 ~~This report is for information purposes and as such,~~ There are no direct environment and climate implications arising from the proposals within this report.

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no direct Community Wealth Implications arising from the proposals within this report.

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APPENDICES

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Wirral Council Constitution Part 5, Section 19
Local Government Act 1972

TERMS OF REFERENCE

This report is being considered by the Regulatory and General Purposes Committee in accordance with Section 8.2 of its Terms of Reference

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

| Council Meeting | Date |
|------------------------|-------------|
| Not applicable | |

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REGULATORY AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Thursday, 13 June 2024

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| REPORT TITLE: | APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE LICENSING PANEL AND THE CHARITABLE TRUSTS SUB-COMMITTEE |
| REPORT OF: | DIRECTOR OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE |

REPORT SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is for the Regulatory and General Purposes Committee to:

- i) note the process for appointing Members to the Charitable Trusts Sub-Committee, the Terms of Reference of which have been approved by Council; and
- ii) agree that the Director of Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer) be given delegated authority to convene Licensing Panels for the purposes of carrying out the Council's functions to deal with applications, determinations and reviews of licences or registrations, and any related matter, in respect of any licensed activity that is the responsibility of the Authority (other than under the Licensing Act 2003 or the Gambling Act 2005)

This matter affects all Wards within the Borough.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Regulatory and General Purposes Committee is recommending to:

- (1) note the Terms of Reference of the Charitable Trusts Sub-Committee and the Licensing Panel as referred to in paragraphs 1.1 and 1.3 of this report.
- (2) authorise the Director of Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer) to carry out the wishes of the Group Leaders in allocating Members to membership of the Charitable Trusts Sub-Committee and to appoint those Members with effect from the date at which the proper officer is advised of the names of such Members.
- (3) give delegated authority to the Director of Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer), in consultation with the Chair and Spokespersons to convene Licensing Panels as and when required for the purposes of carrying out the Council's functions to deal with applications, determinations and reviews of licences or registrations, and any related matter, in respect of any licensed

activity that is the responsibility of the Authority (other than under the Licensing Act 2003 or the Gambling Act 2005) and agree that the term of membership be continued until such time as a new Regulatory and General Purposes Committee is appointed.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 The Terms of Reference of the Regulatory and General Purposes Committee as contained in the Constitution (approved by Council on 24 May 2023), requires the Committee to appoint five (5) of its members, politically balanced, to the Charitable Trusts Sub-Committee.
- 1.2 The Charitable Trusts Sub-Committee has responsibility for discharging the Council's functions as corporate trustee of the Wirral Borough Council Mayor's Charity.
- 1.3 The Terms of Reference as amended at Council on 24 May 2023 also allow for the convening of Licensing Panels of between three (3) and five (5) members of the Regulatory and General Purposes Committee, exempt from political balance but not formed solely by members of one Group, with responsibility for the Council's functions to deal with applications, determinations and reviews of licences or registrations, and any related matter, in respect of any licensed activity that is the responsibility of the Authority (other than under the Licensing Act 2003 or the Gambling Act 2005).

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The terms of reference of both the Charitable Trusts Sub-Committee and Licensing Panels, and the relevant rules of procedure are set out within the Constitution of the Council. As such no other options can be considered.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Once appointed to the Charitable Trusts Sub-Committee Members will be responsible for discharging the Council's functions where it acts as corporate trustee of the Wirral Borough Council Mayor's Charity (Charity Number 518288).
- 3.2 Licensing Panels are convened to allow the consideration by Members of applications, determinations and reviews of licences or registrations, and any related matter, in respect of any licensed activity that is the responsibility of the Authority (other than under the Licensing Act 2003 or the Gambling Act 2005), such as skin piercing, hackney carriage and private hire vehicle, driver and operator licenses.
- 3.3 To allow effective management of applications, etc within relevant statutory timescales or otherwise in a timely manner, where the required decision is outside of officer delegated powers, a Licensing Panel can be convened consisting of between 3 and 5 members of the Committee to consider and determine the matter.

3.4 The setting up and running of Panels is an administrative function managed by the Council's Democratic Services and it is proposed to Members that they delegate authority to the Director of Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer) to convene such Panels as and when required in consultation with the Chair and Spokespersons.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising directly from this report.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Regulatory and General Purposes Committee's Terms of Reference require compliance with the requirements of sections 15 to 17 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, and the relevant regulations concerning political balance on committees and sub-committees. Such political proportionality will therefore apply to membership of the Charitable Trusts Sub-Committee but not to Licensing Panels in light of the amended Terms of Reference approved at Council on 24 May 2023 as referred to in paragraph 1.3 above.

5.2 The table below sets out the proportionality calculations for the allocation of 5 seats on the Charitable Trusts Sub-Committee.

| GROUP | NO. OF SEATS |
|------------------|---------------------|
| Labour | 2 |
| Conservative | 1 |
| Green | 1 |
| Liberal Democrat | 1 |

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

6.1 There are no resource implications arising directly from this report.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 There is a requirement under the Council's Constitution that Members be appointed to the Charitable Trusts Sub-Committee and that Licensing Panels are convened to carry out the Council's functions.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 It is for the political groups to decide who they wish to nominate to the Charitable Trusts Sub Committee.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. This report has no impact on equalities.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The recommendations contained within this report are expected to have no impact on emissions of Greenhouse Gases.

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are none arising directly from the content of this report.

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APPENDICES

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The Council's Constitution: Part 3B Committee Terms of Reference.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

This report is being considered by the Regulatory and General Purposes Committee in accordance with Section 8.3 of its Terms of Reference.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

| Council Meeting | Date |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Council | 22 May 2024 |
| Council | 24 May 2023 |
| Council | 25 May 2022 |
| Council Meeting | 6 September 2021 |

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REGULATORY AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Thursday, 13 June 2024

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| REPORT TITLE: | REQUEST BY TRANMERE ROVERS FOOTBALL CLUB TO REGISTER AS A TRADEMARK THE TRANMERE ROVERS CLUB BADGE |
| REPORT OF: | DIRECTOR OF LAW AND CORPORATE SERVICES |

REPORT SUMMARY

This report deals with a request received by the Mayor from Tranmere Rovers Football Club, to register as a trademark the Tranmere Rovers club badge. The badge is derived from the Council's Coat of Arms and Tranmere Rovers Football Club wish to register as a trademark the badge due to unconnected businesses using the badge unofficially.

The recommendations contained within this report meet the objectives in the Wirral Council Plan 2023 – 27 in respect to safe, resilient, and engaged communities.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Regulatory and General Purposes Committee is requested to consider and decide upon the request to register as a trademark the Tranmere Rovers Football Club Badge which is derived from Wirral Borough Council's Coat of Arms.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 Wirral Borough Council has an official Coat of Arms granted by the Kings of Arms under Royal Authority. The right to use the Coat of Arms is exclusive to the Council and cannot be passed on to a third party, however a Badge derived from the Coat of Arms can be used as a “community emblem” available for display by local organisations with the consent of the Council.
- 1.2 The request received is from Tranmere Rovers Football Club (TRFC), to trademark the club’s badge. The badge is derived from Council’s Coat of Arms and TRFC wish to trademark the badge due to unconnected businesses using the badge unofficially.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The options for Committee are to either approve the request from TRFC to register as a trademark the club’s badge which has been derived from Council’s Coat of Arms or to refuse it.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Tranmere Rovers Football Club (TRFC) first introduced a badge on their shirt in 1962, wearing the Coat of Arms of the Borough of Birkenhead, along with adopting their motto "Ubi fides ibi lux et robur", meaning "Where there is faith there is light and strength".
- 3.2 The badge was replaced in 1972 by a monogram, and, in 1981, by a simplified blue and white shield. In 1987, a complex heraldic crest was introduced onto the badge, adapting the Borough of Birkenhead crest through the inclusion of a football and a TRFC logo. The simpler badge was adopted in 1997, and modified slightly in 2009 to mark the club's 125-year anniversary. The blue and white crest incorporated simplified elements of the Birkenhead Civic Coat of Arms. The crozier and lion originally formed part of the Birkenhead Priory seal. The oak tree was a symbol of the Tranmere Local Board. The star or starfish represents Bebington. The two lions represent Oxton and the crescents may represent the Laird family.
- 3.3 For the 2021–22 season, TRFC reverted to their pre-1997 badge. The post 1997 badge was trademarked, but TRFC state that they have not trademarked the pre-1997 badge. The pre-1997 club badge which is the subject of the recommendations within this report is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

6.1 There are no resource, staffing, ICT or other asset implications arising from the use of the Council's Coat of Arms by voluntary groups and / or Wirral based clubs. Any such matters may be brought to the attention of the committee at the time of consideration of this request.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 The primary risk arising from the granting of this request relates to reputational risk to the Council and Borough. Members of the Committee will need to give consideration to the long-established history of Tranmere Rovers Football Club (over 140 years), strong Community links and relationship with the Council.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 The request forming the basis of this report to Committee was received from Councillor George Davies and is re-directed for consideration by elected members of the Committee.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. There are no equality implications arising from this report.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The content and/or recommendations contained within this report are expected to have minimal or no impact on the emission of Greenhouse Gases.

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Promotion of Wirral by a locally based national club, will encourage visitors to Wirral and economic benefits may be gained in terms of the visitor economy and tourism.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Tranmere Rovers badge

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Past papers in respect of applications for the use of Wirral Coat of Arms

Appendix 1

Tranmere Rovers FC Badge





REGULATORY AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

13 JUNE 2024

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| REPORT TITLE | HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE CRITERIA |
| REPORT OF | DIRECTOR OF LAW AND CORPORATE SERVICES |

REPORT SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is for the Committee to consider the results of a consultation in respect of the current criteria for licensing Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles and determine any amendments to the current criteria in light of the feedback received from the consultation, having regard to the Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards and the Department for Transport Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing Best Practice for Licensing Authorities in England.

This matter affects all Wards within the Borough.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Regulatory and General Purposes Committee:-

1. Approve the following amendments to the criteria for licensing Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles contained within the Council’s Statement of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy.

- a) The requirement that Hackney Carriage Vehicles presented for licensing for the first time must be 3 years old or less from the date of manufacture or date of first registration whichever is the earliest be replaced with the following:

A vehicle presented for licensing as a Hackney Carriage Vehicle for the first time with Wirral Council must have been compliant with Euro 5 emission standards at the date of manufacture or date of first registration whichever is the earliest.

- b) The requirement for MOT testing for Hackney Carriage Vehicles be replaced with the following:

A Hackney Carriage Vehicle that is 11 years of age or more from the date of manufacture or the date of first registration, whichever is the

earliest, will be subject to a licence of no more than 6 months and will therefore be required to pass an MOT and Compliance test every 6 months.

c) That the following criteria be removed:

In circumstances when a Hackney Carriage Vehicle proprietor wishes to change a Hackney Carriage Vehicle that is currently licensed to a different vehicle the replacement vehicle must be the same age or less than the vehicle that is currently licensed, up to a maximum of 10 years old. Vehicles that are ten years old or more must be replaced by a vehicle that is no more than ten years old.

d) The requirement that Private Hire Vehicles must be 10 years of age from the date of manufacture or the date of first registration whichever is the earliest be replaced with the following:

A vehicle presented for licensing as a Private Hire Vehicle for the first time with Wirral Council must have been compliant with Euro 6 emission standards at the date of manufacture or date of first registration whichever is the earliest.

e) The requirement for MOT testing for Private Hire Vehicles be replaced with the following:

A Private Hire Vehicle that is 8 years of age or more from the date of manufacture or the date of first registration, whichever is the earliest, will be subject to a licence of no more than 6 months and will therefore be required to pass an MOT and Compliance test every 6 months.

f) The requirement for tinted windows in respect of both Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles be amended as follows:

The front windscreen must allow at least 75% of light through, the front side windows must allow at least 70% of light through and the windows rear of the B-pillar must allow a minimum light transmission of 30%. No windows or glass fitted to the vehicle may have been subject to an enhanced film / after-market tinting post manufacture. All window glass must meet factory specifications.

g) The requirement in respect of an additional step for Private Hire Vehicles be amended as follows:

A vehicle with a top tread for the entrance which exceeds 38cms from the ground must be fitted with a step to allow easy access into and egress from the vehicle. Any vehicle that does not have a step fitted must carry a portable step to be available for passengers. Both a fitted and portable step must be robust to carry the weight of a passenger and covered with a non-slip surface. The step height must be no more

than 38cms from the ground. The driver of the vehicle must risk assess the use of a portable step on each occasion it is requested by a passenger.

2. That the recommended amendments to the criteria for licensing Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles have immediate effect.
3. Authorise the Licensing Manager to amend relevant licensing documents in accordance with any amendments made to the criteria for licensing Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 The criteria for licensing Hackney Carriage Vehicles and Private Hire Vehicles has not been reviewed since September 2017. Following the publication of the Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards in July 2020 and recommendations contained within the Standards, on 15 September 2021 this Committee resolved to adopt a single cohesive policy document for the licensing of drivers, vehicles and operators in respect of both Hackney Carriages and Private Hire licensing functions. The effect of adopting one cohesive policy document was to consolidate existing policy, criteria and conditions, it did not introduce any new requirements or amend the criteria for licensing Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Vehicles. Since that time, on 17 November 2023, the Department for Transport (DfT) published a revised Best Practice Guidance for Taxi and Private Hire Licensing in England (DfT Best Practice Guidance). This non-statutory Best Practice Guidance complements the Statutory Standards, covering a range of issues outside the remit of the Statutory Standards and provides more detailed guidance in respect of the licensing of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles. It is deemed appropriate, due to the lapse of time since the last review and the most recent publication of the DfT's Best Practice Guidance, for the Licensing Authority to undertake this review. The Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards are attached at Appendix 1 to this report. The Department for Transport Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing Best Practice for Licensing Authorities in England is attached at Appendix 2 to this report.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The Committee may determine that there should be no change to the current criteria for licensing Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles. However, having regard to the consultation outcomes, the most recent publication of the DfT Best Practice Guidance, as well as the criteria for licensing vehicles in neighbouring authorities in the City Region, it is considered that should there be no change to the current criteria, proprietors of vehicles will increasingly seek to have their vehicles licensed in other authorities where the criteria does not restrict vehicles in terms of their age or whether their vehicle has been fitted with rear passenger tinted windows.
- 2.2 Officers have considered replacing the current age criteria for licensing Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles with alternative age criteria, however in respect of this criteria, officers have had particular regard to the DfT Best Practice Guidance which describes setting an arbitrary age limit as "inappropriate and counterproductive".
- 2.3 It was considered appropriate to review the requirement for both Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles to provide either a fitted step or a portable step when the entrance height to a vehicle exceeds 38cm, however in light of the feedback from the consultation it is considered that there should be no

change to this requirement but that the criteria in respect of Private Hire Vehicles be enhanced to take into consideration the feedback from the consultation.

- 2.4 Removing the requirement for the criteria for licensing Private Hire Vehicles to include a specific measurement of 16 inches for each passenger, where bench seats are fitted, was considered as an option, however the feedback from the consultation indicates that this continues to be a relevant factor to be considered when determining whether a vehicle should be licensed as a Private Hire Vehicle.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The legislation gives licensing authorities a wide range of discretion over the types of vehicles that they can license as Hackney Carriages or Private Hire Vehicles. This is recognised in the DfT Best Practice Guidance which states:

“Individual licensing authorities are still responsible for deciding their own policies and making decisions on individual licensing matters applying the relevant law and any other relevant considerations. This guidance is primarily intended to assist licensing authorities, but it is only guidance and does not intend to give a definitive statement of the law; any decisions made by an authority remain a matter for that authority.”

- 3.2 This discretion applies to the specification of the type of vehicle that may be licensed and the age of vehicles that may be licensed. In respect of Hackney Carriage Vehicles the legislation states that “ a district council may require any Hackney Carriage licensed by them to be of such design or appearance or bear such distinguishing marks as clearly identify it as a Hackney Carriage. In respect of Private Hire Vehicles, the legislation specifically refers to determining whether a vehicle is “suitable in type, size and design for use as a Private Hire Vehicle” and states that the Council must also be satisfied that the vehicle is in a suitable mechanical condition, is safe and comfortable. Due to this wide discretion it is common practice for Licensing Authorities to set out a range of general criteria to allow vehicle proprietors to put forward vehicles for licensing that meet the criteria. The current criteria for licensing Hackney Carriage Vehicles in Wirral is attached at Appendix 3 to this report. The current criteria for licensing Private Hire Vehicles in Wirral is attached at Appendix 4 to this report.
- 3.3 Having regard to the lapse of time since the criteria has been reviewed and the changing landscape in respect of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire working models it was considered necessary and appropriate to consult both the trade and the public on the criteria used by Wirral Council for licensing Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles.
- 3.4 The consultation took place between 6 November 2023 and 29 February 2024 and the feedback from the consultation is presented in a report attached at Appendix 5 to this report. The approach used for the consultation included an online public consultation through the ‘Have Your Say’ consultation portal with

a page dedicated to the criteria for Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Vehicles. Useful information provided on the site included the licence criteria for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles. Licence holders were sent emails providing them with the details on how to take part in the consultation and officers encouraged licence holders attending the office to take part in the consultation. Officers also engaged with entertainment venues in the night-time economy, through the Licensed Premises Network meetings where licensees were directed to the consultation page. The following groups and organisations were also directly encouraged to take part in the consultation through emails or face to face meetings: Mencap, Wired, Wirral Evolutions and Autism Together. Meetings also took place with “Wirral Participation and Engagement” attended by Social Workers who were again encouraged to engage with the consultation and share the information with their clients. A meeting also took place with representatives of Unite the Union representing the Hackney Carriage trade and Wirral Bangladeshi Taxi Drivers Association. Respondents to the consultation were asked to provide comments in support of their answers to the questionnaire, these written comments are attached at Appendix 6 to this report.

3.5 The consultation questionnaire was developed around understanding stakeholder views on the following key areas:

- Vehicle Age Criteria
- The frequency of MOT testing
- Window Tint
- Step Height into a vehicle
- The seat size allowance for each individual passenger on bench seats in Private Hire Vehicles

3.6 Whilst it was open for consultees to comment on any area of the criteria which was provided in a link on the consultation page, it was considered necessary and appropriate to ask direct questions on the key areas listed above as it is these key areas that raise regular questions from vehicle proprietors in respect of the type of vehicles that may be licensed by Wirral and have a particular impact in terms of the decision to purchase a vehicle to be licensed.

3.7 Members of this Committee will be aware that the criteria for licensing Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles can vary across different licensing authorities, who can apply their own discretion when licensing vehicles. Applying this discretion does allow licensing authorities to apply the standards that they consider to be appropriate to provide a safe and comfortable experience for individuals using licensed vehicles within their local areas.

3.8 In October 2015, the Deregulation Act 2015 made amendments to the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 to allow a Private Hire Operator to sub-contract a booking to another Private Hire Operator irrespective of where they are licensed within the United Kingdom with the exception of Plymouth which has its own legislation. This change brought to

an end the former prohibition on a sub-contract other than between operators licensed by the same authority. This practice is often referred to as “Cross Border Hiring”. The effect of this deregulation is that vehicles with different criteria can operate across many different authorities. Prior to 2022 this amendment to the legislation had only a nominal impact on the operation of licensed vehicles in Wirral, however Licensing Officers are currently receiving a growing concern from individuals licensed by Wirral in respect of the number of vehicles that operate in Wirral but are licensed by other licensing authorities who have different criteria for licensing vehicles. It is reported that individuals are seeking to have their vehicles licensed by other authorities as they are finding it difficult to obtain vehicles that will comply with the current criteria for licensing vehicles with Wirral Council. Should an individual wish to have a vehicle licensed by another licensing authority, in order to be able to drive that vehicle the individual must also obtain a Private Hire Driver Licence from that authority and work for an Operator who has a licence in that authority. The consequences of this are that both drivers and vehicles can operate in Wirral under the conditions and criteria of another licensing authority.

3.9 The key areas referred to in paragraph 3.5 of this report were the focus of the consultation and it is these key areas that this Committee is requested to review in light of the feedback from the consultation, having regard to the Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards and with reference to the Department for Transport’s Best Practice Guidance for Taxi and Private Hire Licensing in England published on 17 November 2023.

3.10 The Statutory Standards state that “when formulating a taxi and private hire vehicle policy, the primary and overriding objective must be to protect the public.” The key areas of the criteria that this Committee are asked to review are set out below with the findings of the consultation and reference to the (DfT) Best Practice Guidance.

3.11 Vehicle Age Criteria - Private Hire Vehicles

The majority of respondents thought that the Council should not maintain the current policy that PHV’s must be no more than 10 years old.

3.12 Vehicle Age Criteria – Hackney Carriage Vehicles

The majority of respondents thought the Council should not maintain the policy of a Hackney Carriage Vehicle having to be no more than 3 years old when granted its first licence. For those who thought there should be an age limit, the most common (40.0%) suggested age was 10 years. Most respondents (50.2%) thought the Council should maintain the policy of Hackney Carriage Vehicles continuing to be licenced with no upper age limit. For those who thought there should be an age limit, the most common suggested ages were 10 and 15 years. More respondents (44.8%) thought the Council should maintain the policy that if owners want to change their Hackney Carriage Vehicle, they must be the same age or less and no more

than 10 years old, than those who thought the Council should not have an upper age limit (33.1%).

3.13 (DfT) Best Practice Guidance

The setting of an arbitrary age limit may be inappropriate, counterproductive and result in higher costs to the trade and ultimately the customer. Licensing authorities should not impose age limits for the licensing of vehicles instead they should consider more targeted requirements to meet their policy objectives on emissions, safety rating and increasing wheelchair accessible provision where this is low.

3.14 Window Tint – Private Hire Vehicles and Hackney Carriage Vehicles

The majority of respondents thought that the Council should not maintain the current policy that in addition to the legal requirement in respect of tinted windows for the front windscreen and front passenger windows all other windows must allow at least 70% of light to get through.

3.15 (DfT) Best Practice Guidance

For most cars on the road today, the minimum light transmission for windscreens is 75% and 70% for front side windows. There are no rules for tinting the windows rear of the B-pillar and vehicles are often manufactured with glass in the rear that is darker than the front, especially in luxury, estate and people carrier style vehicles.

There is a significant cost and inconvenience associated with requiring drivers to replace the standard manufacturer or factory specifications for window glass. Some passengers may feel more comfortable in vehicles that do not have very heavily tinted rear windows but there is a lack of evidence to suggest that these are detrimental to public safety. Balancing these factors, the department considers that licensing authorities should not require the removal of windows rear of the B-pillar if they have a minimum light transmission of 30% or above. This should maintain passenger confidence whilst ensuring a wide range of vehicles may be licensed.

The department recognises that a minimum light transmission of 30% for windows rear of the B-pillar might impact on executive hire vehicles, where passengers demand a higher degree of privacy. Some licensing authorities already grant executive hire vehicles plate exemptions, and they could determine that an exemption from the 30% minimum light transmission level for these vehicles is appropriate. Authorities should be assured that those vehicles are not used for 'normal fares'.

Authorities should carefully consider the views of the public and the trade when considering the acceptance of 'after-market' tinting and should be assured that any after-market window tinting does not negatively affect the safety features of the glass it is applied to.

3.16 Frequency of MOT Testing - Private Hire Vehicles

The majority of respondents (56.3%) thought the Council should not maintain the policy that Private Hire vehicles must have an MOT and Compliance Test every six months if older than 6 years. However, of these respondents, most non-licence holders (70.8%) thought the Council should maintain this requirement.

3.17 Frequency of MOT Testing - Hackney Carriage Vehicles

Most respondents thought the Council should maintain the policy that Hackney Carriage Vehicles must have an MOT and Compliance Test every six months if the vehicle is older than 10 years.

3.18 (DfT) Best Practice Guidance

An annual test for licensed vehicles of whatever age (including vehicles that are less than three years old) seems appropriate in most cases, unless local conditions suggest that more frequent tests are necessary. More frequent tests may be appropriate for older vehicles which may be more prone to mechanical defects or for vehicles owned by proprietors that persistently present vehicles that do not meet the standards required by the authority.

3.19 Step Height – Private Hire Vehicles

There was a higher number of respondents (49.3%) that considered it a necessary requirement for Private Hire vehicles with an entrance step height exceeding 38cm to have a fitted step or portable step than those respondents who considered it was not necessary (19.4%).

3.20 Step Height – Hackney Carriage Vehicles

The majority of respondents (58.6 %) thought it necessary for Hackney Carriage Vehicles with an entrance step height exceeding 38cm to have a fitted step or portable step.

3.21 (DfT) Best Practice Guidance

Authorities should consider the benefits of requiring additional accessibility equipment to be provided in vehicles beyond that which might be included in a standard vehicle specification, noting that the benefits to disabled customers in terms of their confidence and willingness to travel cannot always be monetised.

3.22 The Seat Size Allowance – Private Hire Vehicles

The majority of respondents (54.0%) thought the Council should maintain the policy that where bench seats are fitted to the rear of a Private Hire Vehicle, the seat must be at least 48” wide.

3.23 (DfT) Best Practice Guidance

There is no reference in the Best Practice Guidance to a recommended measurement for individual passengers when a vehicle is fitted with bench seats.

3.24 In light of the feedback from the consultation it is considered appropriate to maintain this requirement as part of the criteria for licensing Private Hire Vehicles.

3.25 The Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards states that “any decision taken to alter the licensing regime is likely to have an impact on the operation of the taxi and private hire vehicle sector in neighbouring areas.” The table attached at Appendix 7 to this report shows the criteria applied in other authorities in the City Region in respect of the age of vehicles that may be licensed, the frequency of MOT’s in respect of licensed vehicles and the provisions in respect of the type of windows permitted in licensed vehicles.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Each of the licences referred to in this report attracts a fee payable to the Council. Should there be no change to the criteria for licensing Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles it is considered that increasing numbers of proprietors will seek to licence their vehicles and themselves with other licensing authorities which will result in a continual reduction in the amount of income received from licence fees.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Section 47(1) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 provides that:

A district council may attach to the grant of a licence of a hackney carriage under the Town Police Clauses Act of 1847 such conditions as the district council may consider reasonably necessary.

(2) Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing subsection, a district council may require any hackney carriage licensed by them under the Act of 1847 to be of such design or appearance or bear such distinguishing marks as shall clearly identify it as a hackney carriage.

5.2 Section 48 (1) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 provides that a district council shall not grant a licence unless it is satisfied that the vehicle is:

- Suitable in type, size and design for use as a Private Hire Vehicle
- Not of such design and appearance as to lead any person to believe that the vehicle is a Hackney Carriage
- In a suitable mechanical condition
- Safe and Comfortable
- That there is in force in relation to the use of the vehicle a policy of insurance

5.3 Section 70 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 provides that a district council may charge such fees for the grant of vehicle and operators' licences as may be resolved by them from time to time and as may be sufficient to aggregate to cover in whole or in part –

(a) the reasonable cost of carrying out by or on behalf of the district council of inspections of hackney carriage and private hire vehicles for the purpose of determining whether such licence should be granted or renewed

(b) the reasonable cost of providing hackney carriage stands

(c) any reasonable administrative or other costs in connection with the forgoing and with the control and supervision of hackney carriages and private hire vehicles.

5.4 Section 11 of the Deregulation Act 2015 has amended Section 55 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 to allow Private Hire Operators to sub-contract work across different Licensing Authorities.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

6.1 The proposed amendments to the criteria for licensing Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles may have an impact on the level of staffing resources required to process and issue licences as well as the resources necessary to inspect vehicles for compliance with licence criteria and conditions. This is a matter that will be kept under review.

7.0 RISKS

7.1 There is a risk that should the Committee approve the proposed amendments to the criteria for licensing Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles there will be a lowering of the standard of vehicles that are licensed by the Council, however it is considered that this risk can be mitigated by increasing the level of inspections of vehicles carried out by Licensing Officers. In considering this risk, a relevant factor is that vehicles are being licensed by neighbouring authorities that currently have criteria proposed within the recommendations of this report and are carrying out work in Wirral.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 A Council Have Your Say consultation has been undertaken and the outcome of this consultation is referenced throughout the report.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?

Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision or activity. The Equality Impact Assessment relevant to the proposed amendments to the criteria for licensing Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles is available via the link below.

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments>

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The recommendations have taken into consideration the fact that both Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles may contribute to harmful emissions including particulate matter, hydrocarbons and carbon monoxide which can be harmful to health. The proposal to link the licensing of vehicles to the level of emissions seeks to mitigate the impact of these implications and is in line with the Council's Environment and Climate Emergency Policy Statement.

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The proposed amendments to the criteria for the licensing of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles seeks to enhance the provision of vehicles licensed by Wirral Council in order that they can better serve the local economy and improve accessibility across Wirral.

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APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 - The Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards
Appendix 2 - The Department for Transport Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing Best Practice for Licensing Authorities in England
Appendix 3 - The Criteria for licensing Hackney Carriage Vehicles

- Appendix 4 - The Criteria for licensing Private Hire Vehicles
- Appendix 5 - Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Vehicles Consultation Report
- Appendix 6 - Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Vehicles Consultation – Comments
- Appendix 7 - Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence Criteria in neighbouring Authorities across the City Region

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The Council’s Environment and Climate Emergency Policy Statement.
 The Town Police Clauses Act 1847
 The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976
 The Equality Act 2010
 The Deregulation Act 2015

TERMS OF REFERENCE

This report is being considered by the Regulatory and General Purposes Committee who are delegated to determine such matters in accordance with Section 8.2 of the Regulatory and General Purposes Committee’s Terms of Reference set out in the constitution.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

| Council Meeting | Date |
|---|-------------------|
| Regulatory and General Purposes Committee | 15 September 2021 |

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Department
for Transport

Statutory guidance

Statutory taxi and private hire vehicle standards

Updated 25 November 2022

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1. Introduction

There is evidence to support the view that taxis and private hire vehicles (PHV) are a high-risk environment. In terms of risks to passengers, this can be seen in abuse and exploitation of children and vulnerable adults facilitated and in some cases perpetrated by the trade and the number of sexual crimes reported which involve taxi and private hire vehicle drivers. Links between the trade and child sexual abuse and exploitation have been established in many areas and other investigations continue. Data on reported sexual assaults by taxi and private hire vehicle drivers evidence

the risk to passengers – [data from Greater Manchester](#) and [data from Merseyside](#) suggest that, if similar offence patterns are applied across England, 623 sexual assaults per year are reported. These figures do not however account for the under reporting of crime which is estimated to be as high as 83 % in the [Crime survey for England and Wales](#).

The Policing and Crime Act 2017 enables the Secretary of State for Transport to issue statutory guidance on exercising taxi and private hire vehicle licensing functions to protect children and vulnerable individuals who are over 18 from harm when using these services. For the purposes of this document, a child is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday – and the term vulnerable individual has the same meaning as the definition of a vulnerable adult for the purpose of [Section 42 of the Care Act 2014](#), which applies where a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that an adult in its area (whether or not ordinarily resident there):

- has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs)
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect
- as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it

Whilst the focus of the statutory taxi and private hire vehicle standards is on protecting children and vulnerable adults, all passengers will benefit from the recommendations contained in it. There is consensus that common core minimum standards are required to better regulate the taxi and private hire vehicle sector, and the recommendations in this document are the result of detailed discussion with the trade, regulators and safety campaign groups. The Department for Transport (DfT) therefore expects these recommendations to be implemented and maintained unless there is a compelling local reason not to.

It should be noted that as policing and criminal justice is not a devolved matter, the statutory taxi and private hire vehicle standards issued under the Policing and Crime Act 2017 will continue to have effect in Wales although responsibility for taxi and private hire vehicle policy was devolved to the Welsh Assembly in April 2018. Should the Welsh Government introduce legislation to regulate on these issues, the standards in this document would, cease to apply.

All local authorities and district councils that provide children's and other types of services, including licensing authorities, have a statutory duty to make arrangements to ensure that their functions and any services that they contract out to others are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This means that licensing

authorities should have in place arrangements that reflect the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. This includes clear whistleblowing procedures, safe recruitment practices and clear policies for dealing with allegations against people who work with children, as set out in the [Working together to safeguard children](#) statutory guidance.

The statutory taxi and private hire vehicle standards reflect the significant changes in the industry and lessons learned from experiences in local areas since the 2010 version of the DfT best practice guidance. This includes extensive advice on checking the suitability of individuals and operators to be licensed, safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, the Immigration Act 2016 and Common Law Police Disclosure (which replaced the notifiable occupations scheme).

The standards in this document replace relevant sections of the best practice guidance issued by the department in 2010. Where there is a conflict between the statutory taxi and private hire vehicle standards and the best practice guidance the department issues on taxi and private hire vehicle licensing, the standards in this document take precedence.

Terminology

Taxis are referred to in legislation, regulation and common language as hackney carriages, black cabs and cabs. The term taxi is used throughout this document and refers to all such vehicles. Taxis can be hired immediately by hailing on the street or at a rank.

Private hire vehicles include a range of vehicles including minicabs, executive cars, chauffeur services, limousines and some school and day centre transport services. All private hire vehicle journeys must be pre-booked via a licensed private hire vehicle operator and are subject to a triple licensing lock, that is, the operator fulfilling the booking must use vehicles and drivers licensed by the same authority as that which granted its licence.

The term private hire vehicle is used throughout this document to refer to all such vehicles.

2. Consideration of the statutory taxi and private hire vehicle standards

The past failings of licensing regimes must never be repeated. The department has carefully considered the measures contained in the statutory taxi and private hire vehicle standards and recommend that these should be put in to practice and administered appropriately to mitigate the risk posed to the public. The purpose of setting standards is to protect children and vulnerable adults, and by extension the wider public, when using taxis and private hire vehicles.

The government set out in the [Modern crime prevention strategy](#) the evidence that where government, law enforcement, businesses and the public work together on prevention, this can deliver significant and sustained cuts in certain crimes. That is good news for victims and communities and it makes clear economic sense too. Educating the public on the risks of using unlicensed drivers and vehicles, how to identify the licensed trade and appropriate measures to take when using these services will protect all passengers. More information can be found in the [Staying safe: guidance for passengers](#).

The strategy committed to protect children and young people from the risk of child sexual abuse and exploitation (CSAE), by working with local authorities to introduce rigorous taxi and private hire vehicle licensing regimes. Both the [Jay report](#) and [Casey report](#) on CSAE highlighted examples of taxi/private hire vehicle drivers being directly linked to children that were abused, including instances when children were picked up from schools, children's homes or from family homes and abused, or sexually exploited.

The Casey report made clear that weak and ineffective arrangements for taxi and private hire vehicle licensing had left the children and public at risk. The DfT has worked with the Home Office, Local Government Association (LGA), personal safety charities, trade unions and trade bodies, holding workshops, forums, and sharing evidence and good practice with local authorities to assist in the setting of the standards.

This document is published by the Secretary of State for Transport under section 177(1) of the [Policing and Crime Act 2017](#) following consultation in accordance with section 177(5).

The document sets out a framework of policies that, under section 177(4), licensing authorities must have regard to when exercising their functions. These functions include developing, implementing and reviewing their taxi and private hire vehicle licensing regimes. Having regard is more than having a cursory glance at a document before arriving at a preconceived conclusion.

Having regard to these standards requires public authorities, in formulating a policy, to give considerations the weight which is proportionate in the circumstances. Given that the standards have been set directly to address the safeguarding of the public and the potential impact of failings in this area, the importance of thoroughly considering these standards cannot be overstated. It is not a question of box ticking, the standards must be considered rigorously and with an open mind.

Although it remains the case that licensing authorities must reach their own decisions, both on overall policies and on individual licensing matters in light of the relevant law, it may be that the statutory taxi and private hire vehicle standards might be drawn upon in any legal challenge to an authority's practice, and that any failure to adhere to the standards without sufficient justification could be detrimental to the authority's defence. In the interest of transparency, all licensing authorities should publish their consideration of the measures contained in statutory taxi and private hire vehicle standards, and the policies and delivery plans that stem from these. The department has undertaken to monitor the effectiveness of the standards in achieving the protection of children and vulnerable adults (and by extension all passengers).

The statutory taxi and private hire vehicle standards does not purport to give a definitive statement of the law and any decisions made by a licensing authority remain a matter for that authority.

3. Administering the licensing regime

3.1 Licensing policies

The department recommends all licensing authorities make publicly available a cohesive policy document that brings together all their procedures on taxi and private hire vehicle licensing. This should include but not be limited to policies on convictions, a fit and proper person test, licence conditions and vehicle standards.

When formulating a taxi and private hire vehicle policy, the primary and overriding objective must be to protect the public. The importance of ensuring that the licensing regime protects the vulnerable cannot be

overestimated. This was highlighted in the [Report by Dame Louise Casey CB on safeguarding failings](#), published in February 2015.

It will be evident from this report that in many cases the activities of perpetrators take place in spheres which are regulated by the council – taxis have been the focus of particular concern. Persistent and rigorous enforcement of the regulatory functions available to the council, including the placing of conditions on private hire taxi operator licences where appropriate, would send a strong signal that the trade is being monitored and would curtail the activities of opportunistic perpetrators whereby taxi drivers have solicited children to provide sex in return for cigarettes, alcohol or a fare free ride.

The long-term devastation caused by CSAE was summarised in the same report:

Victims suffer from suicidal feelings and often self-harm. Many become pregnant. Some have to manage the emotional consequences of miscarriages and abortions while others have children that they are unable to parent appropriately. The abuse and violence continues to affect victims into adulthood. Many enter violent and abusive relationships. Many suffer poor mental health and addiction.

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (Rotherham Council) provides an example of how the systematic review of policies and procedures and the implementation of a plan to drive improvements in practice can result in a well-functioning taxi and private hire vehicle sector that is rebuilding local confidence in the industry. The history of past failings here and elsewhere is well known, but it is the transparency and resolution that Rotherham Council has demonstrated and the high standards they now require that are rebuilding public confidence.

One of the key lessons learned is that it is vital to review policies and reflect changes in the industry both locally and nationally. Licensing authorities should review their licensing policies every 5 years, but should also consider interim reviews should there be significant issues arising in their area, and their performance annually.

3.2 Duration of licenses

A previous argument against issuing licences for more than a year was that a criminal offence might be committed, and not notified, during this period.

This can of course also be the case during the duration of a shorter licence. This risk can be mitigated for drivers by authorities to undertaking regular interim checks. To help authorities monitor licensees' suitability, licensing authorities should engage with their police force to ensure that when the police believe a licensee presents a risk to the travelling public they use their [Common law police disclosure](#) powers to advise them.

The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 (as amended) sets a standard length at 3 years for taxi and private hire vehicle drivers and 5 years for private hire vehicle operators. Any shorter duration licence should only be issued when the licensing authority thinks it is appropriate in the specific circumstances of the case. If a licensee has requested one, or where required (for example, when the licence holder's leave to remain in the UK is time-limited) or when the licence is only required to meet a short-term demand – they should not be issued on a probationary basis.

3.3 Whistleblowing

It is in the application of licensing authority's policies (and the training and raising of awareness among those applying them) that protection will be provided. Where there are concerns that policies are not being applied correctly, it is vital that these can be raised, investigated and remedial action taken if required. Licensing authorities should have effective internal procedures in place for staff to raise concerns and for any concerns to be dealt with openly and fairly.

A report into the licensing of drivers by South Ribble Borough Council highlights the implications of not applying the agreed policies. In early August 2015, concerns were raised regarding decisions to renew the licences of drivers where there were potential incidents of child sexual exploitation. An internal review concluded that there had been failings in local investigatory procedures which might have affected the ability of the general licensing committee to make proper decisions, and information sharing with the police and data recording was not satisfactory.

The external investigation in South Ribble concluded that there had been a lack of awareness and priority given to safeguarding and the safety of taxi (and private hire vehicle) passengers in the manner in which licensing issues were addressed. We are pleased to note that the [South Ribble taxi licensing report](#) concludes:

The council have been active at every stage in responding to issues and concerns identified. It has taken steps to address operational issues in the licensing function and has engaged fully with other agencies in so doing. In the light of the above, it is not necessary to make any further recommendations.

It is hoped that all licensing authorities will have learnt from these mistakes but to prevent a repeat, local authorities should ensure they have an effective whistleblowing policy and that all staff are aware of it. If a worker is aware of, and has access to, effective internal procedures for raising concerns then whistleblowing is unlikely to be needed.

The [Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998](#) (PIDA), commonly referred to as whistleblowing legislation, provides protection for those that have a reasonable belief of serious wrongdoing, including failure to comply with professional standards, council policies or codes of practice/conduct. The PIDA is part of employment law. In the normal course of events, if a worker reveals information that his employer does not want revealed it may be a disciplinary offence. If someone leaked their employer's confidential information to the press, they might expect to be dismissed for that. The PIDA enables workers who blow the whistle about wrongdoing to complain to an employment tribunal if they are dismissed or suffer any other form of detriment for doing so. It is a qualified protection and certain conditions would have to be met for the worker to be protected. More information is available online for [Employees, known as whistleblowing](#) and the [Guide for employers on whistleblowing](#).

3.4 Consultation at the local level

Licensing authorities should consult on proposed changes in licensing rules that may have significant impacts on passengers and/or the trade. Such consultation should include not only the taxi and private hire vehicle trades but also groups likely to be the trades' customers. Examples are groups representing disabled people, Chambers of Commerce, organisations with a wider transport interest (such as the Campaign for Better Transport and other transport providers), women's groups, local traders, and the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. It may also be helpful to consult with night-time economy groups (such as Pubwatch) if the trade is an important element of dispersal from the local night-time economy's activities.

Any decision taken to alter the licensing regime is likely to have an impact on the operation of the taxi and private hire vehicle sector in neighbouring areas – and licensing authorities should engage with these areas to identify any concerns and issues that might arise from a proposed change. Many areas convene regional officer consultation groups or, more formally, councillor liaison meetings – this should be adopted by all authorities.

3.5 Changing licensing policy and requirements

Any changes in licensing requirements should be followed by a review of the licences already issued. If the need to change licensing requirements has been identified, this same need is applicable to those already in possession of a licence. That is not however to suggest that licences should be automatically revoked overnight, for example if a vehicle specification is changed it is proportionate to allow those that would not meet the criteria to have the opportunity to adapt or change their vehicle. The same pragmatic approach should be taken to driver licence changes – if requirements are changed to include a training course or qualification, a reasonable time should be allowed for this to be undertaken or gained. The implementation schedule of any changes that affect current licence holders must be transparent and communicated promptly and clearly.

Where a more subjective change has been introduced, for example an amended policy on previous convictions, a licensing authority must consider each case on its own merits. Where there are exceptional, clear and compelling reasons to deviate from a policy, licensing authorities should consider doing so. Licensing authorities should record the reasons for any deviation from the policies in place

4. Gathering and sharing information

Licensing authorities must consider as full a range of information available to them when making a decision whether to grant a licence and to meet their ongoing obligation to ensure a licensee remains suitable to hold a licence.

4.1 The Disclosure and Barring Service

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) provides access to criminal record information through its disclosure service for England and Wales. The DBS also maintains the lists of individuals barred from working in regulated activity with children or adults. The DBS makes independent barring decisions about people who have harmed, or where they are considered to pose a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable person within the workplace. The DBS enables organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors to make safer employment decisions by identifying candidates who may be unsuitable for certain work, especially that which involves vulnerable groups including children.

Enhanced certificates with a check of the barred lists include details of spent and unspent convictions recorded on the Police National Computer (PNC), any additional information which a chief officer of police believes to be relevant and ought to be disclosed, as well as indicating whether the individual is barred from working in regulated activity with children or adults. Spent convictions and cautions are disclosed on standard and enhanced certificates according to rules set out in legislation. Convictions which resulted in a custodial sentence, and convictions or cautions for a specified serious offence such as those involving child sexual abuse will always be disclosed on a standard or enhanced certificate. See the [Guidance for disclosure rules](#), and those offences which will always be disclosed for more. As well as convictions and cautions, an enhanced certificate may include additional information which a chief police officer reasonably believes is relevant and ought to be disclosed. Chief police officers must have regard to the [Statutory disclosure guidance](#) issued by the Home Office when considering disclosure. See the [\(Annex – Disclosure and Barring Service information\)](#) summary for the information provided at each level of DBS checks for more.

It should be noted that licensing authorities must not circumvent the DBS process and seek to obtain details of previous criminal convictions and other information that may not otherwise be disclosed on a DBS certificate. Whilst data protection legislation (not just the Data Protection Act 2018 or General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)) gives individuals (or data subjects) a right of access to the personal data that an organisation holds about them, it is a criminal offence to require an individual to exercise their subject access rights so as to gain information about any convictions and cautions. This could potentially lead to the authority receiving information to which it is not entitled. The appropriate way of accessing an individual's criminal records is through an enhanced DBS and barred lists check.

4.2 The DBS update service

Subscription to the DBS update service allows those with standard and enhanced certificates to keep these up to date online and, with the individual's consent, allows nominees to check the status of a certificate online at any time. Subscription to the service removes the need for new certificates to be requested, reduces the administrative burden and mitigates potential delays in relicensing.

The DBS will search regularly to see if any relevant new information has been received since the certificate was issued. The frequency varies depending on the type of information – for criminal conviction and barring information, the DBS will search for updates on a weekly basis. For non-conviction information, the DBS will search for updates every 9 months.

Licensing authorities are able to request large numbers of status checks on a daily basis. The DBS has developed a multiple status check facility (MSCF) that can be accessed via a web service. The MSCF enables organisations to make an almost unlimited number of status checks simultaneously. See the [MSCF checking guide](#) for more.

Should the MSCF advise that new information is available the DBS certificate should no longer be relied upon and a new DBS certificate requested.

4.3 Common Law Police Disclosure

The DBS is not the only source of information that should be considered as part of a fit and proper assessment for the licensing of taxi and private hire vehicle drivers. Common Law Police Disclosure ensures that where there is a public protection risk, the police will pass information to the employer or regulatory body to allow them to act swiftly to mitigate any danger.

Common Law Police Disclosure replaced the Notifiable Occupations Scheme (NOS) in March 2015 and focuses on providing timely and relevant information which might indicate a public protection risk. Information is passed on at arrest or charge, rather than on conviction which may be some time after, allowing any measures to mitigate risk to be put in place immediately.

This procedure provides robust safeguarding arrangements while ensuring only relevant information is passed on to employers or regulatory bodies.

Licensing authorities should maintain close links with the police to ensure effective and efficient information sharing procedures and protocols are in place and are being used.

4.4 Licensee self-reporting

Licence holders should be required to notify the issuing authority within 48 hours of an arrest and release, charge or conviction of any sexual offence, any offence involving dishonesty or violence and any motoring offence. An arrest for any of the offences within this scope should result in a review by the issuing authority as to whether the licence holder is fit to continue to do so. This must not however be seen as a direction that a licence should be withdrawn – it is for the licensing authority to consider what, if any, action in terms of the licence should be taken based on the balance of probabilities. Should an authority place an obligation on licensees to notify under these circumstances, authorities should also ensure appropriate procedures are in place to enable them to act in a suitable timeframe if and when needed.

Importantly, a failure by a licence holder to disclose an arrest that the issuing authority is subsequently advised of might be seen as behaviour that questions honesty and therefore the suitability of the licence holder regardless of the outcome of the initial allegation.

4.5 Referrals to the DBS and the police

In some circumstances it may be appropriate under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 for licensing authorities to make referrals to the DBS. A decision to refuse or revoke a licence as the individual is thought to present a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult, should be referred to the DBS. The power for the licensing authority to make a referral in this context arises from the undertaking of a safeguarding role.

Further [Guidance on the referral duty for local authorities as regulated activity providers](#) has been provided by DBS.

The department recommends that licensing authorities should make a referral to DBS when it is thought that:

- an individual has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult

- an individual has satisfied the [DBS harm test](#)
- received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence
- the person they are referring is, has or might in future be working in regulated activity

If the above conditions are satisfied, DBS may consider it appropriate for the person to be added to a barred list.

These referrals may result in the person being added to a barred list and enable other licensing authorities to consider this should further applications to other authorities be made. See the [Making barring referrals to the DBS](#) for more.

4.6 Working with the police

The police are an invaluable source of intelligence when assessing whether a licensing applicant is a fit and proper person. It is vital that licensing authorities have a partnership with the police service to ensure that appropriate information is shared as quickly as possible. As part of building an effective working relationship between the licensing authority and the police, action taken by the licensing authority as a result of information received should be fed-back to the police. Increasing the awareness among police forces of the value licensing authorities place on the information received, particularly on non-conviction intelligence, will assist furthering these relationships and reinforce the benefits of greater sharing of information.

This relationship can be mutually beneficial, assisting the police to prevent crime. The police can gain valuable intelligence from drivers and operators, for example, the identification of establishments that are selling alcohol to minors or drunks, or the frequent transportation of substance abusers to premises.

To aid further the quality of the information available to all parties that have a safeguarding duty, a revocation or refusal on public safety grounds should also be advised to the police.

4.7 Sharing licensing information with other licensing authorities

Obtaining the fullest information minimises the doubt as to whether an applicant or licensee is fit and proper. An obvious source of relevant information is any previous licensing history. Applicants and licensees should be required to disclose if they hold or have previously held a licence with another authority. An applicant should also be required to disclose if they have had an application for a licence refused, or a licence revoked or suspended by any other licensing authority. Licensing authorities should explicitly advise on their application forms that making a false statement or omitting to provide the information requested may be a criminal offence.

The Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (Safeguarding and Road Safety) Act 2022 (the 2022 Act), requires all licensing authorities in England to use the National Register for Revocations, Refusals and Suspensions (NR3S) to record, and search for, driver refusals, suspensions and revocations. Under the Act, all licensing authorities in England must also report specified concerns about drivers to the authority that issued that driver's licence. An English licensing authority must consider suspending or revoking a driver's licence based on the concerns reported to them by another GB licensing authority. DfT has published [Statutory guidance to support taxi and private hire vehicle licensing authorities in England in complying with this legislation](#) and all English licensing authorities must have regard to this.

The 2022 Act does not place any obligations on Welsh licensing authorities but every licensing authority in Wales is able to search the database and make entries to it. Welsh licensing authorities should use tools like the NR3S to share information on a more consistent basis to mitigate the risk of non-disclosure of relevant information by applicants or licensees. Welsh licensing authorities should follow the same principles when using the NR3S and sharing information with other licensing authorities as set out in the statutory guidance for English licensing authorities. Where a Welsh licensing authority requests information from another licensing authority (whether in England or Wales) as a result of using the NR3S to support their decision-making for an application or renewal, the licensing authority holding the information should consider whether to disclose this information to the Welsh licensing authority in line with its obligations under data protection legislation.

Data protection legislation provides exemption from the rights of data subjects for the processing of personal data in connection with regulatory activities. This includes taxi and private hire vehicle licensing. The exemption applies only to information processed for the core regulatory activities of appropriate organisations – it may not be used in a blanket manner. The exemption applies only to the extent that the application of the rights of data subjects to the information in question would be likely to prejudice the proper discharge of the regulatory functions. The Information

Commissioner's Office (ICO) has published [Guidance to assist organisations to fully understand their obligations and suggest good practice](#) .

For these processes to be effective, all licensing authorities must keep a complete and accurate record of the reasons for refusal, suspension or revocation of a licence, in order that this can be shared if requested and appropriate to do so. The 2022 Act requires licensing authorities in England to keep a record of any relevant information related to decisions recorded on the NR3S database for 11 years from the date of decision. Whilst this requirement does not apply to licensing authorities in Wales, those authorities should retain the relevant records for at least 11 years.

Should a licensing authority receive information that a licence holder did not disclose relevant information, for example by checking the NR3S database, the authority should consider whether the non-disclosure represents dishonesty and should review whether the licence holder remains fit and proper.

4.8 Multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH)

Multi-agency safeguarding hubs are a way to improve the safeguarding response for children and vulnerable adults through better information sharing and high quality and timely safeguarding responses. MASHs (or similar models) should operate on 3 common principles:

- information sharing
- joint decision making
- coordinated intervention.

The Home Office report on [Multi agency working and information sharing](#) recommended that effective multi-agency working still needs to become more widespread. The Children's Commissioner's 2013 [Inquiry into child sexual exploitation in gangs and groups](#) found that both police and local authorities still identified the inability to share information as a key barrier to safeguarding children from sexual abuse and exploitation.

All licensing authorities should operate or establish a means to facilitate the objectives of a MASH (that is, the sharing of necessary and relevant information between stakeholders). As has been emphasised throughout this document, one of the most effective ways to minimise the risk to children and vulnerable adults when using taxis and private hire vehicles is

to ensure that decisions on licensing individuals are made with the fullest knowledge possible.

4.9 Complaints against licensees

Complaints about drivers and operators provide a source of intelligence when considering the renewal of a licence or to identify problems during the period of the licence. Patterns of behaviour such as complaints against drivers, even when they do not result in further action in response to an individual complaint, may be indicative of characteristics that raise doubts over the suitability to hold a licence. All licensing authorities should have a robust system for recording complaints, including analysing trends across all licensees as well as complaints against individual licensees. Such a system will help authorities to build a fuller picture of the potential risks an individual may pose and may tip the balance of probabilities assessment that licensing authorities must take.

Licensees with a high number of complaints made against them should be contacted by the licensing authority and concerns raised with the driver and operator (if appropriate). Further action in terms of the licence holder must be determined by the licensing authority, which could include no further action, the offer of training, a formal review of the licence, or formal enforcement action.

To ensure that passengers know who to complain to, licensing authorities should produce guidance for passengers on making complaints directly to the licensing authority that should be available on their website. Ways to make a complaint to the authority should be displayed in all licensed vehicles. This is likely to result in additional work for the licensing authority but has the advantage of ensuring consistency in the handling of complaints. Currently, it is more likely that a complaint against a taxi driver would be made directly to the licensing authority whereas a complaint against a private hire vehicle driver is more likely to be made to the operator. An effective partnership in which operators can share concerns regarding drivers is also encouraged.

Importantly, this approach will assist in the directing of complaints and information regarding the behaviour of drivers who may be carrying a passenger outside of the area in which the driver is licensed to the authority that issued the licence. In order for this to be effective licensing authorities must ensure that drivers are aware of a requirement to display information

on how to complain and take appropriate sanctions against those that do not comply with this requirement.

In terms of investigating complaints CCTV footage of an incident can provide an invaluable insight, providing an independent witness to an event. This can assist in the decision whether to suspend or revoke a licence. The potential benefits of mandating CCTV in vehicles is discussed in the [In-vehicle visual and audio recording – CCTV](#) section.

4.10 Overseas convictions

The DBS cannot access criminal records held overseas, only foreign convictions that are held on the Police National Computer may, subject to the disclosure rules, be disclosed. Therefore, a DBS check may not provide a complete picture of an individual's criminal record where there have been periods living or working overseas – the same applies when an applicant has previously spent an extended period (3 or more continuous months) outside the UK. It should however be noted that some countries will not provide a certificate of good character unless the individual has been resident for 6 months or more.

Licensing authorities should seek or require applicants to provide where possible criminal records information or a certificate of good character from overseas in this circumstance to properly assess risk and support the decision-making process. It is the character of the applicant as an adult that is of particular interest, therefore an extended period outside the UK before the age of 18 may be less relevant. As with all licensing decisions, each case must be considered on its own merits. See the [Criminal record checks for overseas applicants](#) for more information on applying for overseas criminal record information or certificate of good character.

Where an individual is aware that they have committed an offence overseas which may be equivalent to those listed in the annex to this document ([Annex – Assessment of previous convictions](#)), licensing authorities should advise the applicant to seek independent expert or legal advice to ensure that they provide information that is truthful and accurate.

5. Decision making

5.1 Administration of the licensing framework

A policy is only effective if it is administered properly. The taxi and private hire vehicle licensing functions of local councils are non-executive functions i.e. they are functions of the council rather than the executive (such as the Cabinet). The functions include the determination of licence applications, reviews and renewals, along with the attachment of conditions when considered appropriate. The function may be delegated to a committee, a sub-committee or an officer – which should be set out within a clear scheme of delegation. In London the taxi and private hire vehicle licensing function is undertaken by Transport for London.

Licensing authorities should ensure that all individuals that determine whether a licence is issued or refused are adequately resourced to allow them to discharge the function effectively and correctly.

5.2 Training decision makers

All individuals that determine whether a licence is issued should be required to undertake sufficient training. As a minimum, training for a member of a licensing committee should include:

- licensing procedures
- natural justice
- understanding the risks of CSAE
- disability and equality awareness
- the making of difficult and potentially controversial decisions

Training should not simply relate to procedures, but should include the use of case study material to provide context and real scenarios. All training should be formally recorded by the licensing authority and require a signature from the person that has received the training. Training is available from a number of organisations including the Institute of Licensing and Lawyers in Local Government – the LGA may also be able to assist in the development of training packages.

Public safety is the paramount consideration but the discharge of licensing functions must be undertaken in accordance with the following general principles:

- policies should be used as internal guidance, and should be supported by a member/officer code of conduct
- any implications of the Human Rights Act should be considered
- the rules of natural justice should be observed
- decisions must be reasonable and proportionate
- where a hearing is required it should be fairly conducted and allow for appropriate consideration of all relevant factors
- decision makers must avoid bias (or even the appearance of bias) and predetermination
- data protection legislation

When a decision maker has a prejudicial interest in a case, whether it be financial or a personal relationship with those involved they should declare their interest at the earliest opportunity – this must be prior to any discussions or votes and, once declared, they must leave the room for the duration of the discussion or vote.

5.3 The regulatory structure

It is recommended that councils operate with a regulatory committee or board that is convened at periodic intervals to determine licensing matters, with individual cases being considered by a panel of elected and suitably trained councillors drawn from a larger regulatory committee or board. This model is similar to that frequently adopted in relation to other licensing matters. To facilitate the effective discharge of the functions, less contentious matters can be delegated to appropriately authorised council officers via a transparent scheme of delegation.

It is considered that this approach also ensures the appropriate level of separation between decision makers and those that investigate complaints against licensees, and is the most effective method in allowing the discharge of the functions in accordance with the [General principles section](#). In particular, the committee/board model allows for:

1. Each case to be considered on its own merits. It is rare for the same councillors to be involved in frequent hearings – therefore the councillors involved in the decision making process will have less knowledge of previous decisions and therefore are less likely to be influenced by them. Oversight and scrutiny can be provided in relation to the licensing service generally, which can provide independent and impartial oversight of the way that the functions are being discharged within the authority.

2. Clear separation between investigator and the decision maker – this demonstrates independence, and ensures that senior officers can attempt to resolve disputes in relation to service actions without the perception that this involvement will affect their judgement in relation to decisions made at a later date.

Avoidance of bias or even the appearance of bias is vital to ensuring good decisions are made and instilling and/or maintaining confidence in the licensing regime by passengers and licensees.

Unlike officers, elected members are not usually involved in the day to day operation of the service and as such do not have relationships with licence holders that may give the impression that the discharge of a function is affected by the relationship between the decision maker and the licence holder.

Some licensing authorities may decide to operate a system whereby all matters are delegated to a panel of officers. However, this approach is not recommended and caution should be exercised. Decisions must be, and be seen to be, made objectively, avoiding any bias. In addition, it may be more difficult to demonstrate compliance with the principles referred to above due to the close connection between the officers on the panel, and those involved in the operational discharge of the licensing functions.

Whether the structure proposed is introduced or an alternative model is more appropriate in local circumstances, the objective should remain the same – to separate the investigation of licensing concerns and the management of the licence process. Regardless of which approach is adopted, all licensing authorities should consider arrangements for dealing with serious matters that may require the immediate revocation of a licence. It is recommended that this role is delegated to a senior officer/manager with responsibility for the licensing service.

5.4 Fit and proper test

Licensing authorities have a duty to ensure that any person to whom they grant a taxi or private hire vehicle driver's licence is a fit and proper person to be a licensee. It may be helpful when considering whether an applicant or licensee is fit and proper to pose oneself the following question:

Without any prejudice, and based on the information before you, would you allow a person for whom you care, regardless of their condition, to travel alone in a vehicle driven by this person at any time of day or night?

If, on the balance of probabilities, the answer to the question is no, the individual should not hold a licence.

Licensing authorities have to make difficult decisions but (subject to the [General principles](#)) the safeguarding of the public is paramount. All decisions on the suitability of an applicant or licensee should be made on the balance of probability. This means that an applicant or licensee should not be given the benefit of doubt. If the committee or delegated officer is only 50/50 as to whether the applicant or licensee is fit and proper, they should not hold a licence. The threshold used here is lower than for a criminal conviction (that being beyond reasonable doubt) and can take into consideration conduct that has not resulted in a criminal conviction.

5.5 Criminal convictions and rehabilitation

In considering an individual's criminal record, licensing authorities must consider each case on its merits, but they should take a particularly cautious view of any offences against individuals with special needs, children and other vulnerable groups, particularly those involving violence, those of a sexual nature and those linked to organised crime. In order to achieve consistency, and to mitigate the risk of successful legal challenge, licensing authorities should have a clear policy for the consideration of criminal records. This should include, for example, which offences would prevent an applicant from being licenced regardless of the period elapsed in all but truly exceptional circumstances. In the case of lesser offences, a policy should consider the number of years the authority will require to have elapsed since the commission of particular kinds of offences before they will grant a licence.

Annexed to this document are the department's recommendations on the assessment of previous convictions ([Annex – assessment of previous convictions](#)). This draws on the work of the Institute of Licensing, in partnership with the LGA, the National Association of Licensing Enforcement Officers (NALEO) and Lawyers in Local Government, in publishing its guidance on determining the suitability of taxi and private hire vehicle licensees.

These periods should be taken as a starting point in considering whether a licence should be granted or renewed in all cases. The department's view is that this places passenger safety as the priority while enabling past offenders to sufficiently evidence that they have been successfully rehabilitated so that they might obtain a licence. Authorities are however reminded that applicants are entitled to a fair and impartial consideration of their application.

6. Driver licensing

6.1 Criminality checks for drivers

Licensing authorities are entitled to request an enhanced criminal record certificate with check of the barred lists from the DBS for all driver licence holders or applicants. DfT's 2019 [Survey of taxi and private hire vehicle licensing authorities](#) shows that all licensing authorities in England and Wales have a requirement that an enhanced DBS check is undertaken at first application or renewal.

All individuals applying for or renewing a taxi or private hire vehicle drivers licence licensing authorities should carry out a check of the children and adult barred lists in addition to being subject to an enhanced DBS check (in section x61 of the DBS application other workforce should be entered in line 1 and taxi licensing should be entered at line 2). All licensed drivers should also be required to evidence continuous registration with the DBS update service to enable the licensing authority to routinely check for new information every 6 months. Drivers that do not subscribe up to the Update Service should still be subject to a check every 6 months.

Driving a taxi or private hire vehicle is not, in itself, a regulated activity for the purposes of the barred list. This means that an individual subject to barring would not be legally prevented from being a taxi or private hire vehicle driver but the licensing authority should take an individual's barred status into account alongside other information available. In the interests of public safety, licensing authorities should not, as part of their policies, issue a licence to any individual that appears on either barred list. Should a licensing authority consider there to be exceptional circumstances which means that, based on the balance of probabilities they consider an

individual named on a barred list to be fit and proper, the reasons for reaching this conclusion should be recorded.

Drivers working under an arrangement to transport children may be working in regulated activity as defined by the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/47/contents)/w.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/47/contents). It is an offence to knowingly allow a barred individual to work in regulated activity.

The [Guidance on home-to-school travel and transport](#) issued by the Department for Education (DfE) should be considered alongside this document. Please see [Guidance on driver DBS eligibility and how to apply](#).

6.2 Safeguarding awareness

Licensing authorities should consider the role that those in the taxi and private hire vehicle industry can play in spotting and reporting the abuse, exploitation or neglect of children and vulnerable adults. As with any group of people, it is overwhelmingly the case that those within the industry can be an asset in the detection and prevention of abuse or neglect of children and vulnerable adults. However, this is only the case if they are aware of and alert to the signs of potential abuse and know where to turn to if they suspect that a child or vulnerable adult is at risk of harm or is in immediate danger.

All licensing authorities should provide safeguarding advice and guidance to the trade and should require taxi and private hire vehicle drivers to undertake safeguarding training. This is often produced in conjunction with the police and other agencies. These programmes have been developed to help drivers and operators:

- provide a safe and suitable service to vulnerable passengers of all ages
- recognise what makes a person vulnerable
- understand how to respond, including how to report safeguarding concerns and where to get advice

Since 2015, DfE has run a nationwide campaign, 'Together, we can tackle child abuse', which aims to increase public understanding of how to recognise the signs to spot and encourage them to report child abuse and neglect. DfE continues to promote and [Raise awareness of the campaign materials through its online toolkit](#), for local authorities, charities and organisations for use on their social media channels.

6.3 County lines exploitation

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas (within the UK), using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of deal line.

Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to transport (and store) drugs and money between locations. Children aged between 15 to 17 make up the majority of the vulnerable people involved in county lines, but they may also be much younger. We know that both girls and boys are groomed and exploited and offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children exploited by county lines gangs may have vulnerabilities besides their age, such as broader mental health issues, disrupted or chaotic homes, substance misuse issues, being excluded from school or frequently going missing.

The National Crime Agency's 2018 county lines threat assessment set out that the national road network is key to the transportation of county lines victims, drugs and cash – with hire vehicles being one of the methods used for transportation between locations.

Safeguarding awareness training should include the ways in which drivers can help to identify county lines exploitation. Firstly, they should be aware of the following warning signs:

- children and young people travelling in taxis or private hire vehicles alone
- travelling at unusual hours (during school time, early in the morning or late at night)
- travelling long distances
- unfamiliar with the local area or do not have a local accent
- paying for journeys in cash or prepaid

The Home Office is working with partners to [Raise awareness of county lines and has provided material](#) to help taxi and private vehicle hire staff to identify victims and report concerns to protect those exploited through this criminal activity.

Drivers (or any person) should be aware of what to do if they believe a child or vulnerable person is at risk of harm. If the risk is immediate they should contact the police otherwise they should:

- use the local safeguarding process, the first step of which is usually to contact the safeguarding lead within the local authority
- call Crime Stoppers on 0800 555 111

6.4 Language proficiency

A lack of language proficiency could impact on a driver's ability to understand written documents, such as policies and guidance, relating to the protection of children and vulnerable adults and applying this to identify and act on signs of exploitation. Oral proficiency will be of relevance in the identification of potential exploitation through communicating with passengers and their interaction with others.

A licensing authority's test of a driver's proficiency should cover both oral and written English language skills to achieve the objectives stated above.

7. Vehicle licensing

As with driver licensing, the objective of vehicle licensing is to protect the public, who trust that the vehicles dispatched are above all else safe. It is important therefore that licensing authorities are assured that those granted a vehicle licence also pose no threat to the public and have no links to serious criminal activity. Although vehicle proprietors may not have direct contact with passengers, they are still entrusted to ensure that the vehicles and drivers used to carry passengers are appropriately licensed and so maintain the safety benefits of the licensing regime.

7.1 Criminality checks for vehicle proprietors

Enhanced DBS and barred list checks are not available for vehicle licensing. Licensing authorities should require a basic disclosure from the DBS and that a check is undertaken annually. Any individual may apply for a basic check and the certificate will disclose any unspent convictions recorded on the Police National Computer (PNC). Licensing authorities should consider whether an applicant or licence holder with a conviction for offences provided in the annex to this document ([Annex – assessment of](#)

[previous convictions](#)), other than those relating to driving, meet the 'fit and proper' threshold.

However, it is important that authorities acknowledge that in many cases individuals that license a vehicle may already be licensed as a driver. An authority which undertakes the biannual DBS checks recommended for its drivers should not require those seeking to licence a vehicle to provide a basic DBS check as part of the application process – a basic DBS would not provide any information in addition to that disclosed under the enhanced DBS and barred lists check used for the driver assessment. In these circumstances, the authority should instead rely on the fact that the applicant is considered as fit and proper to hold a driver licence when considering their suitability to hold a vehicle licence. Should the individual cease to hold a driver licence a basic certificate should be required immediately.

A refusal to license an individual as a driver or to suspend or revoke a driver licence does not automatically mean that that individual cannot be issued or continue to hold a vehicle or private hire vehicle operator licence. These decisions must be independent of a driver licence refusal and based on the appropriate information, meaning it should not consider information that would only be available via an enhanced DBS check but instead that which would be disclosed on a basic check. DBS certificate information can only be used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

Private hire vehicle operator and vehicle licences may be applied for by a company or partnership – licensing authorities should apply the 'fit and proper' test to each of the directors or partners in that company or partnership. For this to be effective private hire vehicle operators and those to whom a vehicle licence should be required to advise the licensing authority of any change in directors or partners.

As explained earlier in the context of driver licensing, the DBS cannot access criminal records held overseas so other checks must be considered where an applicant has lived or [worked overseas](#) (see the overseas convictions section).

7.2 In-vehicle visual and audio recording – CCTV

Government has acknowledged the potential risk to public safety when passengers travel in taxis and private hire vehicles. It is unfortunately the

case that no matter how complete the information available to licensing authorities is when assessing whether to issue any taxi or private hire vehicle licence, nor how robust the policies in place are and the rigor with which they are applied, it will never completely remove the possibility of harm to passengers by drivers.

The department's view is that CCTV can provide additional deterrence to prevent this and investigative value when it does. The use of CCTV can provide a safer environment for the benefit of taxi/private hire vehicle passengers and drivers by:

- deterring and preventing the occurrence of crime
- reducing the fear of crime
- assisting the police in investigating incidents of crime
- assisting insurance companies in investigating motor vehicle accidents

All licensing authorities should consult to identify if there are local circumstances which indicate that the installation of CCTV in vehicles would have either a positive or an adverse net effect on the safety of taxi and private hire vehicle users, including children or vulnerable adults, and taking into account potential privacy issues.

While only a small minority of licensing authorities have so far mandated all vehicles to be fitted with CCTV systems, the experience of those authorities that have has been positive for both passengers and drivers. In addition, the evidential benefits of CCTV may increase the level of reporting of sexual offences. According to the [Crime Survey for England and Wales](#) only 17 percent of victims report their experiences to the police, 28 percent of rape or sexual assault victims indicated that a fear they would not be believed as a factor in them not reporting the crime. The evidential benefits CCTV could provide are therefore an important factor when considering CCTV in vehicles.

The mandating of CCTV in vehicles may deter people from seeking a taxi or private hire vehicle licence with the intent of causing harm. Those that gain a licence and consider perpetrating an opportunistic attack against a vulnerable unaccompanied passenger may be deterred from doing so. It is however unfortunately the case that offences may still occur even with CCTV operating.

CCTV systems that are able to record audio as well as visual data may also help the early identification of drivers that exhibit inappropriate behaviour toward passengers. Audio recording should be both overt (that is, all parties should be aware when recordings are being made) and

targeted (that is, only when passengers (or drivers) consider it necessary). The recording of audio should be used to provide an objective record of events such as disputes or inappropriate behaviour and must not be continuously active by default and should recognise the need for privacy of passengers' private conversations between themselves. Activation of the audio recording capability of a system might be instigated when either the passenger or driver operates a switch or button.

Imposition of a blanket requirement to attach CCTV as a condition to a licence is likely to give rise to concerns about the proportionality of such an approach and will therefore require an appropriately strong justification and must be kept under regular review. More information and guidance on assessing the impacts of CCTV and on an authority mandating CCTV is annexed to this document ([Annex – CCTV guidance](#)).

7.3 Stretched limousines

Licensing authorities are sometimes asked to license small (those constructed or adapted to carry fewer than 9 passengers) limousines as private hire vehicles, these vehicles may be used for transport to school proms as well as for adult bookings. It is suggested that licensing authorities should approach such requests on the basis that these vehicles – where they have fewer than 9 passenger seats – have a legitimate role to play in the private hire trade, meeting a public demand. It is the department's view that it is not a legitimate course of action for licensing authorities to adopt policies that exclude limousines as a matter of principle thereby excluding these services from the scope of the private hire vehicle regime and the safety benefits this provides. A blanket policy of excluding limousines may create an unacceptable risk to the travelling public, as it may lead to higher levels of unsupervised operation. Public safety considerations are best supported by policies that allow respectable, safe operators to obtain licences on the same basis as other private hire vehicle operators.

Stretched large limousines which clearly seat more than eight passengers should not be licensed as private hire vehicles because they are outside the licensing regime for private hire vehicles. However, in some circumstances a vehicle with space for more than eight passengers can be licensed as a private hire vehicle where the precise number of passenger seats is hard to determine. In these circumstances, the authority should consider the case on its merits in deciding whether to license the vehicle under the strict condition that the vehicle will not be used to carry more

than eight passengers, bearing in mind that refusal may encourage illegal private hire operation.

8. Private hire vehicle operator licensing

As with driver licensing, the objective in licensing private hire vehicle operators is to protect the public, who may be using operators' premises and trusting that the drivers and vehicles dispatched are above all else safe. It is important therefore that licensing authorities are assured that those that are granted a private hire vehicle operator also pose no threat to the public and have no links to serious criminal activity. Although private hire vehicle operators may not have direct contact with passengers, they are still entrusted to ensure that the vehicles and drivers used to carry passengers are appropriately licensed and so maintain the safety benefits of the driver licensing regime.

8.1 Criminality checks for private hire vehicle operators

Enhanced DBS and barred list checks are not available for private hire vehicle operator licensing. Licensing authorities should request a basic disclosure from the DBS and that a check is undertaken annually. Any individual may apply for a basic check and the certificate will disclose any unspent convictions recorded on the Police National Computer (PNC). Licensing authorities should consider whether an applicant or licence holder with a conviction for offences provided in the annex to this document ([Annex – assessment of previous convictions](#)), other than those relating to driving, meet the 'fit and proper' threshold.

However, it is important that authorities acknowledge that in many cases individuals that license as a private hire vehicle operator may already be licensed as a driver. An authority which undertakes the biannual DBS checks recommended for its drivers should not require those seeking a private hire vehicle operator licence to provide a basic DBS check as part of the application process. A basic DBS would not provide any information in addition to that disclosed under the enhanced DBS and barred lists check used for the driver assessment. In these circumstances, the authority should instead rely on the fact that the applicant is considered as fit and proper to hold a driver licence when

considering their suitability to hold a vehicle licence. Should the individual cease to hold a driver licence a basic certificate should be required immediately

Refusal to license an individual as a driver or to suspend or revoke a driver licence does not automatically mean that that individual cannot be issued or continue to hold a private hire vehicle operator licence. This decision must be independent of a driver licence refusal and based on the appropriate information i.e. it should not consider information that would only be available via an enhanced DBS check but instead that which would be disclosed on a basic check. DBS certificate information can only be used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

A private hire vehicle operator licence may be applied for by a company or partnership – licensing authorities should apply the 'fit and proper' test to each of the directors or partners in that company or partnership. For this to be effective private hire vehicle operators should be required to advise the licensing authority of any change in directors or partners.

As explained earlier in the context of driver licensing, the DBS cannot access criminal records held overseas. Further information on assessing the suitability of those that have spent extended periods in overseas is provided in the [Overseas convictions](#) section.

8.2 Booking and dispatch staff

Private hire vehicle drivers are not the only direct contact that private hire vehicle users have with private hire vehicle operators' staff, for example a person taking bookings (be it by phone or in person). A vehicle dispatcher decides which driver to send to a user, a position that could be exploited by those seeking to exploit children and vulnerable adults. It is therefore appropriate that all staff that have contact with private hire vehicle users and the dispatching of vehicles should not present an undue risk to the public or the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.

Licensing authorities should be satisfied that private hire vehicle operators can demonstrate that all staff that have contact with the public and/or oversee the dispatching of vehicles do not pose a risk to the public. Licensing authorities should, as a condition of granting an operator licence, require a register of all staff that will take bookings or dispatch vehicles is kept.

Operators should be required to evidence that they have had sight of a basic DBS check on all individuals listed on their register of booking and dispatch staff and to ensure that basic DBS checks are conducted on any individuals added to the register and that this is compatible with their policy on employing ex-offenders. DBS certificates provided by the individual should be recently issued when viewed, alternatively the operator could use a [Responsible organisation to request the check on their behalf](#). When individuals start taking bookings and dispatching vehicles for an operator they should be required, as part of their employment contract, to advise the operator of any convictions while they are employed in this role.

The register should be a 'living document' that maintains records of all those in these roles for the same duration as booking records are required to be kept, this will enable cross-referencing between the 2 records. A record that the operator has had sight of a basic DBS check certificate (although the certificate itself should not be retained) should be retained for the duration that the individual remains on the register. Should an employee cease to be on the register and later re-entered, a new basic DBS certificate should be requested and sight of this recorded.

Operators may outsource booking and dispatch functions but they cannot pass on the obligation to protect children and vulnerable adults. Operators should be required to evidence that comparable protections are applied by the company to which they outsource these functions.

Licensing authorities should also require operators or applicants for a licence to provide their policy on employing ex-offenders in roles that would be on the register as above. As with the threshold to obtaining a private hire vehicle operators' licence, those with a conviction for offences provided in the annex to this document ([Annex – assessment of previous convictions](#)), other than those relating to driving, may not be suitable to decide who is sent to carry a child or vulnerable adult unaccompanied in a car.

8.3 Record keeping

Section 56 of the [Local Government \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) Act 1976](#) requires private hire vehicle operators to keep records of the particulars of every booking invited or accepted, whether it is from the passenger or at the request of another operator. Licensing authorities should as a minimum require private hire vehicle operators to record the following information for each booking:

- the name of the passenger
- the time of the request
- the pick-up point
- the destination
- the name of the driver
- the driver's licence number
- the vehicle registration number of the vehicle
- the name of any individual that responded to the booking request
- the name of any individual that dispatched the vehicle

This information will enable the passenger to be traced if this becomes necessary and should improve driver security and facilitate enforcement. It is suggested that booking records should be retained for a minimum of 6 months.

Private hire vehicle operators have a duty under data protection legislation to protect the information they record. The Information Commissioner's Office provides comprehensive on-line guidance on registering as a data controller and how to meet their obligations.

8.4 Use of passenger carrying vehicles (PCV) licensed drivers

PCV licensed drivers are subject to different checks from taxi and private hire vehicle licensed drivers as the work normally undertaken, i.e. driving a bus, does not present the same risk to passengers. Members of the public are entitled to expect when making a booking with a private hire vehicle operator that they will receive a private hire vehicle licensed vehicle and driver. The use of a driver who holds a PCV licence and the use of a public service vehicle (PSV) such as a minibus to undertake a private hire vehicle booking should not be permitted as a condition of the private hire vehicle operator's licence without the informed consent of the booker.

Where a private hire vehicle is unsuitable, for example where a larger vehicle is needed because more than eight passenger seats required or to accommodate luggage, the booker should be informed that a PSV is necessary, and that a PCV licenced driver will be used who is subject to different checks and not required to have an enhanced DBS check.

9. Enforcing the licensing regime

Implementing an effective framework for licensing authorities to ensure that as full a range of information made available to suitably trained decision makers that are supported by well-resourced officials is essential to a well-functioning taxi and private hire vehicle sector. These steps will help prevent the licensing of those that are not deemed fit and proper but does not ensure that those already licensed continue to display the behaviours and standards expected.

9.1 Joint authorisation of enforcement officers

Licensing authorities should, where the need arises, jointly authorise officers from other authorities so that compliance and enforcement action can be taken against licensees from outside their area. An agreement between licensing authorities to jointly authorise officers enables the use of enforcement powers regardless of which authority within the agreement the officer is employed by and which issued the licence. This will mitigate the opportunities for drivers to evade regulation. Such an agreement will enable those authorities to take action against vehicles and drivers that are licensed by the other authority when they cross over boundaries. A model for agreeing [Joint authorisation is contained in the LGA councillors' handbook](#).

9.2 Setting expectations and monitoring

Licensing authorities should ensure that drivers are aware of the policies that they must adhere to and are properly informed of what is expected of them and the repercussions for failing to do so. Some licensing authorities operate a points- based system, which allows minor breaches to be recorded and considered in context while referring those with persistent or serious breaches to the licensing committee. This has the benefit of consistency in enforcement and makes better use of the licensing committee's time.

The provision of a clear, simple and well-publicised process for the [Public to make complaints about drivers and operators](#) will enable authorities to target compliance and enforcement activity. This will provide a further source of intelligence when considering the renewal of licences and of any additional training that may be required. It is then for the licensing authority to

consider if any intelligence indicates a need to suspend or revoke a licence in the interests of public safety.

9.3 Suspension and revocation of driver licences

Section 61 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 provides a licensing authority with the ability to suspend or revoke a driver's licence on the following grounds: -

(a) that he has since the grant of the licence:

- been convicted of an offence involving dishonesty, indecency or violence
- been convicted of an offence under or has failed to comply with the provisions of the Act of 1847 or of this Part of this Act

(aa) that he has since the grant of the licence been convicted of an immigration offence or required to pay an immigration penalty, or

(b) any other reasonable cause

Licensing authorities have the option to suspend or revoke a licence should information be received that causes concern over whether a driver is a fit and proper person. Where the licence holder has been served an immigration penalty or convicted of an immigration offence the licence should be revoked immediately. [Guidance for licensing authorities](#) to prevent illegal working in the taxi and private hire vehicle sector has been issued by the Home Office. As with the initial decision to license a driver, this determination must be reached based on the balance of probabilities, not on the burden of beyond reasonable doubt.

Before any decision is made, the licensing authority must give full consideration to the available evidence and the driver should be given the opportunity to state his or her case. If a period of suspension is imposed, it cannot be extended or changed to revocation at a later date.

A decision to revoke a licence does not however prevent the reissuing of a licence should further information be received that alters the balance of probability of a decision previously made. The decision to suspend or revoke was based on the evidence available at the time the determination was made. New evidence may, of course, become available later.

New evidence may be produced at an appeal hearing that may result in the court reaching a different decision to that reached by the council or an appeal may be settled by agreement between the licensing authority and the driver on terms which, in the light of new evidence, becomes the appropriate course. If, for example, the allegations against a driver were now, on the balance of probability, considered to be unfounded, a suspension could be lifted or, if the licence was revoked, an expedited re-licensing process used.

A suspension may still be appropriate if it is believed that a minor issue can be addressed through additional training. In this instance the licence would be returned to the driver once the training has been completed without further consideration. This approach is clearly not appropriate where the licensing authority believes that, based on the information available at that time, on the balance of probability it is considered that the driver presents a risk to public safety.

10. Annex – assessment of previous convictions

Legislation specifically identifies offences involving dishonesty, indecency or violence as a concern when assessing whether an individual is ‘fit and proper’ to hold a taxi or private hire vehicle licence. The following recommendations to licensing authorities on previous convictions reflect this.

Authorities must consider each case on its own merits, and applicants/licensees are entitled to a fair and impartial consideration of their application. Where a licensing authority is made aware of a conviction, the period is given below, it should be taken to be a minimum in considering whether a licence should be granted or renewed in most cases. The department’s view is that this places passenger safety as the priority while enabling past offenders to sufficiently evidence that they have been successfully rehabilitated so that they might obtain or retain a licence.

10.1 Crimes resulting in death

Where an applicant or licensee has been convicted of a crime which resulted in the death of another person or was intended to cause the death or serious injury of another person they will not be licensed.

10.2 Exploitation

Where an applicant or licensee has been convicted of a crime involving, related to, or has any connection with abuse, exploitation, use or treatment of another individual irrespective of whether the victim or victims were adults or children, they will not be licensed. This includes slavery, child sexual abuse, exploitation, grooming, psychological, emotional or financial abuse, but this is not an exhaustive list.

10.3 Offences involving violence against the person

Where an applicant has a conviction for an offence of violence against the person, or connected with any offence of violence, a licence will not be granted until at least 10 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

10.4 Possession of a weapon

Where an applicant has a conviction for possession of a weapon or any other weapon related offence, a licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

10.5 Sexual offences

Where an applicant has a conviction for any offence involving or connected with illegal sexual activity, a licence will not be granted.

In addition to the above, the licensing authority will not grant a licence to any applicant who is currently on the sex offenders register or on any barred list.

10.6 Dishonesty

Where an applicant has a conviction for any offence where dishonesty is an element of the offence, a licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

10.7 Drugs

Where an applicant has any conviction for, or related to, the supply of drugs, or possession with intent to supply or connected with possession with intent to supply, a licence will not be granted until at least 10 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

Where an applicant has a conviction for possession of drugs, or related to the possession of drugs, a licence will not be granted until at least 5 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed. In these circumstances, any applicant may also have to undergo drugs testing for a period at their own expense to demonstrate that they are not using controlled drugs.

10.8 Discrimination

Where an applicant has a conviction involving or connected with discrimination in any form, a licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

10.9 Motoring convictions

Hackney carriage and private hire drivers are professional drivers charged with the responsibility of carrying the public. It is accepted that offences can be committed unintentionally, and a single occurrence of a minor traffic offence would not prohibit the granting of a licence. However, applicants with multiple motoring convictions may indicate that an applicant does not exhibit the behaviours of a safe road user and one that is suitable to drive professionally.

Any motoring conviction while a licensed driver demonstrates that the licensee may not take their professional responsibilities seriously. However,

it is accepted that offences can be committed unintentionally, and a single occurrence of a minor traffic offence may not necessitate the revocation of a taxi or private hire vehicle driver licence providing the authority considers that the licensee remains a fit and proper person to retain a licence.

10.10 Drink driving/driving under the influence of drugs

Where an applicant has a conviction for drink driving or driving under the influence of drugs, a licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence or driving ban imposed. In the case of driving under the influence of drugs, any applicant may also have to undergo drugs testing at their own expense to demonstrate that they are not using controlled drugs.

10.11 Using a hand-held device whilst driving

Where an applicant has a conviction for using a held-hand mobile telephone or a hand-held device whilst driving, a licence will not be granted until at least 5 years have elapsed since the conviction or completion of any sentence or driving ban imposed, whichever is the later.

11. Annex – DBS information

Information included in criminal records check

| Information included | Basic check | Standard DBS check | Enhanced DBS check | Enhanced DBS (barred list) check |
|--|-------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| Unspent convictions | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Unspent cautions ^{footnote 1} | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Spent convictions ^{footnote 2} | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Spent cautions ^{footnote 1} ^{footnote 2} | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Additional police information ^{footnote 3} | No | No | Yes | Yes |
| Barred list(s) information ^{footnote 4} | No | No | No | Yes |

12. Annex – CCTV guidance

It is important to note that, in most circumstances, a licensing authority which mandates the installation of CCTV systems in taxis and private hire vehicles will be responsible for the data – the data controller. It is important that data controllers fully consider concerns regarding privacy and licensing authorities should consider how systems are configured, should they mandate CCTV (with or without audio recording). For example, vehicles may not be exclusively used for business, also serving as a car for personal use – it should therefore be possible to manually switch the system off (both audio and visual recording) when not being used for hire. Authorities should consider the Information Commissioner's view on this matter that, in most cases, a requirement for continuous operation is unlikely to be fair and lawful processing of personal data.

The Home Office [Surveillance camera code of practice](#) advises that government is fully supportive of the use of overt surveillance cameras in a public place whenever that use is:

- in pursuit of a legitimate aim
- necessary to meet a pressing need
- proportionate
- effective
- compliant with any relevant legal obligations

The code also sets out 12 guiding principles which, as a 'relevant authority' under section 33(5) of the [Protection of Freedoms Act 2012](#), licensing authorities must have regard to. It must be noted that, where a licence is granted subject to CCTV system conditions, the licensing authority assumes the role and responsibility of 'system operator'. The role requires consideration of all guiding principles in this code. The failure to comply with these principles may be detrimental to the use of CCTV evidence in court as this may be raised within disclosure to the Crown Prosecution Service and may be taken into account.

The surveillance camera commissioner (SCC) has provided guidance on the surveillance camera code of practice in its [Passport to compliance](#) which provides guidance on the necessary stages when planning, implementing and operating a surveillance camera system to ensure it complies with the code. The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) has also published a [ICO code of practice](#) which, in this context, focuses on the data governance requirement associated with the use of CCTV such as data retention and disposal, which it is important to follow in order to comply with the data

protection principles. The SCC provides a [Surveillance camera self-assessment tool](#) to assist operators to ensure compliance with the principles set of in the surveillance camera code of practice. The SCC also operate a [Certification scheme](#) – authorities that obtain this accreditation are able to clearly demonstrate that their systems conform to the SCC's best practice and are fully compliant with the code and increase public confidence that any risks to their privacy have been fully considered and mitigated.

The [Data Protection Act 2018](#) regulates the use of personal data. Part 2 of the Data Protection Act applies to the general processing of personal data, and references and supplements the General Data Protection Regulation. Licensing authorities, as data controllers, must comply with all relevant aspects of data protection law. Particular attention should be paid to the rights of individuals which include the right to be informed, of access and to erasure. The [ICO has provided detailed guidance](#) on how data controllers can ensure compliance with these.

It is a further requirement of data protection law that before implementing a proposal that is likely to result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of people, an impact assessment on the protection of personal data shall be carried out. The [ICO recommends in guidance](#) that if there is any doubt as to whether a data protection impact assessment (DPIA) is required one should be conducted to ensure compliance and encourage best practice. A DPIA will also help to assess properly the anticipated benefits of installing CCTV (to passengers and drivers) and the associated privacy risks. these risks might be mitigated by having appropriate privacy information and signage, secure storage and access controls, retention policies, training for staff how to use the system, etc.

It is essential to ensure that all recordings made are secure and can only be accessed by those with legitimate grounds to do so. This would normally be the police if investigating an alleged crime or the licensing authority if investigating a complaint or data access request. Encryption of the recording to which the licensing authority, acting as the data controller, holds the key, mitigates this issue and protects against theft of the vehicle or device. It is one of the guiding principles of data protection legislation, that personal data (including in this context, CCTV recordings and other potentially sensitive passenger information) is handled securely in a way that ensures appropriate security, including protection against unauthorised or unlawful processing and against accidental loss, destruction or damage, using appropriate technical or organisational measures.

All passengers must be made fully aware if CCTV is operating in a vehicle. Given that audio recording is considered to be more privacy intrusive, it is even more important that individuals are fully aware and limited only to

occasions when passengers (or drivers) consider it necessary. The recording of audio should be used to provide an objective record of events such as disputes or inappropriate behaviour and must not be continuously active by default and should recognise the need for privacy of passengers' private conversations between themselves. Activation of the audio recording capability of a system might be instigated when either the passenger or driver operates a switch or button. As well as clear signage in vehicles, information on booking systems should be introduced. This might be text on a website, scripts or automated messages on telephone systems – the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) has issued guidance on privacy information and the right to be informed on its website.

13. Annex - staying safe: guidance for passengers

Licensing authorities should provide guidance to assist passengers in identifying licensed vehicles and the increased risks of using unlicensed vehicles. The guidance might include advice on:

- how to tell if a taxi or private hire vehicle is licensed

Educate the public in the differences between taxis and private hire vehicles. For example:

- a taxi can be flagged down or pre-booked
- a private hire vehicle that has not been pre-booked should not be used as it will not be insured and may not be licensed
- what a private hire vehicle should look like e.g. colour, signage, licence plates etc
- the benefit of pre-booking a return vehicle before going out
- arrange to be picked up from a safe meeting point
- requesting at the time of booking what the fare is likely to be

When using a private hire vehicle, passengers should always:

- book with a licensed operator
- confirm their booking with the driver when s/he arrives
- note the licence number
- sit in the back, behind the driver
- let a third party know details of their journey

When using a taxi, passengers should where possible:

- use a taxi rank and choose one staffed by taxi marshals if available
1. Does not include fixed penalty notices, penalty notices for disorder or any other police or other out-of-court disposals. [↔](#) [↔²](#)
 2. Spent convictions and cautions that have become protected under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions Order) 1975, as amended, are not automatically disclosed on any level of certificate. Further guidance is available in the [DBS filtering guide](#). [↔](#) [↔²](#)
 3. This is any additional information held by the police which a chief police officer reasonably believes to be relevant and considers ought to be disclosed. [↔](#)
 4. This is information as to whether the individual concerned is included in the children's or adults' barred lists maintained by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). [↔](#)

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Department
for Transport

Guidance

Taxi and private hire vehicle licensing best practice guidance for licensing authorities in England

Updated 17 November 2023

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The Department for Transport has issued guidance on taxi and private hire vehicle licensing since 2006 to assist local authorities that have responsibility for the regulation of the taxi and private hire vehicle trades. This is updated periodically, considering stakeholder views and changes in the way the sector operates. This best practice guidance is one of [a number of documents intended to assist the operation and regulation of the sector](#). The objective of the government is to work with licensing authorities to promote the regulation of the sector in a way that enables the provision of safe, accessible, available, and affordable services that meet the wide range of passenger needs by a thriving trade.

In 2020 the government issued, for the first time, [Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards](#) to safeguard the most vulnerable in society. The [Policing and Crime Act 2017](#) enabled the Secretary of State to issue these to licensing authorities; though the focus was on the use of their powers to protect children and vulnerable adults over 18 from harm, the measures will increase the safety of all passengers. Licensing authorities must give due regard to the Statutory Standards when setting their taxi and private hire vehicle licensing policies and procedures. This non-statutory best practice guidance complements the statutory standards, covering a range of issues outside the remit of the statutory standards.

Individual licensing authorities are still responsible for deciding their own policies and making decisions on individual licensing matters applying the relevant law and any other relevant considerations. This guidance is primarily intended to assist licensing authorities, but it is only guidance and does not intend to give a definitive statement of the law; any decisions made by an authority remain a matter for that authority.

The [Local Government Association's Councillors' Handbook on taxi and private hire vehicle licensing](#) advises that those responsible for licensing should communicate regularly with their counterparts in neighbouring authorities to ensure critical information is shared and decision-making is consistent and robust. By working together, local government can make sure that this vital service is safe, respected, and that it meets the needs of all those in their local communities.

This guidance links to relevant documents that licensing authorities may find useful to share with local partners (for example, taxi or private hire vehicle providers).

This version of the best practice guidance replaces all previous versions and will be subject to revision when necessary.

1.2 Terminology

Vehicles licensed under section 37 of the Town Polices Clauses Act 1847 and section 6 of the Metropolitan Carriage Act 1869 are referred to in that legislation as 'hackney carriages'. This term is also used in older regulations. In more recent legislation the term 'taxi' is used.

In this document 'taxi' means vehicles licensed under the aforementioned sections of the above acts only. It does not include private hire vehicles (PHVs).

Vehicles licensed under section 48 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, section 7 of the Private Hire Vehicles (London) Act 1998 and section 5 of the Plymouth City Act 1975 are often referred to as 'minicabs', 'cabs' and even 'taxis'. The term 'private hire vehicle' is used in aforementioned sections of the above acts and so is used throughout this guidance to refer to all such vehicles.

Private hire vehicles include executive cars, chauffeur services, limousines and some school and day centre transport services. One of the overarching objectives of this guidance is to provide greater distinction for the public between taxis and PHVs so that the public is increasingly aware of this. Licensing authorities should adopt this approach in its communications.

1.3 Scope of the best practice guidance

This guidance does not seek to cover the whole range of possible licensing requirements. Instead, it seeks to concentrate on those issues that have caused difficulty in the past or that seem of particular significance. This document will be reviewed and updated when necessary and other specific issues may be added should the need arise. The law on taxi and private hire vehicle licensing contains many complexities which are beyond the scope of this guidance.

The guidance does not purport to give a definitive statement of the law and any decision made by a licensing authority remains a matter for that authority. Licensing authorities will need to seek their own legal advice on issues that are particularly relevant to them. The department is not responsible for interpreting the law – that is a matter for the courts.

The personal safety of passengers is critical. The government has clearly set out measures that licensing authorities should take to safeguard passengers in the [Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards](#). This guidance seeks to

reinforce that message by highlighting other measures that should be considered to assist the sector to deliver the range of services the public demand.

Licensing authorities have to consider a range of vehicles and services in the context of private hire vehicle licensing. The department has produced [guidance to assist licensing authorities in deciding which vehicles and services require licensing under the private hire vehicle regime and which fall outside the private hire vehicle definition](#). The guidance sets out the key principles and characteristics which the department considers define a private hire service.

The guidance on whether services might require a private hire vehicle licence stresses that it remains for licensing authorities to make decisions in the first instance and that, ultimately, the courts are responsible for interpreting the law.

2. The role of taxis and private hire vehicles

Taxis and private hire vehicles play a vital part in local transport, connecting residents to the local economy and in enabling businesses and residents to reach wider transport networks. All social groups use taxis and private hire vehicles. Groups that use them the most are low-income young women, amongst whom car ownership is low, and those with mobility difficulties.

The taxi and private hire vehicle sector is entirely demand-led. Though these services are most often associated with journeys for leisure, social and business purposes, they are an important part of the transport network. As discussed in [section 14 of this guidance](#), they should be considered as part of local transport planning.

Taxis and private hire vehicle services reduce the need for private car ownership, enable key workers to commute when other modes are unavailable, provide door-to-door transport for those that are not able to travel via other modes and assist on meeting the needs for home-to-school transport provision. Taxis and private hire vehicles have a particularly important role in the night-time economy getting people home safely late at night.

3. The role of licensing authorities

As stated in the [Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards](#) issued by the department to licensing authorities, the primary and overriding objective of licensing must be to protect the public. Licensing authorities should also be aware that, as well as ensuring taxi and private hire vehicle services are safe, the public have a reasonable expectation that the services available will be accessible and affordable.

It is for licensing authorities to ensure that their licensing policy and requirements are proportionate, so that passengers can choose from a wide range of safe services. As indicated above, the primary function of the licensing regime is public safety; however, an unduly stringent regime on other issues may restrict the supply of taxi and private hire vehicle services by putting up the cost of operation, or otherwise restricting entry to the trade. Licensing authorities should recognise that too restrictive an approach can be counter-productive, restricting the licensed trade to such an extent that the public resort to the use of unlicensed, unvetted and uninsured drivers and vehicles.

[Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998](#) requires local authorities to consider the crime and disorder implications of all their activities and functions and do all that they reasonably can to reduce crime. Licensing authorities routinely do this by setting licensing requirements that protect passengers, but this duty also extends to considering ways that licensing requirements and policies can reduce crime against drivers. It is the case that drivers are subjected to robbery, verbal and physical assault, this can be racially motivated or aggravated. Licensing authorities must consider ways to protect those working in the trade as well as those that use its services.

Licensing authorities are required under the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) to pay regard to the need to eliminate conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010, to promote equality of opportunity and to foster understanding between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. It is beyond the scope of this document to identify actions which would demonstrate compliance with this duty, and ultimately only a court can do so definitively. We would however suggest that authorities:

- maintain a body of evidence on the impact of services on people with different protected characteristics and use it to make policy decisions consistent with the duty
- consider how they can actively promote equality, such as by consulting regularly with users, planning strategically to provide services which meet their needs, and by prioritising actions which seek to eliminate discrimination or barriers to equal access
- consider how to demonstrate the consideration given in a manner which promotes public awareness of the authority's inclusive approach to service support and provision

Disability is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, and disabled people may face particular barriers accessing taxi and private hire vehicle services if authorities fail to regulate services inclusively and to uphold the rights of affected passengers. In our view, an inclusive service accessible to disabled people is one where:

- there are sufficient vehicles meeting disabled people's access needs, to allow them to travel as easily, between the same locations and at the same times, as non-disabled people
- policy decisions are informed by an accurate and up-to-date understanding of the experience and needs of disabled people with a range of visible and less visible impairments
- action is taken proactively to improve the accessibility of the services supported
- disabled people have confidence that services will meet their needs and that, if things go wrong, their concerns will be understood and investigated thoroughly
- if operators and drivers fail in their responsibilities, that appropriate enforcement action is taken to prevent its recurrence and protect other disabled passengers

3.1 The regulators' role

Licensing authorities are required under [section 22\(2\) of the Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006](#), to have regard to the [Regulators' Code](#).

The code states that:

Regulators should avoid imposing unnecessary regulatory burdens through their regulatory activities and should assess whether similar social, environmental and economic outcomes could be achieved by less burdensome means. Regulators should choose proportionate approaches to those they regulate, based on relevant factors including, for example, business size and capacity.

As with other regulators, licensing authorities' interventions should be focussed on mitigating safety risks for passengers and drivers, and enabling fair competition within the trade by ensuring consistency of regulation and enforcement. Licensing authorities should actively promote inclusivity, equality and independence for disabled people and ensure that they only issue licences to those that are fit and proper to hold one.

A need to intervene might be established through analysing complaints received or consulting with passengers and/or the trade. Licensing authorities should consider the wider impact of interventions and how they affect the delivery of safe, available, affordable and accessible services.

3.2 The objective of regulation and consideration of policies

When formulating a taxi and private hire vehicle policy, the primary and overriding objective must be to protect the public. Ensuring high safeguarding requirements and processes, as set out in the [Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards](#), is only one way in which licensing authorities can help ensure the personal safety of passengers.

Ensuring local residents understand the distinction between the taxi and private hire vehicle trades and how each service can be legally engaged is very important.

The key message needs to be that, unless you are hailing a locally licensed taxi in the street or at a stand, you should not get in any other vehicle unless you have pre-booked it and have received information from the operator to identify it. This messaging can be supported by a policy that makes taxis look distinct from private hire vehicles; this is discussed further in section 8.

In addition to the safety of passengers, regulation should protect equality and enable fair competition. Once a need to intervene is established, licensing authorities should consider whether any policy changes would have unintended negative consequences that might outweigh the benefits of that policy.

For example, if a licensing authority established that the drivers they license have frequent collisions, it may set an objective to reduce these. The authority might try to address this concern by requiring all drivers to have ten years' driving experience on the basis that 'experienced drivers are safer'.

Such a requirement would however prevent an individual under the age of 27 entering the trade. This would be regardless of whether they held an advanced driving qualification. It is probable that such an individual is a safer driver than someone over 27, who passed their driving test 10 years ago but has rarely driven since. While experience is generally useful, individuals should be able to evidence that they meet the objective of the policy rather than an arbitrary criterion.

Licensing authorities should ensure that their various licensing requirements are proportionate to the risk they aim to address or the policy objective they are seeking to achieve. The cost of a requirement, in terms of its effect on the availability of

transport to the public, should be at least matched by its benefit. A detailed, quantitative, cost-benefit assessment is not needed in each case, but licensing authorities are urged to look carefully at the costs, financial or otherwise, imposed by each of their licensing policies and of the equality impacts as required by law.

The Competition and Markets Authority provided [guidance to licensing authorities](#) to consider when designing policy or regulations to assess their impact on competition and the interests of consumers. Their [competition impact assessment](#) guidelines are a useful tool in this process.

The guidelines contain 4 tests which help policy makers assess whether their proposals will limit competition:

- Will the measure directly or indirectly limit the number or range of suppliers?
- Will the measure limit the ability of suppliers to compete?
- Will the measure limit suppliers' incentives to compete?
- Will the measure limit the choices and information available to consumers?

Consideration of these questions will help ensure licensing authorities are aware of the restrictions they may be introducing on competition and may encourage them to consider alternative courses of action where possible.

As well as setting licensing requirements and imposing conditions, licensing authorities may introduce byelaws to assist them in the regulation of the taxi sector. The department has provided:

- [a set of model byelaws](#)
- [guidance on the process of making or amending byelaws](#)

3.3 Delivering licensing services

Taxi and private hire vehicle licensing is a statutory function of licensing authorities and it is important they consider how best to deliver this service in a timely and efficient manner.

Enabling those that wish to enter the trade to evidence that they meet the necessary requirements in a timely way will benefit the trade and passengers through greater choice and availability.

As an example, the statutory standards state that licensing authorities “should require taxi and private hire vehicle drivers to undertake safeguarding training”;

licensing authorities should consider how this training is provided to avoid unnecessary delays to gaining a licence. This might mean providing training material (hardcopy or online) and requiring the driver to attend an assessment. There should be sufficient availability of assessment slots to enable an applicant to evidence this knowledge in a reasonable time.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, several licensing authorities did not accept new licence applications for a substantial period. Refusing to accept an application makes the licensing authority vulnerable to judicial review and reputational damage. New ways of working were implemented by many licensing authorities, including training via virtual meeting platforms, temporary measures / relaxation of licensing requirements, temporary licences, and self-declarations.

Licensing authorities should learn from the challenges presented by COVID-19 and review their contingency plans to improve the way they administer the system and make sure the statutory licensing function can continue if circumstances make 'normal' procedures and processes impossible.

3.4 Licensing fees

It is essential to a well-functioning taxi and private hire vehicle sector that those administering and enforcing the regime are well-resourced. The licensing model is intended to be self-funding through licensing fees and it is expected that licensing authorities seek to provide a well-resourced system at the lowest cost to licensees. Licensing authorities should regularly review their fees to reflect changes to costs, both increases and reductions.

3.5 Licensing policy

The department recommends that all licensing authorities make publicly available a cohesive policy document or single online page which complies with current accessibility guidance, including [WCAG 2.1 accessibility standard](#) to Level AA as a minimum and the [Public Sector Bodies \(Websites and Mobile Applications\) \(No. 2\) Accessibility Regulations 2018](#) for digital content, that brings together its key information on taxi and private hire vehicle licensing. This should include, but not be limited to:

- details on how the public can provide feedback on taxis and PHV licensees
- a 'fit and proper' person test

- licence conditions
- vehicle standards
- taxi tariffs
- licensing fees

Licensing authorities should also refer to the [Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards](#) when compiling this document.

3.6 Consultation at the local level

Licensing authorities should consult on proposed changes in licensing rules that may have significant impacts on passengers and/or the trade. Such consultation should include not only all taxi and private hire vehicle licensees but also groups likely to be the trades' customers.

Examples are groups representing disabled people, chambers of commerce, organisations with a wider transport interest (for example, local transport user groups and other transport providers), women's groups, local traders, and local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. It may also be helpful to consult with night-time economy groups (such as Pubwatch) if the trade is an important element of dispersal from the local night-time economy's activities.

Any decision taken to alter the licensing regime is likely to have an impact on the operation of the taxi and private hire vehicle sector in neighbouring areas. Licensing authorities should engage with these areas to identify any concerns and issues that might arise from a proposed change. Many areas convene regional officer consultation groups or, more formal, councillor liaison meetings; this approach should be adopted by all authorities.

3.7 Changing licensing policy and requirements

Any changes in licensing requirements should be followed by a review of the licences already issued. If a need to change licensing requirements has been identified, this same need is likely to apply to those already in possession of a licence. That is not, however, to suggest that licences should be automatically revoked overnight. For example, if a vehicle specification is changed, then it is proportionate to allow those that would not meet the criteria to have the opportunity to adapt or change their vehicle.

The same pragmatic approach should be taken to driver licence changes - if requirements are changed to include a training course, a reasonable time should be allowed for this to be undertaken or gained. The implementation schedule of any changes that affect current licence holders must be transparent and communicated promptly and clearly.

Licensing authorities must consider each case on its own merits. Where there are exceptional, clear and compelling reasons to deviate from a policy, then they should consider doing so. Licensing authorities should record the reasons for any deviation from the policies that are in place.

4. Accessibility

There are around 13.9 million disabled people in the UK, representing 20% of the population, a proportion that is expected to rise as the average age of the population increases. National Statistics published in the current Family Resources Survey showed that the proportion of people in England who reported a disability was 21%. As people age, the incidence of disability increases, with 40% of over 60s and 75% of over 80s being disabled, meaning that disability will become a fact of life for an increasing number of people, which may not always appear obvious.

Disabled people are particularly reliant on taxi and private hire vehicle services, either because they may not have access to a private car, are unable to use public transport, or because the built environment is insufficiently accessible to meet their needs. This can mean that the availability of an accessible, affordable taxi or private hire vehicle service can make the difference that allows them to live their life the way they want to, and ultimately, to fulfil their potential.

The government wants disabled people to be able to travel easily, confidently and without additional cost, and it is important that all transport services play their part in making this a reality.

The way in which people are disabled and the specific barriers they face may not always be obvious. Licensing authorities and providers of taxi and private hire vehicle services must therefore anticipate the needs of people whose access needs may be more apparent, such as wheelchair users and assistance dog owners, as well as those with less visible impairments, including autistic people or those with mental illness.

Every taxi and private hire vehicle passenger is an individual, each with their own unique wishes and requirements, none more than a disabled passenger using

services. It is, however, important to recognise that there are certain access barriers which will be familiar to people with similar impairments, which authorities should take time to understand.

4.1 Accessibility barriers

Many disabled people face physical barriers when accessing transport services. This may be because the built environment includes features which are difficult for them to use, such as steps, or it may be because vehicle designs cannot accommodate a particular size of wheelchair. Some barriers to the provision of taxi and private hire vehicle services include:

- ranks provided with inadequate space to deploy a ramp
- waiting areas lacking seating for people unable to stand for prolonged periods
- inadequate supply of wheelchair accessible vehicles to ensure that every passenger can travel when and where they want to
- vehicle designs which do not accommodate larger or heavier wheelchairs
- private hire vehicles needed to pick up passengers in large or complex car parks, such as at airports or railway stations
- street design which prevents taxis and private hire vehicles from stopping close to destinations

To mitigate these physical barriers authorities must ensure that due regard is given to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) (see [section 149 of the Equality Act 2010](#)) when taking decisions concerning the provision of taxi and private hire vehicle services and supporting infrastructure, and that reasonable adjustments are made to remove barriers preventing disabled people from accessing taxi and private hire vehicle services.

Licensing authorities should also do the following:

- consult with disabled passengers regularly on their experience of using taxi and private hire vehicle services, in addition to consulting trade unions and associations representing those providing services, and ensure that their feedback informs service development
- incentivise the uptake of wheelchair accessible vehicles where mandating them would be inappropriate.
- consider specifying that wheelchair accessible vehicles should be capable of carrying wheelchairs larger than the reference size

- work with airports, station operators and other locations where large numbers of passengers use taxi and private hire vehicle services to ensure disabled passengers can always access and exit vehicles safely and easily
- exercise discretion on application of other vehicle requirements if they would prevent suitable wheelchair accessible vehicles from being brought into service where there is unmet demand

4.2 Communication barriers

Disabled people may experience communication barriers when booking taxis or private hire vehicles or completing journeys. These may be related to a sensory impairment, such as blindness or deafness, or due to a cognitive impairment or autism. Taking time to understand the communication needs of individual passengers can make them feel more confident when using services.

Communication barriers might include:

- inability to book a taxi or private hire vehicle where using a telephone is the only option
- inability to book a taxi or private hire vehicle where the use of an app, inaccessible to visually impaired people, and those with limited or no access to technology, is the only option
- difficulty identifying the vehicle and seeking assistance from its driver
- difficulty communicating with drivers, particularly when conducted through a screen separating the driver and passenger compartments
- inability of some passengers to understand the driver and to provide information necessary for completing the journey
- inability for some passengers to read a meter (if fitted)

To mitigate these communication related barriers, authorities should take the relevant actions provided in the other sections of this guidance and ensure that:

- a range of booking methods are provided, so that people with limited access to certain forms of technology or communication can request a PHV
- operators should identify a passenger's accessibility needs prior to taking a booking, to ensure an appropriate vehicle is provided.
- information provided in hard copy in vehicles and in public places (such as libraries or private hire vehicle offices) is also readily available in alternative accessible formats, including large print, Braille, and Easy Read
- authority websites, including any pages relating to the taxi and private hire vehicle services and procedures for providing feedback and making

complaints, comply with current [accessibility guidance](#) and legislation, including [WCAG 2.1 accessibility standard](#) to Level AA as a minimum and the [Public Sector Bodies \(Websites and Mobile Applications\) \(No. 2\) Accessibility Regulations 2018](#) for digital content

- operator websites and digital booking apps comply with the WCAG 2.1 accessibility standard to Level AA and with the principles of the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018 as a minimum for digital content

4.3 Barriers relating to the carriage of assistance dogs

There are around 6,000 assistance dog partnerships in the UK, supporting disabled people to navigate the built environment, respond to sounds they cannot hear, react to health emergencies, and interact with objects and obstacles. They are often vital for their owners' ability to live independently, confidently and safely, yet 76% of assistance dog owners surveyed for the [2022 Inclusive Transport Strategy Evaluation report](#) had experienced a refusal or near-refusal during the preceding year. The main barriers faced by assistance dog owners when using these services include:

- the outright refusal of carriage
- an initial refusal of carriage followed by a protracted argument over an assistance dog owner's right to travel
- the provision of a sub-standard service because of a wish not to carry an assistance dog
- longer waits for booked vehicles due to operators allocating only drivers willing to convey passengers accompanied by assistance dogs
- the charging of higher fares or additional fees
- requiring the assistance dog to travel in a separate compartment to its owner
- the failure of local authorities to prosecute drivers even where sufficient evidence exists, preventing affected passengers from having their legal rights upheld

4.4 Confidence barriers

Many disabled people lack confidence to use public transport services including taxis and private hire vehicles. They may have had negative experiences in the past

or read about accessibility issues that others have experienced. Social media now makes it simple for disabled people, and others, to share accounts of being refused carriage or of licensing authorities failing to take decisive action against drivers who discriminate, and this can exacerbate perceptions that such services are not accessible. Confidence related barriers might include:

- the expectation that services will not be accessible, leading disabled people not to travel, or to use other less convenient or safe means
- the fear of confrontations which can ensue when attempting to travel with mobility equipment or an assistance dog
- the fear of being charged too much or taken on a circuitous route
- anxiety linked to mental health or other conditions, exacerbated by previous negative experiences or a fear of not being provided with appropriate assistance
- a lack of confidence in accessibility issues being investigated effectively and drivers facing sanctions where appropriate

To mitigate these confidence-related barriers authorities should take the relevant actions provided in the other sections of this guidance and:

- provide information publicly on the accessibility of taxi and private hire vehicle services, and the action that will be taken if they fall short of reasonable expectations
- always ensure that passengers are kept informed about the progress of investigations into complaints they have made, and that they understand the rationale for any resulting decision on action to be taken
- include in operator and driver facing communications testimonials of passengers who face confidence-related barriers when using taxis and private hire vehicles
- provide handouts explaining how confidence can be undermined by poor service
- support local travel training initiatives to support disabled people to access taxi and private hire vehicle services independently
- invite positive feedback on the accessibility of services, and champion inclusive behaviour, perhaps through communications, awards or other incentives

To assist passengers who would like to raise a complaint, licensing authorities should require operators to provide a driver's private hire licence number and any information relating to a booking upon the relevant licensing authority's request.

4.5 Supporting an inclusive service

Licensing authorities are uniquely placed to ensure that taxi and private hire vehicle services within their jurisdiction actively promote equality and independence for disabled people. By ensuring drivers and operators understand how to provide every customer with the assistance they need, authorities can ensure disabled people can travel with confidence that their needs will be met.

By taking action to ensure there are sufficient wheelchair accessible vehicles to satisfy passenger demand, authorities can ensure that wheelchair users need no longer structure their lives around the times and locations when vehicles accessible to them are likely to be available. And, by taking prompt and robust action to investigate and prosecute licensees in response to cases of discrimination, authorities can ensure that every operator and driver treats seriously their role in providing an inclusive service. Authorities should ensure those that are found liable for discriminatory treatment towards a disabled person are subject to a fine or the loss and/or suspension of their license as a consequence.

Supporting an accessible service is an integral aspect of licensing authorities' role, therefore, it is important that authorities make the provision of an inclusive service a core strategic aim, and that they consider the factors which can influence the extent to which such services meet the needs of all passengers.

4.6 Inclusive service plan

All licensing authorities should develop and maintain an inclusive service plan (ISP), either as a standalone document or as an integral element of a wider strategy. The ISP should describe:

- the demand for accessible services in their area, from wheelchair users and non-wheelchair users, and from people with both visible and less-visible impairments, and an assessment of the extent to which that need is currently being met
- the authority's strategy for making transport more inclusive generally, and specifically in relation to taxi and private hire vehicle provision
- the steps that the authority will take to improve the inclusivity of the taxi and private hire vehicle services it supports, including timescales for their completion
- the courses or assessments authorities require applicants to undertake - these should be suitable for a range of participants e.g. including older drivers

ISPs should be developed collaboratively with organisations representing the interests of disabled people and people with other protected characteristics. This should be based on accurate and up-to-date evidence of need and usage. To support the production and updating of an ISP, authorities should survey existing and potential disabled passengers at least every 5 years, building an understanding of the extent to which the vehicles and services provided by taxi and private hire vehicle fleets adequately support the needs of all passengers and whether driver training needs are being met.

ISPs should be policy documents first and foremost, intended to demonstrate publicly authorities' commitment to improving accessibility continually. They may, however, also serve to demonstrate to passengers the steps being taken to improve services. Authorities should consider how the content can be made more accessible to the public. They should in any case always be made available on authority websites and in alternative accessible hard copy formats, consistent with authorities' legal equalities duties.

ISPs should be updated at least every 5 years, to ensure decisions are based on an up-to-date understanding of passenger needs. ISP reviews should align with other periodic aspects of licensing practice and, where possible, the production of the local transport plan.

ISPs should be developed with an awareness of the context facing disabled passengers. Unfortunately, too many disabled people still report receiving inadequate service from taxi and private hire vehicle operators and drivers, or a lack of support from licensing authorities when they report alleged discrimination. In the three years after rules on the carriage of wheelchair users were introduced, over 30% of authorities had not implemented them, denying disabled passengers the right to be treated like anybody else.

Two decades have passed since the law made it illegal for taxis and private hire vehicles to refuse an assistance dog and yet today too many owners report that they continue to be refused carriage. Additionally, disabled people continue to face barriers when using taxis and private hire vehicles, for example from unhelpful drivers, vehicles with too high a step or a lack of handholds or being refused carriage and left waiting at the kerbside.

To ensure decisions taken on the regulation of services are informed by the lived experiences of disabled people, authorities should take steps to ensure that policy makers and staff dealing with the public understand the barriers that disabled people can face when using transport services. Therefore, relevant authority staff should complete disability awareness training.

ISPs should also take into account any authority rules on the specification of licensed vehicles, including the ease with which they can be converted to convey

passengers seated in a wheelchair. We understand that there is a particular challenge with some electric vehicles, and authorities should ensure they have considered fully the impact of any decision to require the use of such vehicles before changing licensing requirements.

4.7 Assistance for all passengers

Drivers and operators have specific duties not to discriminate against disabled passengers generally, and passengers in wheelchairs or who are accompanied by assistance dogs specifically. However, they also have general duties not to discriminate against anybody on account of their protected characteristics and proactively to provide reasonable adjustments that permit disabled passengers specifically to access their services. Although such general duties are enforced by disabled people through the Civil Courts, authorities have a role to play in creating an expectation that every potential passenger should be valued, regardless of any protected characteristic, and that any passenger requiring reasonable assistance is provided with it.

As a matter of course, drivers should help passengers to stow mobility aids, pushchairs and luggage, to ensure that older, younger or disabled passengers leave the vehicle safely away from traffic, and support customers to use card readers or count their change. Authorities can reinforce this through communications and training but could also include relevant requirements in licensing conditions or byelaws, which can be enforced by the authority.

All licensing authorities must comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) (see [Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010](#)) when taking decisions concerning the provision of taxi and private hire vehicle services and supporting infrastructure. Licensing authorities must also ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to remove physical barriers preventing disabled people from accessing taxi and private hire vehicle services.

Licensing authorities should provide a straightforward, accessible means of reporting alleged instances of discriminatory behaviour, including a dedicated email address and a telephone number. They should also take proactive steps to investigate allegations, interview passengers, and seek relevant evidence from operators and partner agencies.

Cases should be prosecuted where there is sufficient evidence to identify the driver and substantiate the claims made. The guidance on the assessment of convictions provided with the [Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards](#) states that where an applicant has a conviction involving or connected with discrimination in

any form, a licence will not be granted until at least seven years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed. Licensees convicted of such offences should be subject to the same standards.

Where a complaint about discrimination is received that will not result in a conviction, licensing authorities should consider a range of outcomes and take appropriate action based on the balance of probabilities. Licensing sanctions should be considered, such as suspension or revocation. The licensing authority must give full consideration to the available evidence before any decision is made and the licensee should be given the opportunity to state their case. Possible outcomes would include no action being taken and the complaint being recorded, a suspension until disability and equality awareness training/assessment is completed, or revocation of a licence and a refusal to issue another for an appropriate period.

4.8 Assistance dogs

To mitigate barriers relating to the carriage of an assistance dog, authorities must comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) (see [Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010](#)) when taking decisions concerning the provision of taxi and private hire vehicle services. This includes adoption of any policies affecting the carriage of assistance dogs in taxis and private hire vehicles or the investigation and, where appropriate, prosecution of drivers alleged to have discriminated against their owners.

Licensing authorities should:

- remind operators and drivers regularly of their duties under sections 168 to 171 of the [Equality Act 2010](#) and of the authority's intention to prosecute those that refuse to comply
- make it simple for passengers to report alleged instances of illegal discrimination relating to the carriage of assistance dogs
- investigate all such alleged instances, and prosecute drivers where sufficient evidence is identified
- where drivers are legally exempt from carrying assistance dogs, provide them with a card confirming this in large print and Braille, in addition to the statutory exemption notice
- invite operators and drivers to meet with assistance dog owners and learn about the role they play
- work with organisations, such as the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association, to produce hand out material which can be provided to operators and drivers

- encourage drivers to accept the carriage of trainee assistance dogs, which can benefit service accessibility by familiarising operators and drivers with the role of respective dogs and by helping the dogs to learn to behave appropriately when travelling by taxi or private hire vehicle
- build relationships with private hire vehicle operators to encourage proactive reporting of drivers alleged to have discriminated against passengers with assistance dogs, and provision of relevant evidence to support the authority's investigation.
- consider implementing policies at a local level which provide for categories of assistance dogs other than those prescribed at s173 of the Equality Act 2010 to travel in vehicles, where this is deemed appropriate

5. Enforcing the licensing regime

This section reiterates the importance of this function as outlined in the [Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards](#).

Implementing an effective framework for licensing authorities, to ensure that a full range of information is made available to suitably-trained decision makers who are supported by well-resourced officials, is essential to a well-functioning taxi and private hire vehicle sector. Whilst this helps prevent the licensing of those that are not deemed 'fit and proper', it does not ensure that those already licensed continue to display the behaviours and standards expected.

5.1 Setting expectations and monitoring

Licensing authorities should ensure that licensees are aware of the policies to which they must adhere, are properly informed of what is expected of them, and the repercussions for failing to do so.

The provision of a clear, simple and well-publicised process for the public to make comments and complaints about drivers, vehicles and operators will enable authorities to recognise and promote excellence and target compliance and enforcement activity. This will provide a further source of intelligence when considering the renewal of licences and of any additional training that may be required.

It is then for the licensing authority to consider if any intelligence indicates a need to suspend or revoke a licence in the interests of public safety or due to discriminatory behaviour, or to prosecute drivers in the Magistrates' Court for evidenced breaches of sections 165, 168 or 170 of [the Equality Act 2010](#).

Authorities should note that it can be particularly difficult for disabled passengers, including those who are visually impaired, to provide evidence of incidents. They may not, for instance, always be able to identify a driver visually. Authorities should still investigate such reports thoroughly, including taking statements from passengers, drivers and witnesses, accepting video or audio recordings as evidence where appropriate, and seeking evidence from partner agencies and from private hire vehicle operators (where relevant).

Where operators or drivers are prosecuted for Equality Act 2010 offences enabling those affected to give evidence in court may help to strengthen the authority's case, crystallise the harm caused to individuals, and increase complainants' confidence in the enforcement process. It is our view that prosecuting drivers and operators for offences under the Equality Act 2010, rather than relying solely on licensing sanctions, is proportionate to the harm caused by such discrimination and is vital to increasing the confidence of disabled passengers to use services.

We therefore recommend that cases are prosecuted where sufficient evidence exists and doing so would be in the interest of the inhabitants of the area. Blanket policies on not prosecuting offences may be incompatible with authorities' wider equalities duties.

Well-directed compliance and enforcement activity by the licensing authority benefits not only the public but also the responsible people in the taxi and private hire vehicle trades. Indeed, it could be argued that public safety depends upon licensing authorities having effective compliance and enforcement mechanisms in place. This includes actively seeking out those that operate outside the licensing system, not just those who come forward seeking the appropriate licences.

The resources devoted by licensing authorities to enforcement will vary according to local circumstances, including, for example, any difficulties with touting by unlicensed drivers and vehicles (a problem in some urban areas). Licensing authorities will also wish to liaise closely with the police. Multi-agency enforcement exercises (involving, for example, the Department for Work and Pensions) have proved beneficial in some areas.

Licensing authorities often use enforcement staff to check a range of licensed activities (such as premises selling alcohol, market traders etc.) as well as the taxi and private hire vehicle trades, to make the best use of staff time. But it is desirable to ensure that taxi and private hire vehicle enforcement effort is at least partly directed to areas where there is an evening or late-night economy, when problems

such as touting and illegal standing or plying for hire tend most often to arise. In formulating policies to address these issues, licensing authorities should be aware of the [Sentencing Council's guidelines](#) that specifically consider taxi touting/soliciting for hire and ensure those considering cases are aware of these and further guidelines on [offences committed for 'commercial' purposes](#).

5.2 Test purchasing

Test purchasing can be a powerful tool in identifying drivers and operators that are not complying with the requirements and standards an authority expects of its licensees; and those that are unlicensed, uninsured and unvetted who are seeking to illegally carry passengers.

This tool can be particularly useful in identifying those who discriminate against disabled passengers, particularly as evidencing ad hoc incidents can be difficult for the passengers concerned. Authorities have used disabled staff volunteers to run such exercises, targeting locations or particular operators linked to complaints about discrimination, with enforcement officers on hand to take evidence to support potential future prosecutions. Publicising the use of such approaches may act as a deterrent to licensees considering refusing carriage to a disabled person.

Licensing authorities should consider seeking legal advice before undertaking any covert test purchasing activity that will or is likely to take place inside a vehicle. This is so that an assessment can be made as to whether the proposed activity is considered to be covert surveillance (either directed surveillance or intrusive surveillance) under the [Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000](#) (RIPA). More information on directed and intrusive surveillance can be found in the [Covert Surveillance and Property Interference Code of Practice](#).

Test purchase activity does not in general require a covert human intelligence sources (CHIS) authorisation under RIPA as vendor-purchaser activity does not normally constitute a relationship as the contact is likely to be so limited. However, if repeat contact is made with the same driver or operator to encourage familiarity, a relationship may be established for a covert purpose and a CHIS authorisation should be considered.

5.3 Joint authorisation of enforcement officers

Licensing authorities should, where the need arises, jointly authorise officers from other authorities so that compliance and enforcement action can be taken against licensees from outside their area. An agreement between licensing authorities to jointly authorise officers enables the use of compliance and enforcement powers regardless of which authority within the agreement employs the officer and which issued the licence. This will mitigate the opportunities for licensees to evade regulation. Such an agreement will enable those authorities to take action against vehicles and drivers that are licensed by the other authority when they cross over boundaries. A model for agreeing joint authorisation is contained in the [LGA Councillors' handbook](#).

5.4 The Community Safety Accreditation Scheme

The [Community Safety Accreditation Scheme \(CSAS\)](#) is a voluntary scheme under which chief constables can choose to accredit employed people already working in roles that contribute to maintaining and improving community safety with limited but targeted powers. These roles include neighbourhood wardens, hospital security guards, park wardens, shopping mall guards and train guards and local authority enforcement officers.

The scheme creates a framework for public and private bodies to work in partnership with the police, providing additional uniformed presence in communities and capitalising on the skills and information captured by those already engaged with the community.

All schemes are managed, monitored and assessed at a local level by the responsible police force. Main benefits of the scheme include:

- increasing uniformed presence on the streets (CSAS accredited persons wear the uniform of their employing organisation, with an identification badge endorsed by the local police force)
- saving valuable police time in community safety
- promoting partnership working and the two-way exchange of information and intelligence between agencies

For more information about CSAS in your area, please [contact your local police force](#).

5.5 Points-based enforcement systems

To increase compliance with licensing requirements some licensing authorities operate a points-based system, which allows minor breaches of the rules to be recorded and considered in context, while referring those with persistent or serious breaches to the licensing committee (or other bodies charged with reviewing). Such systems can provide greater consistency in enforcement and make better use of the licensing committee's time. Authorities that operate a points-based enforcement system should make clear to licensees that these are separate to the 'penalty points' (endorsements) that the courts can put on a motorist's licence. As set out at 5.1, licensing authorities that use a points-based system should ensure that licensees are aware of the policies to which they must adhere, are properly informed of what is expected of them, and the repercussions for failing to do so - the points for specific breaches should be clearly set out.

Where a points-based enforcement system is in operation points incurred should remain on the record for a fixed period. The usual duration of a driver and private hire vehicle operator licence is 3 and 5 years respectively. To ensure that all past behaviour is taken into account when considering whether to grant a new licence, the department recommends that points should remain on the record from the date of the incident for a minimum of 3 years for drivers and a minimum of 5 years for private hire vehicle operators.

It should be noted that reaching a points limit must not result in an automatic action but should be used to trigger a review of the conduct of the licensee and whether further action is necessary to address any concerns. Such action might be undertaking additional training not just a suspension or revocation. Licensing authorities should however consider whether a review is undertaken in situations where points are incurred within a short period but have not reached a review point; for example, a rapid accumulation of points may indicate deteriorating standards or increasingly unsatisfactory conduct.

5.6 Suspension and revocation of driver's licences

[Section 61 of the Local Government \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) Act 1976](#), [section 16 of the Private Hire Vehicles \(London\) Act 1998](#) and section 19 of the Plymouth City Council Act 1975 provide licensing authorities with the ability to suspend or revoke a driver's licence.

Following the High Court's decision in *Singh-v-Cardiff City Council* 2012 EWHC 1852 Admin, the interim suspension (pending investigation or trial) of a licence is no longer practicable. A decision to suspend a licence is a final decision and should not

be made before a reasoned determination has been made that one of the above grounds (detailed in the relevant aforementioned act) has been met.

Before any decision is made, the licensing authority must give full consideration to the available evidence and the driver should be given the opportunity to state their case. As with the initial decision to license a driver, this determination should be reached based on probability, not on the burden of beyond reasonable doubt. If a period of suspension is imposed, it cannot be extended or changed to revocation later.

A decision to revoke a licence does not prevent the reissuing of a licence if further information is received that would alter the balance of probability, nor does a suspension prevent a subsequent decision to revoke. The decision to suspend or revoke is based on the evidence available at the time it made the determination. New evidence may, of course, become available later.

New evidence may be produced at an appeal, leading the appeal court to a different decision to that reached by the licensing authority. Alternatively, an appeal may be settled by agreement between the licensing authority and the driver on terms which, in the light of new evidence, become the appropriate course. If, for example, the allegations against a driver were now, on the balance of probability, considered to be unfounded, a suspension could be lifted and if the licence was revoked, an expedited re-licensing process used.

A suspension may still be appropriate if it is believed that a minor issue can be addressed through additional training or following a review of the individual circumstances where the limit of a points-based system is met. In this instance, the licence would be returned to the driver once the training has been completed without further consideration. This approach is clearly not appropriate where the licensing authority decides that, based on the information available at that time and on the balance of probability, the driver presents a risk to public safety.

[Section 61\(2B\) Local Government \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) Act 1976](#) and [section 17\(2\) of the Private Hire Vehicles \(London\) Act 1998](#) enable licensing authorities to suspend or revoke a taxi or private hire vehicle driver's licence with immediate effect on the grounds that it is in the interest of public safety and provided that the appropriate form of notice is given. In other cases, the suspension or revocation will take effect 21 days after the appropriate notice is given. The department is not proposing to issue any specific guidance on this issue of when immediate suspension or revocation of a licence is appropriate, preferring to leave it to the discretion of licensing authorities as to when the power should be used.

5.7 Suspension and revocation of vehicle licences

[Section 60 of the Local Government \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) Act 1976](#), [section 16 of the Private Hire Vehicles \(London\) Act 1998](#) and section 18 of the [Plymouth City Council Act 1975](#) provide licensing authorities with powers to suspend or revoke vehicle licences.

In addition, licensing authorities have powers to inspect and test taxis and private hire vehicles. If the licensing authority is not satisfied as to the fitness of the vehicle, or as to the accuracy of the taximeter in the case of taxis, they can suspend the vehicle licence and require the vehicle or the taximeter to be made available for further inspection. If the authority is not satisfied as to the fitness of the vehicle or accuracy of the taximeter after 2 months, this can lead to revocation of the vehicle licence - see [section 68 of the Local Government \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) Act 1976](#), [section 9 of the Private Hire Vehicles \(London\) Act 1998](#) and section 26 of the [Plymouth City Council Act 1975](#) for further details.

5.8 Suspension and revocation of private hire vehicle operator licences

[Section 62 of the Local Government \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) Act 1976](#) provides authorities with wide powers to suspend an operator's licence, section 20 provides a similar power under the [Plymouth City Council Act 1975](#). Transport for London may, under [section 16\(2\) of the Private Hire Vehicles \(London\) Act 1998](#), suspend or revoke an operator's licence. Additionally, if in the interests of public safety, the suspension or revocation may take effect immediately under [section 17\(2\) of the 1998 act](#). Otherwise, the suspension or revocation takes effect 21 days after the appropriate notice is served.

6. Driver licensing

6.1 Duration of driver licences

The [Local Government \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) Act 1976](#) (as amended), the [Private Hire Vehicles \(London\) Act 1998](#) and the [Plymouth City Council Act 1975](#) set a standard length of 3 years for taxi and private hire vehicle driver licences. Any shorter duration licence should only be issued when the licensing

authority thinks it is appropriate in the specific circumstances of the case. For example, where the licence holder's leave to remain in the UK is time-limited, the licensee has requested a shorter duration or the licence is only required to meet a short-term demand. Taxi and private hire vehicle licences should not be issued on a 'probationary' basis.

6.2 Fit and proper test

The [Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards](#) sets out the approach licensing authorities should take in respect to the fit and proper test. However, in addition to those checks provided in the statutory standards, as a minimum, the department would expect all applicants to undergo an assessment of their medical fitness. Before making a decision on a person's application for, or for the renewal of, a driver's licence a licensing authority must search the database provided by the National Anti-Fraud Network, the National Register for Revocations, Refusals and Suspensions (NR3S), for entries relating to the applicant.

This requirement to search the database arises under the [Taxis and Private Hire Vehicle \(Safeguarding and Road Safety\) Act 2022](#). The responsibilities of licensing authorities to share safeguarding and road safety concerns about taxi and private hire vehicle drivers with each other under this act are outlined in [statutory guidance](#).

6.3 Disability awareness

Drivers should be trained in disability awareness and/or have their knowledge and skills assessed. Drivers should also be encouraged, through targeted and general communications, to uphold the highest standards of customer service. The training or assessment should include but not be limited to:

- the features of an inclusive, high quality service
- appropriate attitudes, behaviours and skills
- assistance that can be provided to all passengers
- the protected characteristics, and related Equality Act 2010 duties
- understanding the different barriers that disabled people face when using taxis and private hire vehicles, and how they might be identified
- the role of taxis and private hire vehicles in enabling disabled people to be independent and the role of drivers and operators in facilitating this

- how to communicate with people with different communication needs
- how to assist people with a range of visible and less visible impairments
- supporting wheelchair users to board, alight and travel in safety and comfort whilst seated in their wheelchair
- the identification and role of assistance dogs
- legal obligations towards disabled passengers and the consequences of not complying with them
- an assessment of the trainee's knowledge and skills

[The REAL disability equality training programme](#) created on behalf of the Department for Transport, which includes common content for all modes as well as content developed for taxi and private hire vehicle drivers may provide a foundation for the development of courses meeting these requirements and should be considered when assessing disability awareness training needs.

Licensing authorities should encourage drivers to learn British Sign Language, including contributing to related costs.

6.4 Driver proficiency

The [Road Safety Statement](#) published in 2019 stated that:

The need to improve road safety does not end with the driving test; nor does it exclude those who drive or ride professionally or as part of their job.

Licensing authorities should require taxi and private hire vehicle drivers, as professional drivers, to display a higher degree of driving aptitude and diligence than a private motorist. This is considered appropriate and proportionate and is consistent with other elements of taxi and private hire vehicle driver licensing, for example, medical and vision assessments.

The ability to drive a car is tested when obtaining a driving licence. Nevertheless, evidence shows that driving behaviours are a significant contributor to road collisions. Factors such as fatigue, distractions and excess speed contribute significantly to collisions; excess speed alone accounted for 12 percent of all road traffic collisions in 2021 and 25 percent of those that resulted in a fatality. As professional drivers, for whom time is money, an appreciation of the effect of additional distractions and pressures which can negatively influence their driving behaviours is particularly relevant.

Licensing authorities should require taxi and private hire vehicle drivers to undertake training and/or assessment focussed on attitudes and behaviours, such as those provided by IAM Roadsmart and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA), at first application and renewal (typically every 3 years). Where an authority has specific concerns about the driving ability of a driver, for example through passenger complaints, it would be appropriate for the authority to consider whether the driver in question should undertake a practical driving ability training course or assessment to address those concerns.

6.5 Acceptance of non-UK driving licences

Individuals can drive legally in the UK with non-UK car and motorcycle licences for up to 12 months. Some individuals will then be required to (or may wish to) exchange a licence issued by another country. A [tool is available to provide more information on which licences must be exchanged](#) as well as the requirements and processes involved.

6.6 Medical and vision assessment

There is general recognition that it is appropriate for taxi and private hire vehicle drivers to have more stringent medical standards than those applicable to normal car drivers because:

- they carry members of the general public who have expectations of a safe journey
- they are on the road for longer hours than most car drivers
- they may have to assist disabled passengers and handle luggage

Licensing authorities should apply the [Group 2 medical required for an entitlement to drive lorries \(category C\) and for buses \(category D\)](#).

All initial category C and D licence applications require a medical assessment by a registered medical practitioner - recorded on the D4 form, this does not need to be the applicant's GP. Category C and D licence holders are required to make a medical declaration at each renewal of their category C or D driver's licence (every 5 years) until the age of 45 when an assessment is required again.

From age 45 an assessment is required every 5 years until the age of 65 when the requirement is an annual medical assessment.

Though it is not a requirement, the DVLA recommends that drivers who submit a medical report with an application or renewal for a category C and D licence should obtain this from a doctor with access to their full medical records. When conducting medical investigations, the DVLA will write to the driver's GP or consultant if further medical information is required; licensing authorities should do the same.

It is the responsibility of licensing authorities to assess the medical information they receive and decide whether a taxi or private hire vehicle licence should be issued. It is not the responsibility of the medical professional that provides the information to do this. Licensing authorities should seek the same information to inform their decision as required by the DVLA for category C and D licences. It is therefore suggested that [DVLA's medical examination report \(D4\)](#) is used as a template for licensing authorities to gather relevant information.

Detailed guidance on assessing medical fitness to drive is available in DVLA's [Assessing fitness to drive – a guide for medical professionals](#).

6.7 Immigration checks

The [Immigration Act 2016](#) (section 37 and Schedule 5) amended existing licensing regimes in the UK to prevent illegal working in the taxi and private hire vehicle sector, as drivers and operators. Licensing authorities are prohibited from issuing a licence to anyone who is disqualified by reason of their immigration status, and they discharge their duty by conducting immigration checks. The Home Office have provided [guidance for licensing authorities](#) on this matter.

Being disqualified from holding a licence by reason of their immigration status means that the person is in the UK illegally, is not permitted to work, or is permitted to work, but is subject to a condition that prohibits them from holding a licence in this sector.

The requirement to check the immigration status of licence applicants is in addition to and does not amend or replace the existing 'fit and proper' test.

6.8 Age limits

It is not appropriate to set a maximum age limit for drivers. Medical fitness to drive should be regularly assessed. Minimum age limits, beyond the statutory periods for holding a full driving licence, also seem inappropriate. Applicants should be assessed on their merits, and to do otherwise may in any case be contrary to the [Equality Act 2010](#), unless such restrictions can be justified in the public interest.

6.9 Language proficiency

The [Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards](#) recommend that a licensing authority's test of a driver's proficiency should cover both oral and written English language skills. Written proficiency is relevant because this could affect a driver's ability to understand written documents, such as policies and guidance relating to the protection of children and vulnerable adults, and applying this to identify and act on signs of exploitation. Oral proficiency will be relevant in identifying potential exploitation through communicating with passengers and their interaction with others.

Language proficiency will bring wider passenger benefits to those set out in the [Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards](#) in terms of the driver's ability to demonstrate an understanding of the desired destination, an estimation of the time taken to get there and other common passenger requests and for the driver to provide a legibly written receipt upon request.

6.10 Vocational training and assessment

The [Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards](#) are clear that all drivers should be required to undertake safeguarding training to understand policies and guidance relating to the protection of children and vulnerable adults to identify and act on signs of exploitation.

Whilst the minimum recommended requirements for safeguarding and disability awareness training could be met by requiring drivers to undertake vocational qualifications, it does not have to be delivered through this route. As set out in [section 3 of this document](#), licensing authorities should be able to demonstrate that any licensing conditions or requirements over and above that recommended by government are justified and proportionate.

Vocational qualifications provide a 'snapshot' of learning as they are awarded based on the curriculum of the course at the time it is taken. The training required of

drivers will naturally evolve over time and so a vocational qualification may need to be supplemented with further training and assessment. An example of this is the inclusion of '[county lines](#)' awareness as part of safeguarding training.

Given the need for driver knowledge and awareness to evolve and the potential need for periodic assessment, licensing authorities should not require applicants for a licence to have obtained a vocational qualification. If drivers and private hire vehicle operators wish to go beyond what is required to obtain a licence as part of their development or business model they can obviously do so, but it should not be a licensing requirement.

6.11 Topographical knowledge

Taxi drivers need a good working knowledge of the area for which they are licensed because taxis can be hired immediately, directly with the driver, at ranks or on the street and so drivers are not able to prepare a route. Licensing authorities should therefore require prospective taxi drivers to pass a test of local topographical knowledge as a pre-requisite to the first grant of a licence. The department's view is that the stringency of the test should reflect the complexity or otherwise of the local geography, in accordance with the principle of ensuring that barriers to entry are not unnecessarily high.

Private hire vehicles are not legally available for immediate hiring. To hire a private hire vehicle the prospective passenger must go through an operator; the operator should gather sufficient information from the passenger to identify the collection and drop-off points, this will enable the driver to check the details of a route before starting a journey and plan or enter it in a navigation system. Given the availability, reliability and ease of use of sat nav systems, licensing authorities should not require any topographical knowledge or navigational tests for private hire vehicle drivers.

6.12 Intended use policies in respect of taxi drivers

Holders of taxi licences are permitted to carry pre-booked fares anywhere in England and Wales, reflecting that taxi drivers may carry passengers beyond the boundary of their licensing authority, the 'compellable area', and seek a return fare to avoid additional miles without a fare. We are aware that a number of licensing authorities have introduced a taxi 'intended use' policy when considering licence

applications aimed at reducing the number of taxis working predominantly to carry prebooked fares in other areas rather than plying for hire in their licensed area.

Licensing authorities should require an applicant for a taxi driver licence to declare that they intend to work predominately within the licensing authority's area. The residential address provided by the application should be considered in assessing the likelihood of this declaration being adhered to when assessing an application for a taxi driver licence.

6.13 Vehicle condition check

The driver of a vehicle is always legally responsible for its condition while in use. Licensing authorities should require drivers to conduct a walkaround check as part of a driver's core role. Drivers can be fined up to £2,500, be banned from driving and get three penalty points for driving a vehicle in a dangerous condition. [Annex 6 of the Highway Code](#) provides information and rules about vehicle maintenance.

A driver should undertake a walkaround check before a vehicle is used. Where more than one driver will use the vehicle during the day's running, the driver taking charge of a vehicle should make sure it is roadworthy and safe to drive by carrying out their own walkaround check.

Drivers should be required to retain the vehicle checklist as proof that they have undertaken the required vehicle check. Drivers should be made aware that they may be subject to sanctions if they are unable to produce this or it is clear that while the form has been completed, the check has not. Further sanctions may result against them, as well as vehicle proprietors, if they are found using a defective vehicle, especially if the condition of the vehicle is such that it is obvious no routine checks have occurred over several days.

A [model vehicle checklist is available on GOV.UK landing page for this guidance](#).

7. Private hire vehicle operator licensing

The objective in licensing private hire vehicle operators is, again, the safety of the public, who will be using operators' premises and the vehicles and drivers arranged through them. The [Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards](#) sets out relevant safeguarding checks for operators, including criminality checks. In addition, the Department consider it appropriate to ensure that private hire vehicle operators

administer their business correctly to be considered 'fit and proper'. Licensing authorities should consider the following as part of their assessment.

7.1 Sources of information

Checking open-source information, cross checking information with bodies such as Companies House and the Office of the Traffic Commissioner can help licensing authorities assure themselves that the company is suitable to be licensed.

7.2 Disability awareness

The licensee and all staff in customer facing roles and people managing service delivery should be trained in disability awareness, or have their knowledge and skills assessed, and be encouraged through targeted and general communications to uphold the highest standards of customer service. Training or assessment should include but not be limited to:

- the features of an inclusive, high quality service
- appropriate attitudes, behaviours and skills
- assistance that can be provided to all passengers
- the protected characteristics, and related Equality Act 2010 duties
- understanding the different barriers that disabled people face when using private hire vehicles, and how they might be identified
- the role of private hire vehicles in enabling disabled people to be independent and the role of operators in facilitating this
- how to communicate with people with different communication needs
- how to assist people with a range of visible and less visible impairments
- the identification and role of assistance dogs
- legal obligations towards disabled passengers and the consequences of not complying with them
- an assessment of the trainee's knowledge and skills

The [REAL disability equality training programme](#) created on behalf of the Department for Transport, which includes common content for all modes, as well as [content developed for taxis and private hire vehicles](#) may provide a foundation

for the development of courses meeting these requirements, and should be considered when assessing disability awareness training needs.

Licensing authorities should require operators to ensure that any digital booking platforms comply with the [WCAG 2.1 accessibility standard](#) to Level AA and with the principles of the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018 as a minimum.

Cases should be prosecuted where there is sufficient evidence to substantiate offences under section 167A or section 170 of the [Equality Act 2010](#), or where an operator has unlawfully discriminated against a passenger or failed to make reasonable adjustments under the same Act.

7.3 Private hire vehicle operators – duration of licences

The [Local Government \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) Act 1976](#) (as amended) and the [Private Hire Vehicles \(London\) Act 1998](#) set a standard length of licence of 5 years for private hire vehicle operators. Any shorter duration licence should only be issued when the licensing authority thinks it is appropriate in the specific circumstances of the case. For example, the licence holder's leave to remain in the UK is time-limited, the licensee has requested a shorter duration, or the licence is only required to meet a short-term demand. Private hire vehicle operator licences should not be issued on a 'probationary' basis.

7.4 Insurance

It is appropriate for a licensing authority to check that appropriate public liability insurance has been obtained.

7.5 Health and Safety responsibilities

Health and safety law creates duties on businesses where requirements apply to workers in the same way as they do for employees. Guidance from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) ([Health and safety for gig economy, agency and temporary workers - HSE](#)) outlines the different type of workers and what is expected of businesses who use their services.

In practice, this means establishing effective management arrangements and carrying out an assessment of the risks to workers while they are at work, and to other people who may be affected by their work activities. Any assessment should identify the significant risks affecting workers and others, and, importantly, identify measures to reduce those risks. For example, this includes how to ensure work-related road safety (see [Driving for work](#) for further guidance), training requirements and the provision and use of any protective equipment. The HSE also provide [guidance for both employers and workers on protecting lone workers](#). This guidance applies to anyone contracted to work for an operator, including self-employed people.

[Secured by Design](#) (SBD) is the official police security initiative that works to improve security to provide safe places, including those in which to work. SBD's product based accreditation scheme – the [Police Preferred Specification](#) - provides a recognised standard for all security products that can deter and reduce crime and includes those for lone workers.

[Devices and apps are available](#) to help employers protect lone workers, however they are not likely to be sufficient on their own. Operators must still manage the risks of working alone, including training, supervising and monitoring lone workers as well as keeping in touch with them and responding to any incidents.

In the department's view, although it may not be the role of licensing authorities to enforce Health and Safety legislation, it is reasonable for any breaches of this legislation to be considered as part of the 'fit and proper' test. As stated in this guidance, the primary and overriding objective must be to protect the public.

7.6 Compliance with employment law

It is not within the scope of this guidance to offer an opinion on the employment status of private hire vehicle drivers, nor is it for licensing authorities to decide on these matters: only the courts can make rulings on employment status. The Department for Business and Trade has published [guidance to make it easier for individuals and businesses to understand which employment rights apply to them](#).

In the department's view, where an employment tribunal or a court of law has ruled on the employment status of a driver or drivers working for an operator, whether the operator is complying with that decision in respect of the driver(s) referred to in the ruling, should reasonably be considered by a licensing authority as part of the 'fit and proper' test for a private hire vehicle operator.

8. Vehicle licensing

The legislation gives licensing authorities a wide range of discretion over the types of vehicle that they can license as taxis or private hire vehicles. Some authorities specify conditions that in practice can only be met by purpose-built vehicles but the majority license a range of vehicles.

8.1 Specification of vehicle types that may be licensed

Normally, the best practice is for licensing authorities to adopt the principle of enabling as many different types of vehicles as possible to be licensed. Indeed, licensing authorities should set down a range of general criteria, leaving it open to the taxi and private hire vehicle trades to put forward vehicles of their own choice which can be shown to meet those criteria. In that way, there can be flexibility for new vehicle types to be readily considered.

Licensing authorities should give very careful consideration to a policy that automatically rules out particular types of vehicle or prescribes only one type or a small number of types of vehicle. For example, the department believes authorities should be particularly cautious about specifying that only purpose-built taxis can be licensed, given the strict constraint on supply that that implies. Nevertheless, purpose-built vehicles are amongst those that a licensing authority could be expected to license. It may also be too restrictive to automatically rule out considering multi-purpose vehicles, provided that the capacity of the vehicle is not more than 8 passengers.

The owners and drivers of vehicles may want to make appropriate adaptations to their vehicles to help improve the personal security of the drivers. Licensing authorities should look favourably on such adaptations, but, as mentioned in the [section of this guidance on partitions in vehicles](#), they may wish to ensure that modifications are present when the vehicle is tested and not made after the testing stage.

8.2 Motorcycles

It is recognised that some licensing authorities may wish to license motorcycles as private hire vehicles. To assist those authorities the department has published [guidance which outlines the standards and conditions which the](#)

[department considers to represent best practice when licensing motorcycles as private hire vehicles.](#)

8.3 Pedicabs

Pedicabs or rickshaws are pedal-powered vehicles in combination with a trailer designed to carry passengers. They include electrically assisted pedal cycles. Pedicabs offer short-distance, zero emission journeys. Outside London, pedicabs can be regulated as taxis. Where there is local interest in providing pedicab services, licensing authorities should make appropriate adjustments to their licensing requirements for drivers and vehicles to accommodate these requests. Under London legislation, pedicabs cannot be licensed as taxis.

8.4 Vehicle age limits

The frequency of testing required (see [frequency of vehicle tests](#)) to ensure the ongoing safety of vehicles is a separate issue to the setting of maximum age limits at first licensing, or maximum age limits beyond which an authority will not licence a vehicle.

The setting of an arbitrary age limit may be inappropriate, counterproductive and result in higher costs to the trade and ultimately passengers. For example, a maximum age for first licensing may have adverse unintended consequences. A 5-year-old used electric vehicle will produce less emissions than a new Euro 6 diesel or petrol car – enabling the trade to make use of previously owned vehicles will assist it to transition more rapidly to zero emission vehicles and improve air quality.

Licensing authorities should not impose age limits for the licensing of vehicles instead they should consider more targeted requirements to meet their policy objectives on emissions, safety rating and increasing wheelchair accessible provision where this is low.

8.5 Vehicle safety ratings

The increasing ability of a car to reduce or prevent injury during an impact is reported as having had the most significant effect on road casualty totals in recent

years. Although numbers have remained broadly consistent since 2010, they still indicate [30% fewer fatalities in 2018](#) than a decade earlier.

[Euro NCAP](#) is an independent, not-for-profit, organisation which is widely recognised by the motor industry and road safety professionals as providing motorists with objective information on the crash safety of passenger cars. The 1-5 star rating helps consumers compare the safety potential of different models and is based on assessment in 4 important areas:

- adult occupant protection (for the driver and passengers)
- child occupant protection
- vulnerable road user protection (pedestrians and cyclists)
- Safety Assist, which evaluates driver assistance (for example, lane keeping and autonomous emergency braking) and occupant status (for example, seat belt reminders and driver monitoring) technologies

Evolving vehicle regulations and consumer information have supported this trend and a 2019 [research paper](#) considered differences in real-world injury outcome for occupants in cars rated by Euro NCAP. It concluded that the risk of fatal injury was reduced by 40% for occupants of a 5-star rated car when compared with an equivalent 2-star rated car.

The NCAP star rating system goes beyond type approval and not all new vehicles undergo Euro NCAP tests. A car that just meets the minimum type approval standards would not be eligible for any stars. This also means that a car which is rated poorly is not necessarily unsafe, but it is not as safe as its competitors that were rated better. As of 2021, [Government Buying Standards for transport](#) have required that new cars must have a minimum and valid 5-star Euro NCAP safety rating.

[Read more information on the NCAP rating system, how this has evolved and what this means for older vehicles.](#)

Licensing authorities should consider the safety benefits to passengers, drivers and pedestrians of vehicles which have received a higher NCAP rating, where these have been assessed, alongside the potential impacts on the availability of vehicles for passengers. Any requirements should be kept under review as the range of vehicles changes.

8.6 Environmental considerations

The UK is committed to a 2050 net zero target. This puts the UK on track to end our contribution to climate change, becoming one of the first major economies to legislate for net zero emissions. On transport, government is phasing out the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans, from 2035 all new cars and vans must be zero emissions at the tailpipe.

Where clean air zones are introduced, authorities will already be working to address local environmental considerations under the [Clean Air Zones Framework](#). More widely, licensing authorities, in discussion with those responsible for environmental health issues, will wish to consider how its vehicle licensing policies can and should support any environmental policies adopted by the local authority. This will be particularly important in designated air quality management areas or low/ultra-low emission zones.

Licensing teams should work with council colleagues with air quality and climate responsibilities to ensure taxi and private hire vehicle fleets play their part in work to tackle local emissions. Leading areas cite large-scale change in these fleets needs a longer-term strategy, with a coordinated approach across council teams and local trades, that considers licencing requirements, other supportive policies (for example, try-before-you-buy scheme), and, in the context of moving to a fully zero emission vehicle fleet, a strategy for supporting the installation of electric vehicle charge points.

Taxis and private hire vehicles that operate predominantly in urban areas can be significant contributors to poor local air quality, if not properly maintained and regularly checked, due to their higher usage.

Licensing authorities should carefully and thoroughly assess the impact of vehicle emission requirements to enable the sector to plan for the future. The short-term objective should be to mitigate the harm from internal combustion engines through the setting of high EURO emission standards for example, EURO 6 but, in the long-term, the trade will need to be fully prepared for the end of the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and the need to transition to zero emission vehicles. Licensing authorities should set out their own long-term plan in good time.

In response to local air quality concerns, many licensing authorities are considering how to support the use of [ultra-low or zero emission vehicles given the growing range of vehicles](#) available. As stated in the [vehicle age limit section of this guidance](#), greater flexibility regarding the age of vehicles licensed can result in more rapid improvement in air quality than mandating new 'clean' internal combustion engine vehicles.

8.7 Imported vehicles: type approval

It may be that, from time to time, an authority will be asked to license a taxi or private hire vehicle that has been imported independently (by somebody other than the manufacturer). Such a vehicle might meet the authority's criteria for licensing, but the authority may nonetheless be uncertain about the wider rules for foreign vehicles being used in the UK. Such vehicles will be subject to the 'type approval' rules. For passenger cars up to 10 years old at the time of first GB registration, this means meeting the technical standards of either a GB vehicle type approval or an individual vehicle approval.

Most registration certificates issued since late 1998 should indicate the approval status of the vehicle. The technical standards applied (and the safety and environmental risks covered) under each of the above are proportionate to the number of vehicles entering service. Read [further information about these requirements and the procedures for licensing and registering imported vehicles](#).

8.8 Tinted windows

For most cars on the road today, the minimum light transmission for windscreens is 75% and 70% for front side windows. There are no rules for tinting the windows rear of the B-pillar and vehicles are often manufactured with glass in the rear that is darker than the front, especially in luxury, estate and people carrier style vehicles.

There is a significant cost and inconvenience associated with requiring drivers to replace the standard manufacturer or factory specifications for window glass. Some passengers may feel more comfortable in vehicles that do not have very heavily tinted rear windows but there is a lack of evidence to suggest that these are detrimental to public safety. Balancing these factors, the department considers that licensing authorities should not require the removal of windows rear of the B-pillar if they have a minimum light transmission of 30% or above. This should maintain passenger confidence whilst ensuring a wide range of vehicles may be licensed.

The department recognises that a minimum light transmission of 30% for windows rear of the B-pillar might impact on executive hire vehicles, where passengers demand a higher degree of privacy. Some licensing authorities already grant executive hire vehicles plate exemptions, and they could determine that an exemption from the 30% minimum light transmission level for these vehicles is appropriate. Authorities should be assured that those vehicles are not used for 'normal fares'.

Authorities should carefully consider the views of the public and the trade when considering the acceptance of 'after-market' tinting and should be assured that any after-market window tinting does not negatively affect the safety features of the glass it is applied to.

Read separate guidance about the [rules for tinted vehicle windows](#).

8.9 An accessible fleet

The physical accessibility of vehicles used to provide taxi and private hire vehicle services is a significant factor in the inclusivity of the overall service provided. Wheelchair accessible vehicles are essential for wheelchair users who are unable to transfer from their wheelchair to the vehicle, or who prefer to travel in their wheelchair.

Licensing authorities should understand the demand for mixed fleets in its area and ensure that, when issuing licences, it has the right mix of vehicles. They should recognise that some designs of wheelchair accessible vehicles may not be suitable for some ambulant disabled passengers.

Licensing authorities should assess the demand for wheelchair accessible vehicles in its area on a 5-yearly basis and publish the results. If demand is not currently met, it should also provide an explanation about how the licensing authority plans to meet this demand. Licensing authorities should consider ways to incentivise an increase in wheelchair accessible vehicle provision. This may consist of licence fee rebates, access to bus lanes where agreed with the local highways authority, relaxation of other licensing requirements where it would otherwise be difficult to source appropriate wheelchair accessible vehicles, priority roadway access and, in the case of taxis, rank access.

8.10 Inclusive vehicle specifications

The design of non-wheelchair accessible vehicles licensed for use as taxis or private hire vehicles can also have a bearing on their accessibility. This guidance advises authorities to adopt the principle of setting down general criteria for vehicles and allowing drivers and operators to demonstrate how their vehicles fulfil them. When setting minimum criteria for newly licensed vehicles, authorities should consider factors which could influence the accessibility of vehicles to disabled passengers, including:

- the ease with which passengers can enter and leave the vehicle, including the height of steps and the positioning of seats
- the space available for assistance dogs to remain with their owner in the vehicle
- the space available for folded mobility aids in addition to other items of luggage
- the comfort and safety with which disabled people can use them
- wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAVs)

The government's 2022 statutory guidance '[Access to taxis and private hire vehicles for disabled users](#)' recommends that WAVs large enough to accommodate a passenger seated in a "reference wheelchair" should be designated formally as being "wheelchair accessible" for the purposes of section 167 of the [Equality Act 2010](#).

This reflects the department's view that a vehicle which is only able to accommodate smaller wheelchairs would not be accessible to the majority of wheelchair users. Authorities should also maintain a consistent policy on their support or otherwise for WAVs which wheelchair users enter through the rear door. Many wheelchair users find boarding and travelling in such vehicles can be easier and more comfortable, and authorities should consider permitting their use where this is not already the case.

We have undertaken a review of the reference wheelchair standard and believe that further consideration on its use is required. In the meantime, we suggest that licensed WAVs meet minimum size requirements and any changes in policy will be reflected in future guidance.

For some passengers in wheelchairs, only vehicles which enable them to board, alight from and travel whilst remaining in their wheelchair are accessible and it is important that sufficient vehicles of this category are available throughout the day to provide an acceptable service.

Other wheelchair users may be able to transfer onto the seat of a car, with or without assistance, with the wheelchair stored in the vehicle's boot during the journey. For such passengers, and for some ambulant disabled people, for whom high steps and large open spaces may be difficult to negotiate, traditional WAVs may be challenging to access.

Licensing authorities should adopt policies on the minimum standards for WAVs, noting that some passengers need to use wheelchairs larger and heavier than the [reference wheelchair](#).

A truly inclusive transport system is one where a mixed fleet is available, where wheelchair users can travel as easily as anybody else, and this means ensuring that there are sufficient suitable vehicles to serve their needs.

Licensing authorities should assess the demand for wheelchair accessible taxis and private hire vehicles within their jurisdiction at least every five years, aligning with the production of the local transport plan where possible, and take appropriate steps to ensure that the supply of suitably accessible vehicles meets the demand for them.

The assessment, targeted proportion, and details of the steps that will be taken to achieve it should be documented in the authority's [inclusive service plan](#).

8.11 Accessibility equipment

Authorities should consider the benefits of requiring additional accessibility equipment to be provided in vehicles beyond that which might be included in a standard vehicle specification, noting that the benefits to disabled customers in terms of their confidence and willingness to travel cannot always be monetised. Authorities should, as a minimum, require the installation of hearing loops in vehicles where an internal screen is fitted, to support passengers who are deaf or hard of hearing to communicate with drivers.

Authorities should also investigate options for making the payment process more accessible for visually impaired passengers. Whilst not widely used in the UK, 'talking' meters are used in other countries, and some payment card readers are more accessible than others. Implementing such interventions could support more disabled passengers to use taxi and private hire vehicle services with confidence.

Licensing authorities should ensure that such modifications are present when the vehicle is tested and not made after the testing stage.

8.12 Vehicle identification and signage

Members of the public can often confuse private hire vehicles with taxis, failing to realise that they are not available for immediate hire and that a private hire vehicle driver can only fulfil pre-booked requests. Greater differentiation in signage will help the public to distinguish between the two elements of the trade. To achieve this,

licensing authorities should seek to differentiate the profile of private hire vehicles as these can only be legally engaged through a booking with a licensed operator.

Licensing authorities should not permit roof signs of any kind on private hire vehicles and should require all taxis to display a 'taxi' roof sign/box that can be illuminated when available for hire. Roof signs must comply with the [Road Vehicles Lighting Regulations 1989](#). Permitting any sign/box on a private hire vehicle, regardless of the wording on such a sign, is likely to increase awareness of the vehicle and the likelihood of being mistaken for a taxi.

This increases the success of those illegally standing or plying for hire and may lead to confrontation when private hire vehicle drivers refuse a request for a journey that has not been pre-booked. Having an illuminated sign on taxis and prohibiting them from private hire vehicles will provide a simple way for the public to differentiate between the two services and we encourage all licensing authorities to promote this difference to raise public awareness.

Licensing authorities should not impose a livery requirement on private hire vehicles. The more distinctive a private hire vehicle is made to appear, the greater the chance that this might be confused with a taxi. To assist the differentiation further, licensing authorities which require taxis to be a particular colour should prevent private hire vehicles from being that same colour, unless they are easily identifiable i.e. they are purpose-built vehicles as is the case in many of our cities.

Licensing authorities' private hire vehicle signage requirements should be limited to the authority licence plate or disc and a "pre-booked only" door sign.

This approach enables passengers to be given the clear and consistent message that you should only get in a vehicle that 'has a taxi sign on the roof' unless you have pre-booked a private hire vehicle and have received information from the operator to identify it.

A private hire vehicle driver and proprietor are free to work with more than one operator and licensing conditions or requirements that effectively tie a vehicle or driver into an exclusive relationship with an operator should not be implemented or should be discontinued where these are currently imposed. Examples of such policies are a requirement for the private hire vehicle to display the name of the operator under which it is operating by means of a permanent or semi-permanent sign, or to require a driver to advise the licensing authority of the operator who they intend to work for and require notification in advance of any change.

Where an exclusive relationship exists between the vehicle proprietor, driver and operator, a licensing authority should consider permitting the display of operator details in a discreet manner to not undermine the overall objective of enabling the

public to differentiate easily between taxis and private hire vehicles. This might, for example, be through small branding on the rear of the vehicle.

Restrictions on the use of terms which might lead to confusion among the public are detailed in section 64 of [The Transport Act 1980](#) in respect of roof-signs; to assist the public in differentiating taxis from private hire vehicles, similar restrictions should be applied to all signage on private hire vehicles. Signs which include the word “taxi” or “cab”, whether singular or plural, or any word of similar meaning or appearance to any of those words, whether alone or as part of another word should not be permitted.

Licensing authorities should only exempt the display of a licence plate by a private hire vehicle in exceptional circumstances. ‘Executive hire’ services are licensed as private hire vehicles and licensing authorities should assure themselves that there is sufficient justification to exempt these vehicles from a requirement to display a plate or disc and that there is an effective means to prevent the vehicle being used for ‘normal’ private hire work.

8.13 Passenger capacity

Licensing authorities are responsible for deciding how many passengers a taxi or private hire vehicle is licensed to carry. Whilst the Vehicle Registration Certificate (V5C) issued by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency states the seating capacity of a vehicle, licensing authorities are entitled to restrict the passenger carrying capacity in the interest of convenience and comfort. When considering limiting the passenger carrying capacity on the grounds of comfort, authorities should consider the principles set out in the [Competition and Market Authority’s guidance](#).

Licensing authorities should consider whether there may be a safety risk for passengers in terms of ‘third row’ seats, if passengers must move other seats with which they are unfamiliar to enter or exit the vehicle in an emergency situation. Should these seats be included in the licensed seating capacity, licensing authorities should require operators to advise passengers in advance that some seats have restricted access and so may be unsuitable for those with mobility difficulties.

Given the benefits of seatbelts, the department considers that taxis and private hire vehicles should not be licensed to carry more people than the number of seatbelts available. Though rear-facing seats do not require a seatbelt, they often are equipped with one. Vehicles that have a designated space for the carrying of a wheelchair should have this space considered in the vehicle’s licensed capacity.

8.14 Carrying children

The safest way for a child to travel by car is in an appropriate car seat. It is however unreasonable and impractical for a taxi or private hire vehicle to carry a range of seats to meet the possible needs of all passengers. If the correct child car seat has not been provided, the law allows children to travel in taxis and private hire vehicles, but only if they travel on a rear seat; children under three can travel in a rear seat without a seat belt, and children who are three or older must wear an adult seat belt.

Children aged 3 and over should always count towards the licensed capacity of the vehicle because if an appropriate car seat is not available, they must wear an adult seat belt. Children under the age of 3 do not need to wear an adult seatbelt when an appropriate car seat is not available, so they do not need to count towards the licensed capacity. Licensing authorities should provide advice to licensees on its policy on the carriage of children under three years to provide certainty in terms of overloading and refusal of carriage in such situations.

Further [information on the carriage of children safely in taxis and private hire vehicles has been published by the Royal Society on the Prevention of Accidents \(RoSPA\)](#) with the support of the Department for Transport. Drivers and operators should be made aware of this guidance to ensure compliance with the law and to protect passengers.

8.15 Personal security

The personal security of taxi and private hire vehicle drivers and staff must be considered. [Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998](#) requires local authorities and others to consider crime and disorder reduction while exercising all their duties. Authorities should ensure that security adaptations (for example, partitions in vehicles) do not prevent drivers from fulfilling their legal obligations towards disabled passengers. For example, whilst front seats may not be included in occupancy numbers or generally used by passengers where security screens are fitted, some disabled people may require access to the front seat to complete a journey comfortably and safely, thereby reducing the numbers carried in the back.

To emphasise the reciprocal aspect of the taxi and private hire vehicle services, licensing authorities should make available signs or notices which set out not only what passengers can expect from drivers, but also what drivers can expect from passengers who use their service. Two [sample notices have been provided for illustrative purposes](#) but licensing authorities are encouraged to formulate their own, in the light of local conditions and circumstances.

Licensing authorities should seek to build good links between the taxi and private hire vehicle trades and the local police force, including participation in any community safety partnerships.

The [Health and Safety Executive list the installation of CCTV with visible signage as a successful measure to improve safety](#). Community safety partnerships are also required to invite public transport providers and operators to participate in the partnerships. Research has shown that anti-social behaviour and crime affects taxi and private hire vehicle drivers and control centre staff. It is therefore important that the personal security of those working in the sector is considered.

Other security measures include guidance, talks by the local police and conflict avoidance training. The department has issued guidance for drivers on staying safe:

- [Staying safe: guidance for taxi drivers](#)
- [Staying safe: guidance for the private hire vehicle trade](#)

8.16 Partitions in vehicles

Vehicles used by the trade that are not purpose built are unlikely to have a partition between the front and rear of the vehicle which may provide protection for the driver from assault. Partitions can be made from materials that withstand a knife attack or hard body impact and can be fitted and taken out easily.

The fitting of in-vehicle partitions must not cause the vehicle to be a danger to anyone in the vehicle or on the road, in compliance with regulation 100 of the [Road Vehicles \(Construction and Use\) Regulations 1986](#). In order that the partition is effective in providing a means to separate drivers and passengers, the front passenger seat should not be included in the seating capacity of the vehicle licence where a partition is fitted. The department has published guidance on the [design and fitting of screens to taxis and private hire vehicles](#) not originally designed to have a screen.

Licensing authorities may wish to ensure that such modifications are present when the vehicle is tested and not made after the testing stage.

8.17 In-vehicle visual and audio recording – CCTV

The [Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards](#) set-out the department's position on this matter - that CCTV can provide additional deterrence to prevent crime and investigative value when it occurs. The use of CCTV can provide a safer environment for the benefit of taxi and private hire vehicle passengers and drivers by:

- deterring and preventing the occurrence of crime
- reducing the fear of crime
- assisting the police in investigating incidents of crime
- assisting insurance companies in investigating motor vehicle accidents

The statutory standards state that all licensing authorities should consult to identify if there are local circumstances which indicate that the installation of CCTV in vehicles would have either a positive or an adverse net effect on the safety of taxi and private hire vehicle users, including children or vulnerable adults, and taking into account potential privacy issues. Signs in the vehicle are required to highlight the presence of CCTV to passengers and an extra indicator is required to show when audio recording has been activated. The department's view is that CCTV in vehicles can enhance both drivers' and passengers' safety and consideration of the merits of CCTV by licensing authorities must include both aspects.

Licensing authorities should review the [Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards](#) for further information on consideration of mandating CCTV in taxis and private hire vehicles.

8.18 Emergency equipment

The Highway Code advises that should a vehicle catch fire, the occupants should get out of the vehicle quickly and to a safe place and not to attempt to extinguish a fire in the engine compartment, as opening the bonnet will make the fire flare. The National Fire Chief Council (NFCC) recommends that licensing authorities that require fire extinguishers to be provided in vehicles, should ensure that suitable and sufficient training is received by the drivers.

The NFCC's advice is that if a licensing authority elects not to require drivers to undertake training on the safe way to tackle a vehicle fire, vehicles should not be required to carry fire extinguishers and drivers advised to get out and stay out of the vehicle and call 999, rather than attempting to firefight.

8.19 Vehicle testing

Licensing authorities must only license vehicles that are safe. It is therefore appropriate and proportionate that authorities require vehicles to pass rigorous safety checks. There is considerable variation between licensing authorities on vehicle testing, including the related but separate question of age limits. The following can be regarded as best practice.

Frequency of vehicle tests

The legal requirement is that private hire vehicles which are at least three years old, and all taxis, must be subject to an MOT test or its equivalent at least once a year. Local authorities may obtain a designation from the Secretary of State for Transport to issue 'Certificates of Compliance'. The requirements of the test normally include those in an MOT test but may also include another inspection by a licensing officer to ensure the vehicle meets the relevant local requirements for issuing a taxi or private hire vehicle licence e.g. cleanliness of the vehicle inside and outside, correct plates displayed etc.

An annual test for licensed vehicles of whatever age (including vehicles that are less than three years old) seems appropriate in most cases, unless local conditions suggest that more frequent tests are necessary. More frequent tests may be appropriate for older vehicles which may be more prone to mechanical defects (see [Vehicle age limits](#) or for vehicles owned by proprietors that persistently present vehicles that do not meet the standards required by the authority. More information is also provided in the [Environmental considerations section of this guidance](#).

Monitoring diligence

Licensing authorities should, where possible, obtain details of the test, including failures. Where testing arrangements do not make the sharing of this information possible, the licensing authority should use GOV.UK to [check the MOT record](#) of a vehicle to ascertain if any vehicle defects were identified during an MOT. Where licensing authorities designate where a vehicle must be inspected, and the outcome is not recorded on the MOT database, the authority should require the tester to provide them with the outcome of the test.

It is expected that diligent monitoring and maintenance of the vehicle condition by proprietors should result in few if any dangerous or minor defects being detected at on-road compliance checks. A vehicle proprietor should ensure that a vehicle is in a safe and satisfactory condition, frequent failures can be raised with the proprietor and authorities can consider whether they are content that the proprietor is taking sufficient action to monitor and maintain the safety of their vehicles.

Criteria for tests

MOT tests ensure that vehicles comply with roadworthiness and environmental standards which contribute to the government's road safety strategy. It seems appropriate to apply the same criteria to taxis and private hire vehicles. However, taxis and private hire vehicles provide a service to the public, so it is also appropriate to set criteria for assessing the internal condition of the vehicle, for example, wheelchair fixings and restraint straps, though these criteria should not be unreasonably onerous.

Number of testing stations

As the application of the MOT standards is considered appropriate to ensure the mechanical safety of a vehicle it should be accepted that any DVSA approved testing centre is able to conduct this assessment in this respect and that any recent MOT will evidence the fact the vehicle is roadworthy. This approach maximises the testing capacity available to vehicle proprietors and allows licensing authorities to focus their testing capacity on any additional criteria that they consider necessary for taxi and private hire vehicles.

Licensing authorities should ensure that their testing standards are publicised and easily obtainable by applicants for vehicle licences.

9. Quantity restrictions of taxi licences outside London

9.1 Legal powers

The present legal provision on quantity restrictions for taxis outside London is set out in [section 16 of the Transport Act 1985](#). This provides that the grant of a taxi licence may be refused for the purpose of limiting the number of licensed taxis if, but only if, the licensing authority is satisfied that there is no significant unmet demand for taxi services in their area.

In the event of a challenge to a decision to refuse a licence, the authority concerned would have to establish that it had, reasonably, been satisfied that there was no significant unmet demand.

9.2 Impacts of quantity restrictions

The Competition and Markets Authority was clear in its 2017 guidance on the [Regulation of taxis and private hire vehicles: understanding the impact of competition](#) that:

Quantity restrictions are not necessary to ensure the safety of passengers, or to ensure that fares are reasonable. However, they can harm passengers by reducing availability, increasing waiting times, and reducing the scope for downward competitive pressure on fares.

Most licensing authorities do not impose quantity restrictions. The department regards that as best practice. Where restrictions are imposed, the department would urge that the matter should be regularly reviewed. The matter should be approached in terms of the interests of the travelling public:

- What benefits or disadvantages arise for them because of the continuation of controls?
- What benefits or disadvantages would result for the public if the controls were removed?
- Is there evidence that removal of the controls would result in a deterioration in the amount or quality of taxi service provision?
- Are there alternative ways in which the issue could be addressed?

If alternative measures could be used to achieve the same effect, then the department believes these should be used in preference to quantity restrictions.

It has been observed that where quantity restrictions are imposed, vehicle licence plates command a premium, often of tens of thousands of pounds. This indicates that there are people who want to enter the taxi market and provide a service to the public, but who are being prevented from doing so by the quantity restrictions.

9.3 Demand surveys

If a licensing authority does nonetheless take the view that a quantity restriction can be justified in principle, there remains the question of the level at which it should be set, bearing in mind the need to demonstrate that there is no significant unmet demand. This issue is usually addressed by means of a survey. It will be necessary for the licensing authority to carry out a survey sufficiently frequently to be able to respond to any challenge to the satisfaction of a court. To assist in the inclusion of the taxi and private hire vehicle sector in Local Transport Plans these surveys

should, where possible, follow the cycle of their production but should be undertaken at least every 5 years.

The following points should be considered when conducting a survey on quantity restrictions:

- waiting time at ranks
- waiting time for street hailing
- waiting time for telephone/online/app engagement
- latent demand (those that would choose to travel by taxi but do not due to excessive waiting times) peak demand (the most popular times for consumers to use taxis should not be discounted as atypical)
- assessments should consider whether the demand for WAVs has been met

The financing of demand surveys should be paid for by the local taxi trade through general revenues from licence fees. Other funding arrangements may call in to question the impartiality and objectivity of the survey process.

9.4 Consultation on quantity restrictions

As well as statistical demand surveys, assessment of quantity restrictions should include consultation with all those concerned, including user groups. User groups that typically use taxis (and/or private hire vehicles) the most include people with mobility difficulties, women, older people and those without access to a car. The views of the retail and hospitality sector (including hoteliers, operators of pubs and clubs and visitor attractions) should also be sought and considered, recognising that most taxi (and private hire vehicle) journeys are for leisure and shopping purposes.

The role taxis can play in dispersing the public that have enjoyed the night-time economy should not be ignored. Alongside pre-booked private hire vehicles, taxis may be the only means by which people can return home. Excessive waits for vehicles may lead to conflict among passengers or the increased use of unlicensed, unvetted and uninsured drivers and vehicles, both of which may then result in increased call upon police resources: they should therefore be consulted on any restrictions.

All local transport plans are expected to promote the use of active or public transport - taxis are frequently used for the 'first and last mile' of longer journeys that could be made using public transport. The views of the providers of other transport modes (such as train operators) should also be sought and considered if a quantity restriction is to be imposed.

All the evidence gathered in a survey should be published, together with an explanation of what conclusions have been drawn from it and why. If quantity restrictions are to be continued, their benefits to consumers and the reason for the level at which the number is set should be set out.

9.5 Reviewing quantity restrictions

The department's view is that licensing authorities that elect to restrict taxi licences should review this decision and, if the policy continues, the quantity at least every 5 years and aligned to the production of local transport plans where possible. The department also expects the justification for any policy of quantity restrictions to be included in the local transport plan process where this is their responsibility. Licensing authorities should consider the following questions when considering quantity controls.

Have you considered the government's view that quantity controls should be removed unless a specific case that such controls benefit the consumer can be made?

Questions relating to the policy of controlling numbers

- Have you recently reviewed the need for your policy of quantity controls?
- What form did the review of your policy of quantity controls take?
- Who was involved in the review?
- What decision was reached about retaining or removing quantity controls?
- Are you satisfied that your policy justifies restricting entry to the trade?
- Are you satisfied that quantity controls do not:
 - reduce the availability of taxis
 - increase waiting times for consumers
 - reduce choice and safety for consumers
- What special circumstances justify retention of quantity controls?
- How does your policy benefit consumers, particularly in remote rural areas?
- How does your policy benefit the trade?
- If you have an accessibility policy, how does this fit with restricting taxi licences?

Questions relating to setting the number of taxi licences

- When last did you assess unmet demand?

- How is your taxi limit assessed?
- Have you considered latent demand, i.e. potential consumers who would use taxis if more were available, but currently do not?
- Are you satisfied that your limit is set at the correct level?
- How does the need for adequate taxi ranks affect your policy of quantity controls?

Questions relating to consultation and other public transport service provision

When consulting, have you included:

- those working in the market
- consumer and passenger (including disabled) groups
- groups which represent those passengers with special needs, children and other vulnerable groups
- local interest groups, e.g. hospitals or visitor attractions
- the police
- a wide range of transport stakeholders e.g. rail/bus/coach providers and traffic
- managers

Do you receive representations about taxi availability?

What is the level of service currently available to consumers (including other public transport modes)?

10. Taxi fare rates

10.1 Legal powers

Licensing authorities have the power to set maximum taxi fares for journeys within their area, and most do so. There is no power to set fares for private hire vehicles. Unlike most licensing functions, the setting of fares is an executive function, not a council function.

10.2 Setting taxi fare rates

Maximum fare rates should be designed with a view to practicality and reviewed regularly, including any variability of the fare rates dependent on time of day or day of the week. Authorities should consider adopting a simple formula for deciding on fare changes as this will increase understanding and improve the transparency of the process for passengers. The Department recommends that in reviewing fare rates, authorities should pay particular regard to the needs of the travelling public, with reference both to what it is reasonable to expect people to pay but also to the need to give taxi drivers the ability to earn a sufficient income and so incentivise them to provide a service when it is needed. There is likely to be a case for higher fare tariffs at times of higher demand to encourage more drivers to make themselves available or when the journeys are required at anti-social times.

To ensure that taxi tariffs reflect the costs of the trade they should be reviewed following significant changes in licensing fees and other major costs such as fuel. Regular reviews will assist drivers in maintaining their earnings and so continue to attract those seeking to become taxi drivers and provide existing licensees with greater confidence to remain in the trade and plan for future investment in new vehicles. Regular reviews will also avoid large changes in fares for passengers that infrequent reviews are more likely to result in.

The [Competition and Markets Authority recognised in its 2017 report](#) the need for licensing authorities to be responsive to patterns of demand, that they:

should monitor waiting times and consider adjusting the regulated fare cap to address mismatches between supply and demand. Addressing such mismatches is likely to benefit passengers.

10.3 Price competition in taxi fares

Taxi fare tariffs are a maximum, and in principle are open to downward negotiation between passenger and driver. It is not good practice to encourage such negotiations at ranks, or for on-street hailing; there would be risks of confusion and security problems.

Licensing authorities should however make it clear that published fares rates are a maximum. The growing use of telephone and electronic means to hire taxis means that passengers may benefit from competition and price comparison among taxi intermediaries. It is perfectly legitimate for taxi intermediaries to advertise discounted fares, such as '5% discount from fares.'

11. Taxi ranks and roadside infrastructure

Taxi ranks can provide a useful interchange between modes of transport and a focal point for taxis and passengers at peak periods. There are a number of aspects that should be considered when assessing the number and location of taxi ranks, including how ranks contribute to a wider transport policy and its success in delivering accessible transport as disabled users are less able to seek alternatives.

When providing new taxi ranks or redesigning areas of the built environment in which existing ones are located, authorities should seek to locate ranks as close as possible to transport interchanges and other key destinations that they serve in order to minimise walking distances for passengers and follow the Department for Transport's [Inclusive Mobility](#) guidance and other sources of best practice in accessible street design. As well as the taxi trade, licensing authorities should seek the views of residents and other interested parties such as businesses in the night-time economy and transport hub operators.

The provision of taxi ranks should be subject to regular review. This will help authorities establish whether a change is required to current provision and how to make necessary amendments to ranks for the benefit of the travelling public. The department's view is that, in the absence of regular engagement with the taxi trade on this issue, a review at least every 5 years strikes the right balance between the burden placed on licensing authorities, being responsive to changes in passenger uptake or changing patterns in people flow and, where possible, alignment with the production of local transport plans.

Taxi ranks late at night can become a hotspot for anti-social behaviour. These problems can be mitigated or even solved through a taxi marshal scheme in busy town and city centres. Such schemes can be jointly funded by taxi drivers and licensing authorities. Marshals can help local authorities support their night-time economy by fostering public confidence in taxis by encouraging users to form an orderly queue, eliminating potential flashpoints and moving people quickly and efficiently. It is also an opportunity to prevent the use of unlicensed vehicles plying for hire.

If feasible, a short-term waiting area for drivers of taxis picking up disabled passengers should be considered. This could be an area of the footway with a kerb assigned as a setting-down/picking-up point for people using taxis that have ramps designed for transfer directly to the footway.

Wheelchair access to most taxis is on the nearside, though some taxis load wheelchair users through the rear door or the far side door. Where taxi ranks are being designed or redeveloped, they should be designed to facilitate access into all vehicle types without creating safety risks for either customers or drivers.

Licensing authorities should work with local authority partners to ensure that vehicle priority measures, parking and waiting restrictions do not prevent disabled passengers from being picked up and/or dropped off close to their origin or destination. Taxi and private hire vehicle drivers, operators and those developing cycling infrastructure play a collective role in ensuring vulnerable road users can reach their destinations safely. The need for inclusively designed cycle infrastructure should be considered so that disabled passengers are able to access the kerbside with ease where possible. The [local transport note guidance \(LTN 1/20\)](#) supports authorities with the delivery of accessible cycling infrastructure, and further advice can be sought from Active Travel England.

Consideration should also be given to how disabled people relying on taxis and private hire vehicles will gain access to the kerbside on roads where access is prevented, such as areas where bus priority is implemented.

Authorities should also work with the operators of facilities served by a high volume of private hire vehicles to ensure that safe spaces are provided for drivers to collect passengers, without requiring them to navigate busy car parks alone.

Where information is provided at taxi ranks, authorities should consider including directions to nearby public toilet facilities.

12. Taxi zones

The areas of some licensing authorities are divided into two or more zones for taxi licensing purposes. Drivers may be licensed to ply for hire in one zone only. Zones exist for historical reasons, due to local authority boundary changes.

Taxi and private hire vehicle licensing is highly devolved with lower tier local authorities often responsible for administering the regime. The Department recommends the abolition of taxi zones. This would chiefly benefit the travelling public. Zoning tends to diminish the supply of taxis and the scope for customer choice – for example, if 50 taxis were licensed overall by an authority, but only 25 of them were entitled to ply for hire in each zone. It can be confusing and frustrating for people wishing to hire a taxi to find that a vehicle licensed by the relevant authority is nonetheless unable to pick them up (unless pre-booked) because they are in the wrong part of the authority's area. Abolition of zones can also reduce costs for the authority, for example through simpler administration and enforcement. It can also promote fuel efficiency, because taxis can pick up a passenger anywhere in the authority's area, rather than having to return empty to their licensed zone after dropping a passenger in another zone.

It should be noted that, in 2008, the government made a legislative reform order that removed the need for the Secretary of State to approve amalgamation resolutions made by licensing authorities. Although these resolutions no longer require the approval of the Secretary of State, the statutory procedure for making them – in paragraph 25 of schedule 14 to the [Local Government Act 1972](#) – remains the same.

13. Flexible transport services

It is possible for taxis and private hire vehicles to provide flexible transport services in a number of different ways. Such services can play a valuable role in meeting a range of transport needs, especially in rural areas – though potentially in many other places as well.

The department encourages licensing authorities, as a matter of best practice, to play their part in promoting flexible services to increase the availability of transport to the travelling public. This can be done partly by drawing the possibilities to the attention of the taxi and private hire vehicle trade. It also should be borne in mind that vehicles with a higher seating capacity than the vehicles typically licensed as taxis (for example those with 6, 7 or 8 passenger seats) may be used for flexible services and should be considered for licensing in this context.

The main legal provisions under which flexible services can be operated are:

Shared taxis and private hire vehicles – advance bookings (section 11, [Transport Act 1985](#)): licensed taxis and private hire vehicles can provide a service at separate fares for passengers sharing the vehicle. The operator takes the initiative to match up passengers who book in advance and agree to share the vehicle at separate fares (lower than for a single hiring). An example could be passengers being picked up at home to go to a shopping centre or returning from the shops to their homes. The operator benefits through increased passenger loadings and total revenues.

Shared taxis – immediate hiring (section 10, [Transport Act 1985](#)): such a scheme is at the initiative of the local licensing authority, which can set up schemes whereby licensed taxis (not private hire vehicles) can be hired at separate fares by people from ranks or other places that have been designated by the authority. Authorities are required to set up such a scheme if holders of ten per cent or more of the taxi licences in their area ask for one. The passengers pay only part of the metered fare and without pre-booking, but the driver receives more than the metered fare.

Taxi and private hire vehicle buses (section 12, [Transport Act 1985](#)): owners of licensed taxis and private hire vehicles can apply to the Traffic Commissioner for a 'restricted public service vehicle (PSV) operator licence'. The vehicle owner can then use it to provide a bus service for up to eight passengers. The route must be registered with the Traffic Commissioner and must have at least one stopping place in the area of the authority that licensed the taxi, though it can go beyond it. The bus service will be eligible for Bus Service Operators Grant (subject to certain conditions) and taxi/private hire vehicle buses can be used for local authority subsidised bus services. The benefits are that the travelling public have another transport opportunity opened for them, whilst taxi and private hire vehicle owners have another business opportunity.

14. Local transport plans and strategy

The [Transport Act 2000](#) as amended by the [Local Transport Act 2008](#), requires all local transport authorities in England, excluding London, to produce a Local Transport Plan (LTP), having regard to Government policy.

An LTP is a public facing document that sets out the future of transport in the local authority. LTPs should clearly articulate an integrated transport strategy drawn from a robust evidence base and vision for the local area, and also include an implementation plan that list the policies and interventions that will deliver the strategy.

All modes of transport including taxi and private hire vehicle services have a valuable part to play in the provision of local transport, and so licensing authorities are likely to have a role to play in delivering LTPs. The key policy themes for such services could be availability and accessibility. LTPs can cover:

- quantity controls, if any, and plans for their review
- licensing conditions, with a view to safety but also to a good supply of taxi and private hire vehicle services
- how passengers can access services, such as the provision of taxi ranks and safe areas for pick-up and drop-off points
- vehicle suitability and availability for people with disabilities
- vehicle emission standards and the location and capacity of electric vehicle charging infrastructure to support taxis and private hire vehicle to contribute to air quality objectives
- encouragement of flexible services

The [Greater London Authority Act 1999](#) places a similar duty on the Mayor of London. The Mayor must publish a transport strategy to develop and implement policies for the promotion and encouragement of safe, integrated, efficient and economic transport facilities and services to, from and within Greater London. As above, taxi and private hire vehicle services have a valuable part to play in overall transport provision.

15. Tax checks in taxi and private hire vehicle licensing

HMRC introduced a tax registration check (tax check) for renewed applications in England and Wales to drive taxis and private hire vehicles and to operate a private hire vehicle business in April 2022.

An applicant who wishes to renew a licence needs to carry out a tax check. The licensing authority must obtain confirmation from HMRC that the applicant has completed the check before being able to consider their renewed licence application.

This aims to address part of the hidden economy by helping applicants for taxi and private hire vehicle driver and operator licences to understand their tax obligations and by making access to the licences they need to trade conditional on completing a tax check.

The rules apply to applications made by individuals, companies and partnerships, including Limited Liability Partnerships. Licensing authorities are required to signpost first-time applicants to HMRC guidance about their potential tax obligations and obtain confirmation that the applicant is aware of the guidance before considering the application.

Where the application is not a first-time application (a renewed application) the licensing body must, before considering the application, obtain confirmation from HMRC that the applicant has completed a tax check.

An applicant can carry out a tax check by providing information to enable HMRC to satisfy itself that the applicant has told HMRC about income earned under the licence. The check verifies that a person has complied with an obligation to notify their chargeability to tax, where such an obligation applied. The check is quick and easy to complete, and HMRC has developed a digital system to facilitate it. Additional help is also available to individuals who are digitally excluded or need extra support.

HMRC has published [guidance for licensing authorities and applicants on how to complete checks](#).



HACKNEY CARRIAGE VEHICLE LICENCE

CRITERIA

Hackney Carriage Vehicle Criteria

In this document the “Licensing Authority” means Wirral Council, its Licensing Health and Safety and General Purposes Committee, its Licensing Panel and its Officers.

Although the criteria set out in this document may have been met, approval for the issuing of a licence may be withheld if the Licensing Authority is of the opinion that the vehicle is unsuitable for public use.

Although the Licensing Authority may extend its approval of any particular type of hackney carriage vehicle to all other hackney carriage vehicles conforming to the design of that type the Licensing Authority may withdraw such general approval if, in their opinion, any unsuitable features arise.

The criteria set out in this document are made under Section 47 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

MOTs and compliance test pass certificates will only be accepted up to 28 days from the date of the test.

A vehicle licensed as a private hire or hackney carriage vehicle with any other local authority will not be licensed by Wirral Council.

VEHICLE AGE POLICY

1. Every vehicle presented for licensing for the first time must be three years old or less from the date of first registration or date of manufacture (whichever is the earlier).
2. In circumstances when a Hackney Carriage Vehicle proprietor wishes to change a Hackney Carriage Vehicle that is currently licensed to a different vehicle, the replacement vehicle must be the same age or less than the vehicle that is currently licensed, up to a maximum of ten years old. Vehicles that are ten years old or more must be replaced by a vehicle that is no more than ten years old
3. Once a vehicle reaches 10 years of age it will be required to be tested every six months and a six monthly licence will be issued.

GENERAL CONSTRUCTION

4. All vehicles must be purpose built and built to accommodate disabled passengers in wheelchairs in the rear passenger compartment.
5. All vehicles must comply in all respects with the requirements of the Motor Vehicle (Type Approval) Regulations 1980 and the Motor Vehicle (Type Approval) Regulations (Great Britain) 1984. Every new vehicle offered for approval must comply in all respects with the British and European vehicle regulations and be M1 type approved in accordance with European Whole Vehicle Type Approval 70/156/EEC as amended. Those vehicles which do not hold M1 type approval must be presented with approved certification that the specific vehicle meets the requirements of M1 category.
6. All vehicles must have separate driver and rear passenger compartments, separated by a transparent partition in accordance with the manufacturer or vehicle converter’s original specification.
7. Vehicles presented for approval must comply with the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 and any subsequent amendment or re-enactment thereof.

8. The steering wheel must be on the offside of the vehicle.
9. Unless approved by the Licensing Authority no fittings outside of the manufacturer's or vehicle converter's specification may be attached to or be carried upon the inside or outside of the vehicle.
10. Any vehicle that has been the subject of significant damage rectification repairs will not be licensed unless such repairs have been carried out in accordance with the manufacturer's or vehicle converter's specification.

BODYWORK

11. The vehicle must be free from corrosion, damage, or unsatisfactory repairs.
12. Paintwork must be of a high standard and the colour and finish of all panels must match exactly.

WHEELS AND TYRES

13. Where a hackney carriage vehicle is supplied with alloy wheels, all four road wheels must be of the same type and pattern.
14. Where a hackney carriage vehicle is supplied with wheels intended to be fitted with wheel trims, all four road wheels must be fitted with wheel trims of the same pattern.
15. Alloy wheels, wheel rims, and fitted wheel trims must be free from damage and defects which affect the safety, appearance, or integrity of the wheel.
16. Part-worn and remould tyres must comply with the Motor Vehicle Tyres (Safety) Regulations 1994.
17. All tyres, including the spare where applicable, must be the correct size, speed, and load rating for the vehicle as per the manufacturer's specification, and be compatible with the taximeter.
18. All tyres, including the spare where applicable, must be properly inflated in accordance with both the vehicle and tyre manufacturer's specifications.
19. All tyres must have a continuous tread depth of at least 1.6mm across the central three quarters of the breadth of the tyre, and visible tread across the remaining breadth of the tyre.
20. All tyres, including the spare, where applicable, must be free from cuts and other defects.
21. The hackney carriage vehicle must carry a method for dealing with a tyre should it become defective. This method must be in accordance with the manufacturer's specification which may be one of the following:
 - full size spare wheel - which must be the same size and type as the four road wheels and be fitted with a tyre of the same size, speed, and load rating as the four road wheels. Proper tools and equipment for changing the wheel must also be carried.
 - space saver spare wheel - which must be the correct size and type for the vehicle and be fitted with a tyre of the correct size, speed, and load rating. The tyre must be correctly inflated in

accordance with the manufacturer's specifications. Proper tools and equipment for changing the wheel must also be carried.

- run-flat tyres - which must be fitted to all four road wheels. Run-flat tyres may only be used if the vehicle is fitted with an appropriate and serviceable tyre pressure monitoring system (TPMS).
- emergency tyre sealant and compressor/inflator pack – which must be permanently marked with the vehicle registration number.

ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

22. Any additional electrical installation to the original vehicle equipment must be adequately insulated and be protected by suitable fuses. Any electrical installation and components within the taxi must meet the electromagnetic compatibility (EMC) requirements of UNECE Regulation 10 and be marked accordingly.

FUEL SYSTEMS

23. A device must be provided whereby the supply of fuel to the engine may be immediately cut off.
24. A manually operated device must have its location together with the means of operation and 'off' position clearly marked on the outside of the vehicle. In the case of a vehicle fitted with an automatic inertia fuel cut off switch, no markings are required.

INTERIOR LIGHTING

25. Lighting must be provided for the driver and passengers.
26. Separate lighting controls for both passenger and driver must be provided.
27. Passenger compartment light switches and window controls must be within easy reach of all passengers
28. In the case of the passenger compartment, an illuminated control switch must be fitted in an approved position.
29. Lighting must be provided at floor level to each passenger door and be activated by the opening of the doors.

SEATS

30. Seats must be secure and covered with an appropriate material which must be properly upholstered and in good and clean condition, free from rips, tears and holes.
31. If seat covers are used they must be correctly fitted, in a good and clean condition and free from rips, tears and holes.

SEAT BELTS

32. Vehicles must be fitted with lap and diagonal seatbelts on all seats, including rear facing seats, as per the manufacturer or vehicle converter's specification.
33. Seatbelts and seatbelt mechanisms must be in good working order and free from frays, cuts, and other damage.
34. If a seatbelt sustains any frays, cuts, or other damage the seatbelt must be replaced – not repaired.

DRIVER COMPARTMENT

35. Vehicles must be provided with a means of communication between the passenger and the driver.
36. Vehicles must be fitted with an induction loop system.

PASSENGER COMPARTMENT

37. Occasional seats must automatically rise when not in use.
38. The rear seat dimensions must be adequate to carry the appropriate number of adult passengers comfortably.
39. Suitable means must be provided to assist persons to rise from the rear seat with particular attention to the needs of elderly and disabled persons.
40. Colour contrasting grab handles must be placed at door entrances to aid passenger access to and egress from the vehicle.
41. Colour contrasting sight patches are required on all passenger seats.

WHEELCHAIRS & RAMPS

42. Hackney carriage vehicles must be built to accommodate disabled passengers in wheelchairs and must be so equipped in order that disabled passengers in wheelchairs may be carried comfortably and safely.
43. Anchorages must be provided for the wheelchair and occupant. Anchorages must be either chassis or floor linked.
44. Restraints must be provided for wheelchairs and occupants which must be independent of each other.
45. Anchorages must also be provided for the safe stowage of wheelchairs when not in use, whether folded or otherwise.
46. A BS 6109 compatible ramp with a safe working load (S.W.L.) of 300kg for the loading of a wheelchair and occupant must be available for the safe loading and unloading of passengers.
47. An adequate locking device must be fitted to ensure that the ramp(s) do not slip or tilt when in use.
48. The surface of the ramp must be covered with a non-slip material.

49. The edges of the ramp's surface must be marked in a high-contrast colour scheme.
50. Ramps which are not permanently fixed to the vehicle must be permanently marked with the vehicle registration number.

ENTRANCE STEP

51. The outer edge of the floor at each entrance must be fitted with non-slip high-visibility treads.
52. The top tread for any entrance must not exceed 38 cm above ground level when the vehicle is un-laden, except as detailed in criteria 53.
53. Where the top tread for the entrance exceeds 38 cm then an intermediate step must be provided at each entrance into the passenger compartment. The intermediate step must not extend outwards beyond the vertical line of the vehicle's wing mirrors. The step must be covered with a suitable non-slip surface with the edges of the step highlighted yellow.

WINDOWS

54. Windows must be provided at the sides and at the rear of the vehicle.
55. Passenger door windows must be capable of being easily opened by passengers when seated. The control for opening a door window must be clearly identified so as not to be mistaken for any other control.
56. The front windscreen must let at least 75% of light through and all other windows must let at least 70% of light through.

HEATING AND VENTILATION

57. A heating and ventilation system must be provided for the driver and passengers with independent controls for the driver and passengers and must be in good working order.

DOORS

58. Where hinged doors are fitted:
 - An automatic locking device must be fitted to passenger doors.
 - When the vehicle is stationary, the passenger doors must be capable of being opened from the inside and outside of the vehicle by one operation of the latch mechanism.
 - The interior door handle must be clearly visible, of a contrasting colour to the interior of the vehicle, and easily accessible to passengers when the door is in the fully open or closed position.
 - A hinged door must be capable of being opened to a minimum angle of 90 degrees.

59. Where sliding doors are fitted:

- An automatic locking device must be fitted to passenger doors.
- When the vehicle is stationary, the passenger doors must be capable of being opened from the inside and outside of the vehicle by one operation of the latch mechanism.
- The interior door handle must be clearly visible, of a contrasting colour to the interior of the vehicle, and easily accessible to passengers when the door is in the fully open or closed position.
- There must be reflective strips on both the front and rear edges of the door.
- There must be an illuminated sign bearing the words "Door Open" clearly visible from the rear of the vehicle. This sign must be automatically linked to the passenger doors in order that when either door handle is activated to open the door, the sign is illuminated.
- There must be a sign within the passenger compartment, clearly visible to all passengers, giving instructions on the correct operation of the passenger door.
- An audible or visual warning must be fitted in the driver's compartment indicating when any door is open.

60. Where electric doors are fitted:

- A sign must be clearly displayed inside the vehicle providing instructions on the correct operation of the door opening and closing mechanism.
- The door system design shall incorporate a method to detect an obstruction in the path of a closing door. When an obstruction is detected, the door system shall react in a manner that will allow the obstruction to be released
- A method for detecting an obstruction and preventing the closure of a powered door shall be included as part of the design of the door controls.

INTERIOR LIGHTBOX

61. A lightbox must be exhibited in a prominent position within the hackney carriage vehicle.
62. The lightbox must display the word 'CAB' in uppercase letters and the vehicle licence number below it.
63. The lightbox must be wired to the ignition so that it will remain lit at all times the vehicle ignition is turned on.

FLOOR COVERING

64. The floor of the vehicle must be covered in an appropriate non-slip material which can be easily cleaned.
65. The floor covering must not impede the movement of wheelchairs.

LUGGAGE

66. There must be provision for the safe carrying of luggage commensurate with the number of passengers being carried in the vehicle.
67. Provision must be made for luggage to be kept separate and secured from the passenger seating area.

TAXIMETER

68. A taximeter must be fitted to the vehicle, calibrated, and sealed to show the tariffs set by Wirral Council.

EXTERIOR ROOF LIGHT

69. An illuminated roof-sign displaying the word 'TAXI' must be securely fitted to the roof of the hackney carriage vehicle in such a position that it is clearly visible from the front of the vehicle by day and night.
70. The roof-sign must be connected to the taximeter so that when the vehicle is available for hire the sign is illuminated and it is not illuminated when hired.



PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE LICENCE

CRITERIA

Private Hire Vehicle Criteria

The legislation gives local authorities a wide discretion over the types of vehicles that can be licensed as private hire vehicles.

Wirral Council must be satisfied that vehicles licensed as private hire vehicles are suitable in type, size and design for use as private hire vehicles, that it is in a suitable mechanical condition and is safe and comfortable.

In this document the "Licensing Authority" means Wirral Council, its Licensing Health and Safety and General Purposes Committee, its Licensing Panel and its Officers.

Although the criteria set out in this document may have been met, approval for the issuing of a licence may be withheld if the Licensing Authority is of the opinion that the vehicle is unsuitable for use as a private hire vehicle to transport members of the public for hire and reward.

A vehicle that meets the criteria to be licensed as a private hire vehicle must have passed the MOT and Compliance Test in accordance with the Licensing Authority's procedure for testing vehicles before it can be licensed and before each renewal of that licence. Further tests and inspections may be carried out as directed by the Licensing Authority or Merseyside Police.

MOT or Compliance Test Pass Certificates submitted more than 28 days after the date of test will not be accepted.

A vehicle licensed as a private hire or hackney carriage vehicle with any other local authority will not be licensed by Wirral Council.

VEHICLE AGE POLICY

1. Vehicles must be under 10 years of age from the date of manufacture or date of first registration, whichever is the earliest.
2. Once a vehicle reaches 6 years of age it will be required to be tested every six months and a six monthly licence will be issued.
3. Any vehicle which is more than 9 years and 6 months old will be issued with a licence that will expire on the day before it reaches 10 years old

GENERAL CONSTRUCTION

4. The vehicle must be fitted with at least 4 doors and 4 wheels
5. The vehicle must be capable of carrying at least 4 and not more than 8 passengers in addition to the driver.
6. The vehicle must be fitted (in addition to the front drivers and passengers doors) with at least two side/rear opening doors and all doors must be easily accessible to all passengers and capable of being opened from inside.
7. Any vehicle with a top tread for the entrance which exceeds 38cm must be fitted with a step to allow easy access to and egress from the vehicle. Any vehicle that does not have a step fitted must carry a portable step to be available for use by all passengers.
8. The vehicle must comply in all respects with the requirements of the Motor Vehicle (Type Approval) Regulations 1980 and the Motor Vehicle (Type Approval) Regulations (Great Britain) 1984 and be M1 type approved in accordance with European Whole Vehicle Type Approval 70/156/EEC as amended.

9. Any converted vehicles will be required to hold the appropriate low volume type approval certificate in the M1 classification or the appropriate Individual Vehicle Approval Certificate.
10. The vehicle presented for approval must, as a minimum, comply with the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 and any subsequent amendment or re-enactment thereof.
11. The steering wheel must be on the offside of the vehicle.
12. Unless approved by the Licensing Authority no fittings outside of the manufacturer's specification may be attached to or be carried upon the inside or outside of the vehicle.
13. Any vehicle that has been the subject of significant damage rectification repairs will not be licensed unless such repairs have been carried out in accordance with the manufacturer's specification.
14. Any vehicle which has been disposed of under an insurance salvage agreement 9 category A or B will not be licensed.
15. Where bench seats are fitted to the rear of the vehicle one person will be counted for each complete length of 16" measured in a straight line lengthwise along the front of the seat.

BODYWORK

16. The vehicle must be free from corrosion, damage, or unsatisfactory repairs.
17. Paintwork must be of a high standard and the colour and finish of all panels must match exactly.

WHEELS AND TYRES

18. Where a vehicle is supplied with alloy wheels, all four road wheels must be of the same type and pattern.
19. Where a vehicle is supplied with wheels intended to be fitted with wheel trims, all four road wheels must be fitted with wheel trims of the same pattern.
20. Alloy wheels, wheel rims, and fitted wheel trims must be free from damage and defects which affect the safety, appearance, or integrity of the wheel.
21. Part-worn and remould tyres must comply with the Motor Vehicle Tyres (Safety) Regulations 1994.
22. All tyres, including the spare where applicable, must be the correct size, speed, and load rating for the vehicle as per the manufacturer's specification.
23. All tyres, including the spare where applicable, must be properly inflated in accordance with both the vehicle and tyre manufacturer's specification.
24. All tyres, including the spare where applicable, must have a continuous tread depth of at least 1.6mm across the central three quarters of the breadth of the tyre, and visible tread across the remaining breadth of the tyre.
25. All tyres, including the spare where applicable, must be free from cuts and other defects.
26. The vehicle must carry a method for dealing with a tyre should it become defective. This method must be in accordance with the manufacturer's specification which may be one of the following:

- a. full size spare wheel - which must be the same size and type as the four road wheels and be fitted with a tyre of the same size, speed, and load rating as the four road wheels. Proper tools and equipment for changing the wheel must also be carried.
- b. space saver spare wheel - which must be the correct size and type for the vehicle and be fitted with a tyre of the correct size, speed, and load rating. The tyre must be correctly inflated in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications. Proper tools and equipment for changing the wheel must also be carried.
- c. run-flat tyres - which must be fitted to all four road wheels. Run-flat tyres may only be used if the vehicle is fitted with an appropriate and serviceable tyre pressure monitoring system (TPMS).
- d. emergency tyre sealant and compressor/inflator pack – which must be permanently marked with the vehicle registration number.

ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

27. Any additional electrical installation to the original vehicle equipment must be adequately insulated and be protected by suitable fuses. Any electrical installation and components within the vehicle must meet the electromagnetic compatibility (EMC) requirements of UNECE Regulation 10 and be marked accordingly.

INTERIOR LIGHTING

28. Interior lighting must be provided in accordance with the manufacturer's specification. No additional lighting may be fitted.

SEATS

29. Seats must be secure and covered with an appropriate material which must be properly upholstered and in good and clean condition, free from rips, tears and holes.
30. If seat covers are used they must be correctly fitted, in a good and clean condition and free from rips, tears and holes.

SEAT BELTS

31. Vehicles must be fitted with lap and diagonal seatbelts on all seats, including rear facing seats, as per the manufacturer's specification.
32. Seatbelts and seatbelt mechanisms must be in good working order and free from frays, cuts, and other damage, and show no evidence of repair.
33. For the avoidance of doubt any cut, frayed or damaged seatbelt must have been replaced and not repaired.

WINDOWS

34. Windows must be provided at the sides and at the rear of the vehicle.
35. Passenger door windows must be capable of being easily opened by passengers when seated.
36. The front windscreen must let at least 75% of light through and all other windows must let at least 70% of light through.

HEATING AND VENTILATION

37. A heating and ventilation system must be provided and must be in good working order.

DOORS

38. All doors must be easily accessible to all passengers and capable of being opened from inside. It must be clear to passengers how to operate the doors of the vehicle.

Hinged and sliding doors

39. When the vehicle is stationary, the passenger doors must be capable of being opened from the inside and outside of the vehicle by one operation of the latch mechanism.

40. Where sliding doors are fitted an audible or visual warning must be fitted in the driver's compartment indicating when any door is open.

41. Where sliding doors are fitted there must be a sign within the passenger compartment, clearly visible to all passengers, giving instructions on the correct operation of the passenger door.

Electric doors

42. Where electric doors are fitted:

- A sign must be clearly displayed inside the vehicle providing instructions on the correct operation of the door opening and closing mechanism.
- The door system design shall incorporate a method to detect an obstruction in the path of a closing door. When an obstruction is detected, the door system shall react in a manner that will allow the obstruction to be released
- A method for detecting an obstruction and preventing the closure of a powered door shall be included as part of the design of the door controls.

FLOOR COVERING

43. The floor of the vehicle must be covered in an appropriate non-slip material which must be free from rips, tears, and holes.

44. All floor covering fitted must be of uniform colour and material.

LUGGAGE

45. There must be provision for the safe carrying of luggage commensurate with the number of passengers being carried in the vehicle.

46. Provision must be made for luggage to be kept separate and secured from the passenger seating area.

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Have your say

Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Vehicles Consultation Report



Consultation: 6 November 2023 – 29 February 2024

Report: 11 March 2024

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1.0 Executive Summary

Wirral Council want to ensure that when passengers travel in Private Hire Vehicles or Hackney Carriage Vehicles licensed by the Council, they feel safe and comfortable. There is a set of criteria which vehicles must meet before they can be licensed by Wirral Council. The Council is undertaking a review of this criteria and requested the views of residents and stakeholders to help provide a high standard of vehicle that is safe and comfortable and meets the needs of passengers.

The consultation ran from 6 November 2023 – 29 February 2024 the feedback is presented in this report. The findings will be considered at a meeting of the Regulatory and General Purposes Committee who will review the key areas of the criteria for Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Vehicles highlighted in this consultation.



1.1 Key Findings

- 289 people responded to this survey.
- The majority of respondents stated that they were taxi drivers (59.9% Private Hire Driver and 11.1% Hackney Carriage Driver). (Question 1)
- Most of respondents (74.9%) stated that they were licence holders. (Question 2)
- The majority of respondents (60.0%) stated they used both Private Hire and Hackney Carriage vehicles). (Question 3)
- The most common way of arranging a journey in a Hackney Carriage was “Get a Taxi from a Hackney (taxi) rank” (60.5%). (Question 4)
- When asked how often respondents use Private Hire or Hackney Carriage vehicles, the most common answer was “Less frequently [than monthly]” (47.9%). (Question 5)

Vehicle Age Criteria

- The majority of respondents (63.8%) thought the Council should not maintain the policy of Private Hire Vehicles must be no more than 10 years old. However, of these respondents, the majority of non-licence holders thought the Council should maintain this age limit (56.9%). (Question 6)
- The majority respondents (57.1%) thought the Council should not have any age limit for Private Hire vehicles. For those who thought there should be an age limit, the most common (48.5%) suggested age was 15 years. (Question 7 and 8)
- The majority of respondents (56.3%) thought the Council should not maintain the policy of Private Hire vehicles must have an MOT and Compliance Test every six months if older than 6 years. However, of these respondents, most non-licence holders (70.8%) thought the Council should maintain this requirement. (Question 9)
- More respondents (41.1%) thought the Council should not maintain the policy of Hackney Carriage vehicles must be not more than 3 years old to be granted its first licence, than should (29.8%). (Question 10)
- The majority of respondents (54.4%) thought the Council should not have any age limit for Hackney Carriage vehicles being licenced for the first time. For those who thought there should be an age limit, the most common (40.0%) suggested age was 10 years. (Question 11 and 12)
- Most respondents (50.2%) thought the Council should maintain the policy of Hackney Carriage vehicles can continue to be licenced with no upper age limit. For those who thought there should be an age limit, the most common suggested ages were 10 and 15 years (both 33.9%). (Question 13 and 14)

- Most respondents (57.4%) thought the Council should maintain the policy of Hackney Carriage must have an MOT and Compliance Test every six months if older than 10 years. (Question 15)
- More respondents (44.8%) thought the Council should maintain the policy of if owners want to change their Hackney Carriage, they must be the same age or less and no more than 10 years old, than should not (33.1%). However, of these respondents, the majority of non-licence holders (61.%) thought the Council should maintain this requirement. (Question 16)

Window Tint

- The majority of respondents (68.4%) thought the Council should not maintain the policy of Private Hire vehicles having a maximum permitted tint level of 30%. However, of these respondents, most non-licence holders (78.6%) thought the Council should maintain this requirement. (Question 17)
- The majority of respondents (54.4%) thought the Council should not maintain the policy of Hackney Carriage vehicles having a maximum permitted tint level of 30%. However, of these respondents, most non-licence holders (78.6%) thought the Council should maintain this requirement. (Question 18)

Step Height

- The majority of respondents (49.3%) thought it necessary for Private Hire vehicles with an entrance step height exceeding 38cm to have a fitted step or portable step than not (19.4%). (Question 19)
- The majority of respondents (58.6 %) thought it necessary for Hackney Carriage vehicles with an entrance step height exceeding 38cm to have a fitted step or portable step. (Question 20)

Bench Seat

- The majority of respondents (54.0%) thought the Council should maintain the policy of where bench seats are fitted to the rear of Private Hire vehicle, the seat must be at least 48" wide. (Question 21)



2.0 Methodology

People were asked to tell us about their views on the licencing of Private Hire and Hackney Carriage vehicles through the Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Vehicles Consultation. The consultation took place between 6 November 2023 and 29 February 2024. The approach used was an on online public consultation through the 'Have your say' consultation portal at www.haveyoursay.wirral.gov.uk with a page dedicated to the Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Vehicles Consultation. Useful information provided on the site included the licence criteria for Private Hire and Hackney Carriage vehicles. An online questionnaire was provided for residents to engage with. Respondents were also able to request paper copies, help completing the questionnaire, or submit additional comments via a dedicated email address, which was published on the 'Have your say' website alongside the online questionnaire. The Regulatory and General Purposes Committee will review and determine the key areas of criteria highlighted in the consultation for Private Hire and Hackney Carriage vehicles in light of the findings of the consultation.

2.1 Questionnaire

The consultation questionnaire was developed around understanding stakeholder views on the following key areas:

- Vehicle age criteria
- Frequency of MOT testing
- Window tint
- Step height
- Bench seat

In the survey no questions were mandatory so respondents could choose which questions to respond to.

To enable further understanding, and in-depth analysis, respondents were invited to provide free-text comments to expand on their ideas or concerns. Following closure of the consultation, the responses to each of the direct questions were collated and the responses included in this report. For the free-text comment questions, a text coding approach was used based on the reoccurring themes. This data was then collated and summarised in the report.

2.2 Analysis of Respondents

Respondents to the online tools were provided with the option to provide demographic information about themselves. It must be noted that this is an option and that not all respondents included this information. This data allows the demographic results to be included in this report to enable analysis of the scope of responses and representation from different demographic groups.

2.3 Interpretation of Results

In terms of the results, it is important to note that:

- The public consultation is not representative of the overall population but information regarding the opinion of those who engaged in the consultation.
- Free-text questions that offered respondents the option to provide written feedback could have covered multiple themes. Therefore, with free-text responses were categorised using a coding system. The percentages given, reflect the percentage of respondents who made the comment. As they may have made more than one comment, the total percentage may exceed 100%.
- For some questions, respondents were asked to select one or more options. The percentages given, reflect the percentage of respondents who selected the options. As they may have made more than one options, the total percentage may exceed 100%.
- All questions show the results of all the respondents who answered. In addition, questions 6 to 21 include a comparison of answers given by non-licence holders and licence holders.

2.4 Communication

In order to raise awareness amongst as many residents and stakeholders as possible, the consultation was promoted through the council's corporate communication channels and platforms. This included:

- Organic social media (mix of platforms)
- Resident Email
- Councillor Email
- Press/Content Media release
- WirralView platform

In addition to the above, the Licencing Service itself led on direct engagement with Private Hire and Hackney Carriage licensed drivers and other stakeholders to encourage take up and signpost to the HYS platform.



3.0 Results

3.1 The Questionnaire

The questionnaire was responded to by 289 people. All responses came through the online portal, no paper copies were completed. This includes representatives of organisations whose responses are included in the analysis below. Their full responses can be found in Appendix 1- Direct Representations.

3.1.1 Introduction

Question 1: In what capacity are you completing this consultation?

289 people answered this question and they may have selected more than one option. 59.9% of respondents stated that they were Private Hire drivers. The next most common options selected were Private Hire vehicle owners (30.4%) and member of the public (26.0%).

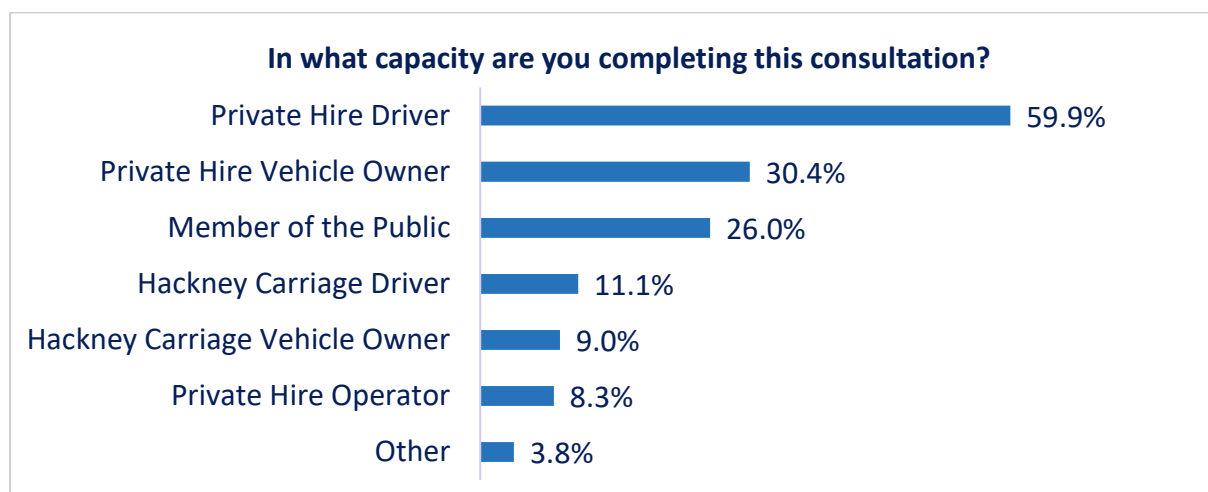


Figure 1: Chart displaying results to “In what capacity are you completing this consultation?”

| In what capacity are you completing this consultation? | Total | % |
|--|-------|-------|
| Private Hire Driver | 173 | 59.9% |
| Private Hire Vehicle Owner | 88 | 30.4% |
| Member of the Public | 75 | 26.0% |
| Hackney Carriage Driver | 32 | 11.1% |
| Hackney Carriage Vehicle Owner | 26 | 9.0% |
| Private Hire Operator | 24 | 8.3% |
| Other | 11 | 3.8% |

Table 1: Table displaying the results to “In what capacity are you completing this consultation?”



Question 2: Are you a Private Hire or Hackney Carriage licence holder?

287 people answered this question. Respondents selected one option that they agreed with. 74.9% of respondents stated that they were Private Hire or Hackney Carriage licence holders whilst 25.1% stated that they were not.

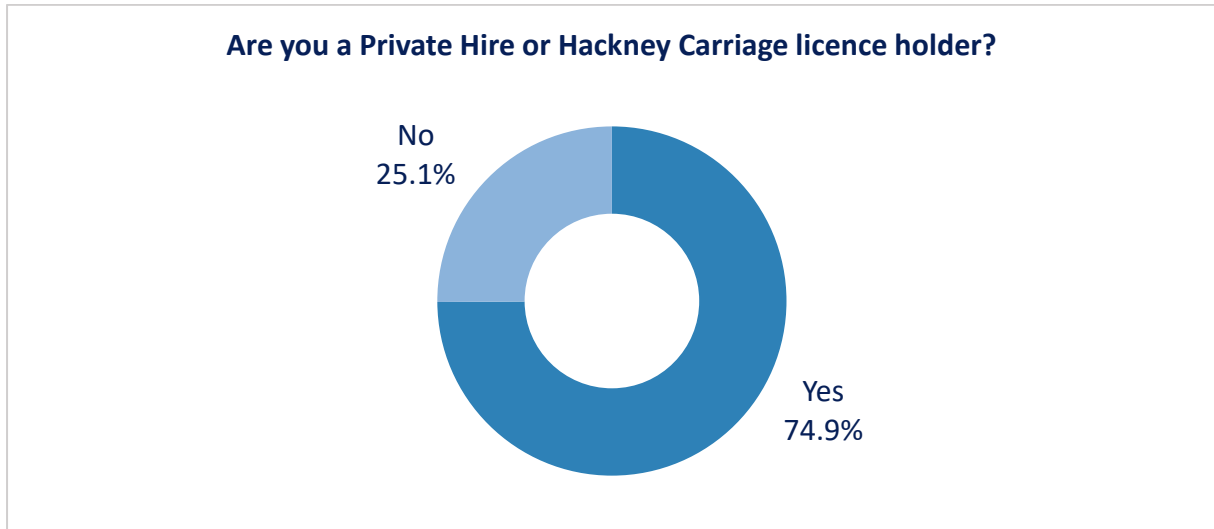


Figure 2: Chart displaying results to "Are you a Private Hire or Hackney Carriage licence holder?"

| Are you a Private Hire or Hackney Carriage licence holder? | Total | % |
|--|-------|-------|
| Yes | 215 | 74.9% |
| No | 72 | 25.1% |

Table 2: Table displaying the results to "Are you a Private Hire or Hackney Carriage licence holder?"



3.1.2 Licenced Vehicle Usage

Question 3: Which type of licensed vehicle do you use?

Only respondents who stated they were non-licence holders were able to answer this question. 60 people answered this question. Respondents selected one option that they agreed with. 60.0% of the respondents stated that they use both Private Hire and Hackney Carriage vehicles whilst 35.0% stated they use Private Hire vehicles and 5.0% stated they use Hackney Carriage vehicles.

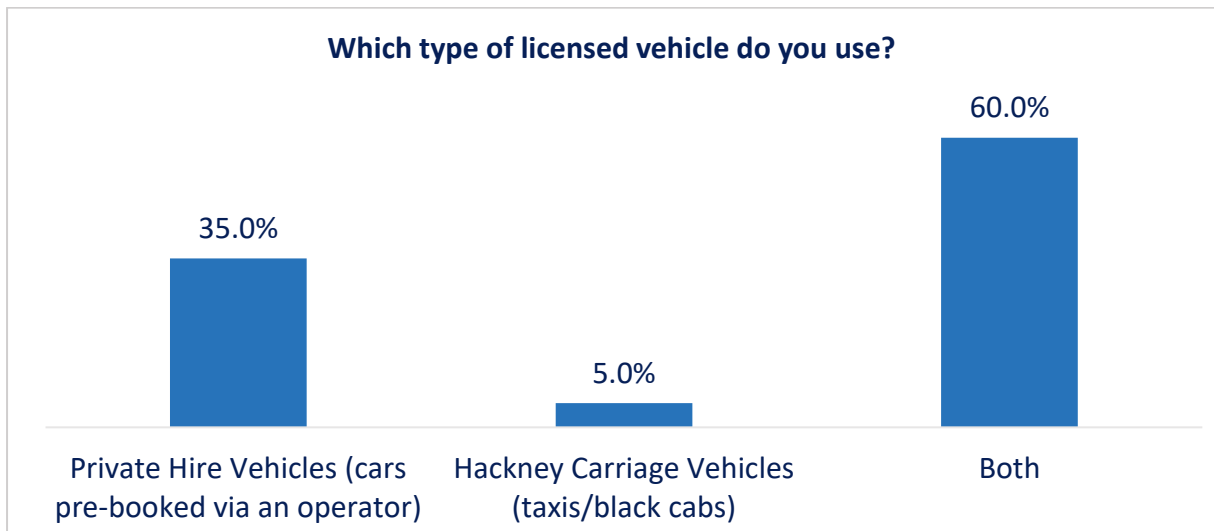


Figure 3: Chart displaying results to "Which type of licensed vehicle do you use?"

| Which type of licensed vehicle do you use? | Total | % |
|---|-------|-------|
| Private Hire Vehicles (cars pre-booked via an operator) | 21 | 35.0% |
| Hackney Carriage Vehicles (taxis/black cabs) | 3 | 5.0% |
| Both | 36 | 60.0% |

Table 3: Table displaying the results to "Which type of licensed vehicle do you use?"

Question 4: If you use Hackney Carriage Vehicles, how do you usually arrange your journey?

Only respondents who stated they were non-licence holders were able to answer this question. 38 people answered this question and they may have selected more than one option. 60.5% of the responses were “Get a taxi from a Hackney (taxi) rank”. The next most popular options were “Hail/Flag a Hackney (taxi) in the street” (52.6%) and “Book through an operator” (28.9%).

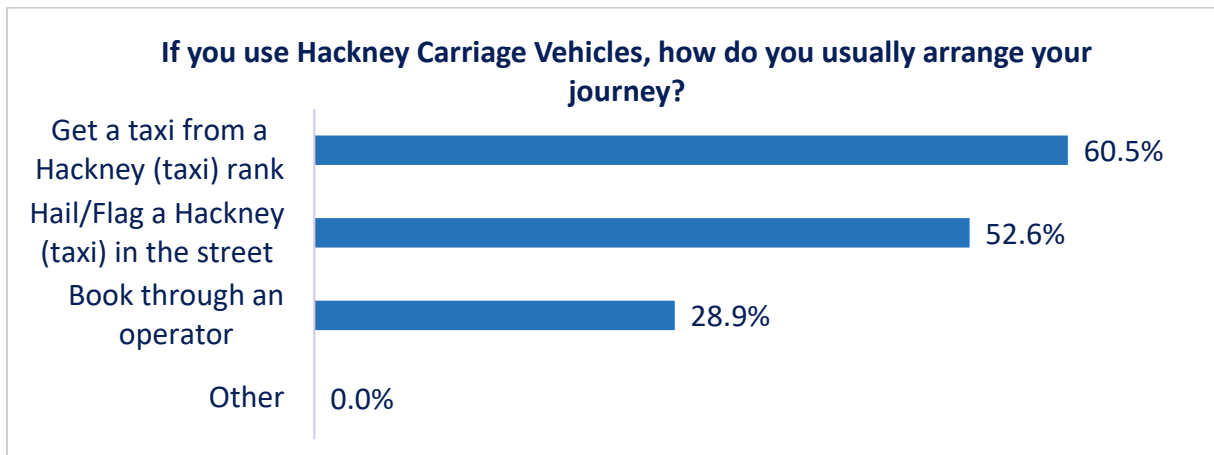


Figure 4: Chart displaying results to “If you use Hackney Carriage Vehicles, how do you usually arrange your journey?”

| If you use Hackney Carriage Vehicles, how do you usually arrange your journey? | Total | % |
|--|-------|-------|
| Get a taxi from a Hackney (taxi) rank | 23 | 23.0% |
| Hail/Flag a Hackney (taxi) in the street | 20 | 20.0% |
| Book through an operator | 11 | 11.0% |
| Other | 0 | 0.0% |

Table 4: Table displaying the results to “If you use Hackney Carriage Vehicles, how do you usually arrange your journey?”



Question 5: How often do you use Private Hire Vehicles or Hackney Carriage Vehicles as a means of transport in Wirral?

Only respondents who stated they were non-licence holders were able to answer this question. 71 people answered this question. Respondents selected one option that they agreed with. 47.9% of respondents used Private Hire Vehicles or Hackney Carriage Vehicles as a means of transport in Wirral less frequently whilst 33.8% used them monthly and 14.1% weekly.

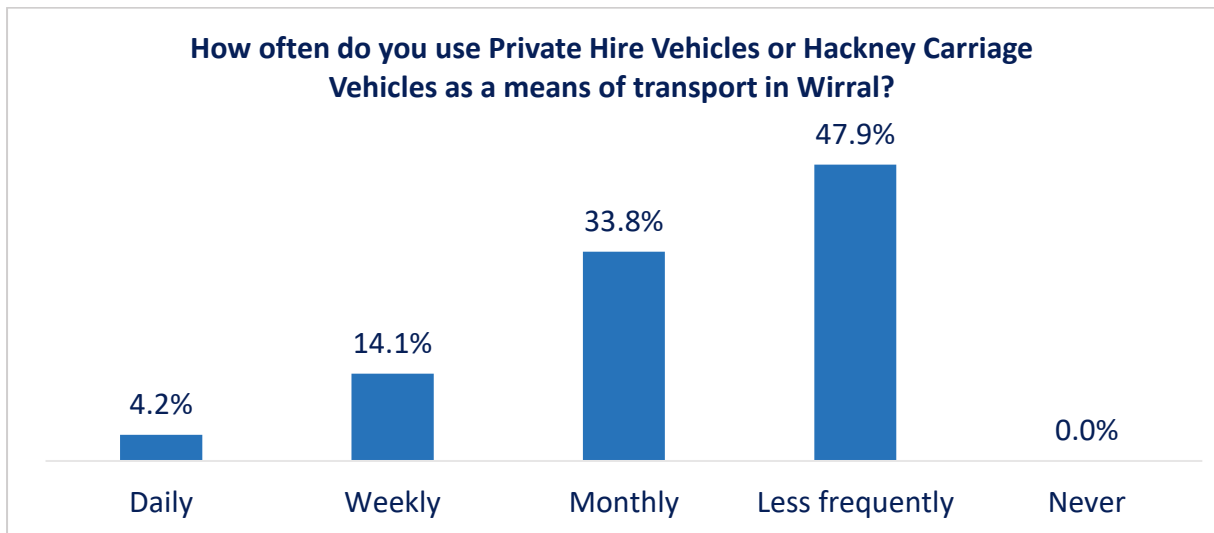


Figure 5: Chart displaying results to “How often do you use Private Hire Vehicles or Hackney Carriage Vehicles as a means of transport in Wirral?”

| How often do you use Private Hire Vehicles or Hackney Carriage Vehicles as a means of transport in Wirral? | Total | % |
|--|-------|-------|
| Daily | 3 | 4.2% |
| Weekly | 10 | 14.1% |
| Monthly | 24 | 33.8% |
| Less frequently | 34 | 47.9% |
| Never | 0 | 0.0% |

Table 5: Table displaying the results to “How often do you use Private Hire Vehicles or Hackney Carriage Vehicles as a means of transport in Wirral?”



3.1.3 Vehicle Age Criteria

Question 6: Private Hire Vehicles must be no more than 10 years old. Do you think the Council should maintain this age limit for Private Hire Vehicles?

287 people answered this question. Respondents selected one option that they agreed with. 33.1% of all respondents thought the Council should maintain this age limit whilst 63.8% thought the Council should not.

The majority of non-licence holders (56.9%) thought the Council should maintain this age limit whilst most licence holders (73.2%) thought the Council should not.

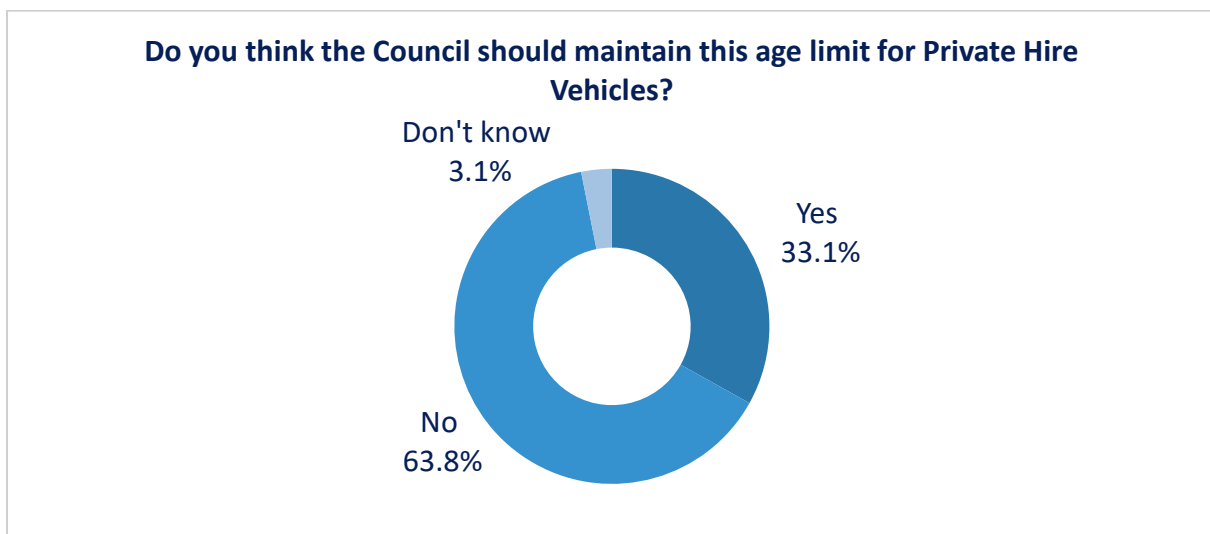


Figure 6: Chart displaying results to “Do you think the Council should maintain this age limit for Private Hire Vehicles?”

| Do you think the Council should maintain this age limit for Private Hire Vehicles? | Total | % |
|--|-------|-------|
| Yes | 95 | 33.1% |
| No | 183 | 63.8% |
| Don't know | 9 | 3.1% |

Table 6: Table displaying the results to “Do you think the Council should maintain this age limit for Private Hire Vehicles?”

Respondents were asked to add a comment to support their answer. 200 people answered this free text question. Below are the top themes that emerged from the free-text comments as a percentage of the number of people who provided an answer to the question. As the percentage reflects the proportion of respondents who made the comment and that respondents may have made more than one comment in their answer, the total percentages may exceed 100%.

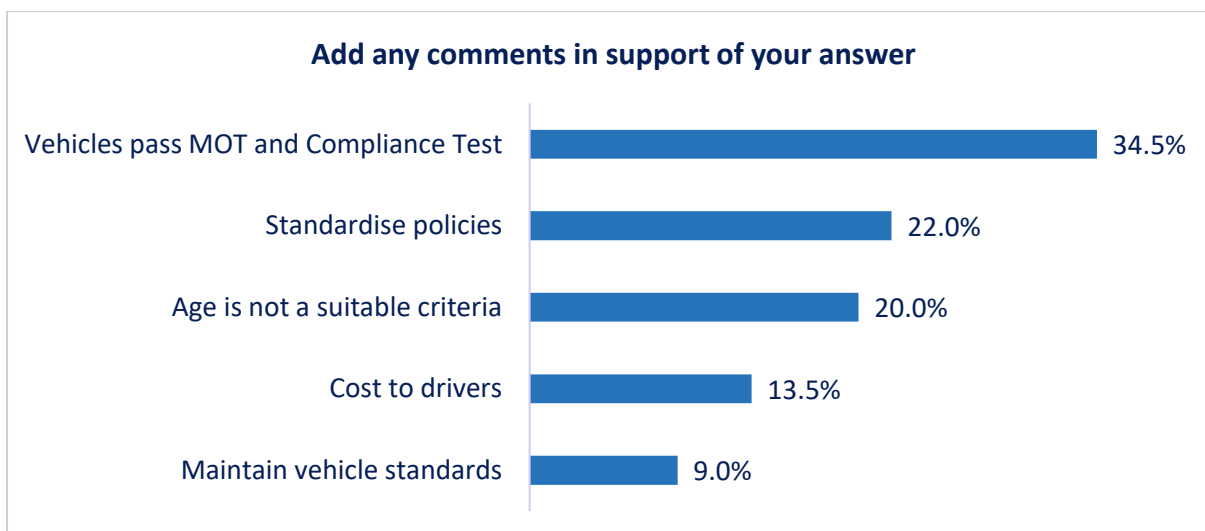


Figure 7: Chart displaying results to “Add any comments in support of your answer”

| Add any comments in support of your answer | Total | % |
|--|-------|-------|
| Vehicles pass MOT and Compliance Test | 69 | 34.5% |
| Standardise policies | 44 | 22.0% |
| Age is not a suitable criteria | 40 | 20.0% |
| Cost to drivers | 27 | 13.5% |
| Maintain vehicle standards | 18 | 9.0% |

Table 7: Table displaying the results to “Add any comments in support of your answer”

- Vehicles pass MOT and Compliance Test (34.5%).** Respondents suggested that an age limit is not suitable as older vehicles can be in good condition and pass required tests. They suggest MOT and Compliance Tests better indicate a vehicles condition for use than age.
- Standardise policies (22.0%).** Respondents expressed their wish for Wirral Council to standardise policies with national guidelines and other councils, particular councils in the LCR. They feel penalised by this policy whilst drivers licenced under other councils can operate in Wirral without this restriction. They also suggested they would licence their own vehicle with other councils to avoid Wirral Council policies. Some also wished to standardise the policy for both Private Hire and Hackney Carriage vehicles.
- Age is not a suitable criteria (20.0%).** Respondents suggested that the age limit should be increased or removed completely as age is not a good indication of vehicles safety or reliability. They suggest that contemporary vehicles are made to a higher standard and the current age limit does not reflect this. Some also suggest that age does not always correlate to usage or condition, suggesting testing and milage might be a more suitable criteria.

- **Cost to drivers (13.5%).** Respondents suggested the high cost of replacing a vehicle to be prohibitory. They also suggested that the cost is unnecessary as the vehicles are still in good condition and replacing the vehicles would be bad for the environment.
- **Maintain vehicle standards (9.0%).** Respondents wished to maintain the age criteria or reduce it as they thought older vehicles wear out due to high level of use and testing helps maintain vehicle quality and safety. They also suggested that old cars are more polluting.

Question 7: Do you think the Council should have any age limit for Private Hire Vehicles?

Only respondents who answered no to the previous question were able to answer this question. 182 people answered this question. Respondents selected one option that they agreed with. 42.9% of all respondents thought the Council should have an age limit whilst 57.1% thought the Council should not.

50.0% of non-licence holders thought the Council should have an age limit whilst 58.1% of licence holders thought the Council should not.

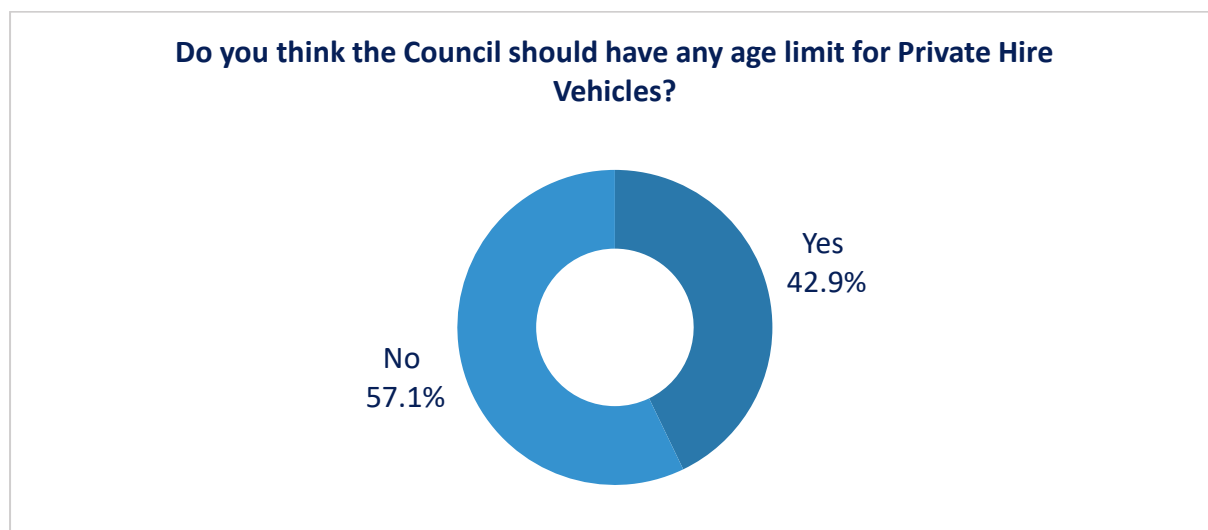


Figure 8: Chart displaying results to “Do you think the Council should have any age limit for Private Hire Vehicles?”

| Do you think the Council should have any age limit for Private Hire Vehicles? | Total | % |
|---|-------|-------|
| Yes | 78 | 42.9% |
| No | 104 | 57.1% |
| Don't know | 0 | 0.0% |

Table 8: Table displaying the results to “Do you think the Council should have any age limit for Private Hire Vehicles?”

Respondents were asked to add a comment to support their answer. 123 people answered this free text question. Below are the top themes that emerged from the free-text comments as a percentage of the number of people who provided an answer to the question. As the percentage reflects the proportion of respondents who made the comment and that respondents may have made more than one comment in their answer, the total percentages may exceed 100%.



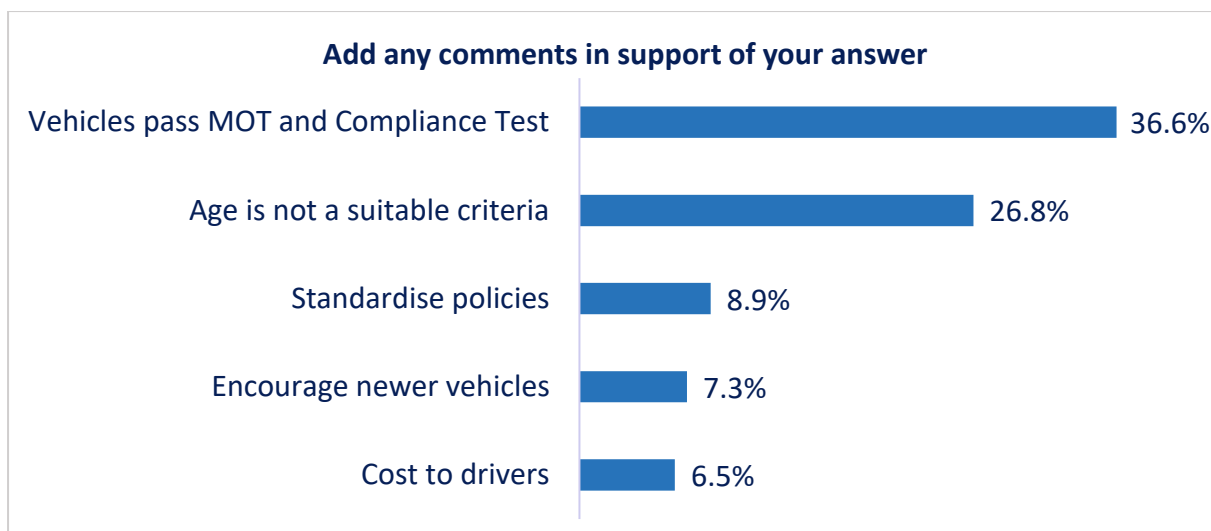


Figure 9: Chart displaying results to “Add any comments in support of your answer”

| Add any comments in support of your answer | Total | % |
|--|-------|-------|
| Vehicles pass MOT and Compliance Test | 45 | 36.6% |
| Age is not a suitable criteria | 33 | 26.8% |
| Standardise policies | 11 | 8.9% |
| Encourage newer vehicles | 9 | 7.3% |
| Cost to drivers | 8 | 6.5% |

Table 9: Table displaying the results to “Add any comments in support of your answer”

- **Vehicles pass MOT and Compliance Test (36.6%).** Respondents suggested similar reasons to the previous question regarding MOT and Compliance Tests indicate vehicles condition better than age.
- **Age is not suitable criteria (26.8%).** Respondents suggested similar reasons to the previous question regarding age not always reflecting the condition of the vehicle and that testing and milage might be more suitable criteria.
- **Standardise polices (8.9%).** Respondents suggested similar reasons to the previous question regarding standardising policies with other councils (particularly the LCR) and between Private Hire and Hackney Carriage vehicles, unfair competition with vehicles licenced by other councils and motivation to licence their own vehicles with other councils.
- **Encourage newer vehicles (7.3%).** Respondents thought that the age limit should be maintained or reduced to encourage the introduction of newer vehicles (particularly electric vehicles) which are safer, more environmentally friendly and provide a better experience to customers. Some respondents opposed this argument suggesting continuing to use older vehicles has a lower carbon footprint that purchasing new vehicles.

- **Cost to drivers (6.5%).** Respondents suggested similar reasons to the previous question regarding the high cost of replacing vehicles which are still in good condition.



Question 8: What do you consider that age limit should be?

Only respondents who answered yes to the previous question were able to answer this question. 68 people answered this question. Respondents suggested ages they thought suitable. 48.5% of all respondents suggested the age limit should be 15 years and 32.4% suggested 12 years.

Most non-licence holders (81.8%) and licence holders (93.6%) suggested age limits greater than 10 years.

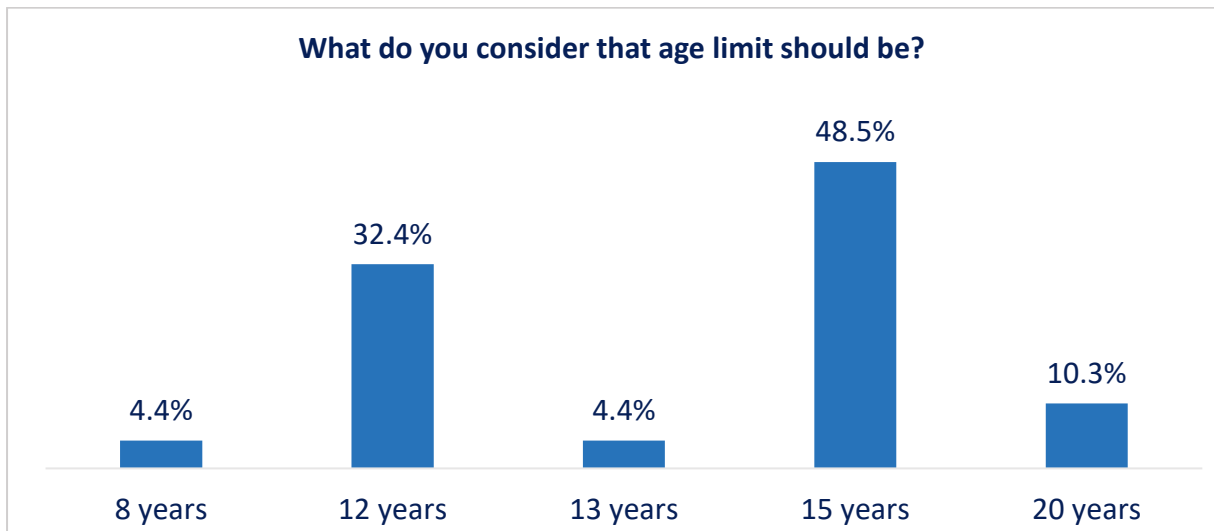


Figure 10: Chart displaying results to “What do you consider that age limit should be?”

| What do you consider that age limit should be? | Total | % |
|--|-------|-------|
| 8 years | 3 | 4.4% |
| 12 years | 22 | 32.4% |
| 13 years | 3 | 4.4% |
| 15 years | 33 | 48.5% |
| 20 years | 7 | 10.3% |

Table 10: Table displaying the results to “What do you consider that age limit should be?”

Question 9: Private Hire Vehicles that are 6 years old or more must have an MOT and Compliance Test every six months. Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement?

288 people answered this question. Respondents selected one option that they agreed with. 40.3% of all respondents thought the Council should maintain this requirement whilst 56.3% thought the Council should not.

Most non-licence holders (70.8%) thought the Council should maintain this requirement whilst the majority of licence holders (68.2%) thought the Council should not.

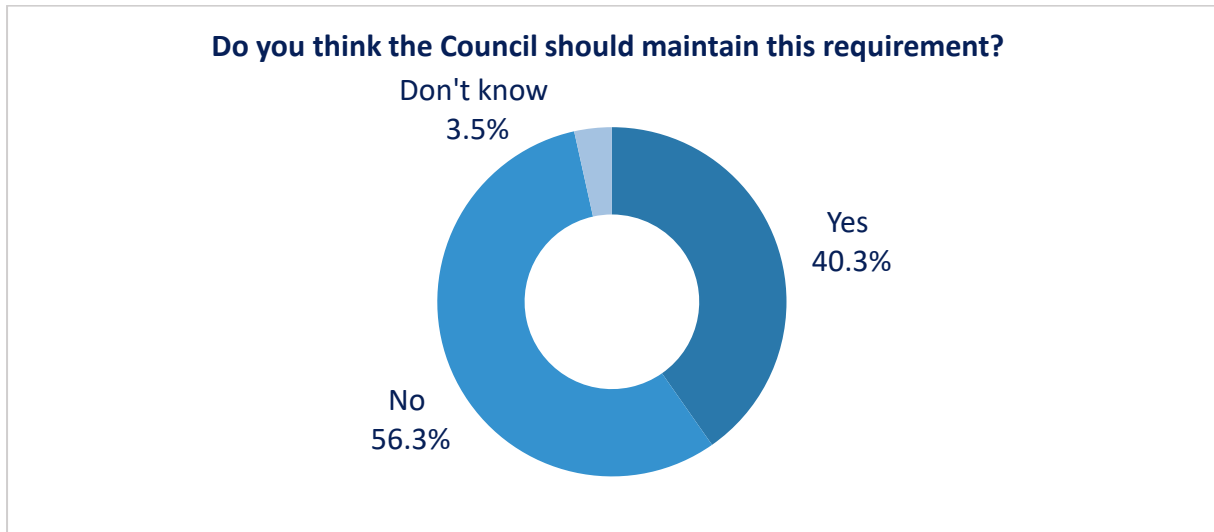


Figure 11: Chart displaying results to “Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement?”

| Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement? | Total | % |
|--|-------|-------|
| Yes | 116 | 40.3% |
| No | 162 | 56.3% |
| Don't know | 10 | 3.5% |

Table 11: Table displaying the results to “Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement?”

Respondents were asked to add a comment to support their answer. 170 people answered this free text question. Below are the top themes that emerged from the free-text comments as a percentage of the number of people who provided an answer to the question. As the percentage reflects the proportion of respondents who made the comment and that respondents may have made more than one comment in their answer, the total percentages may exceed 100%.



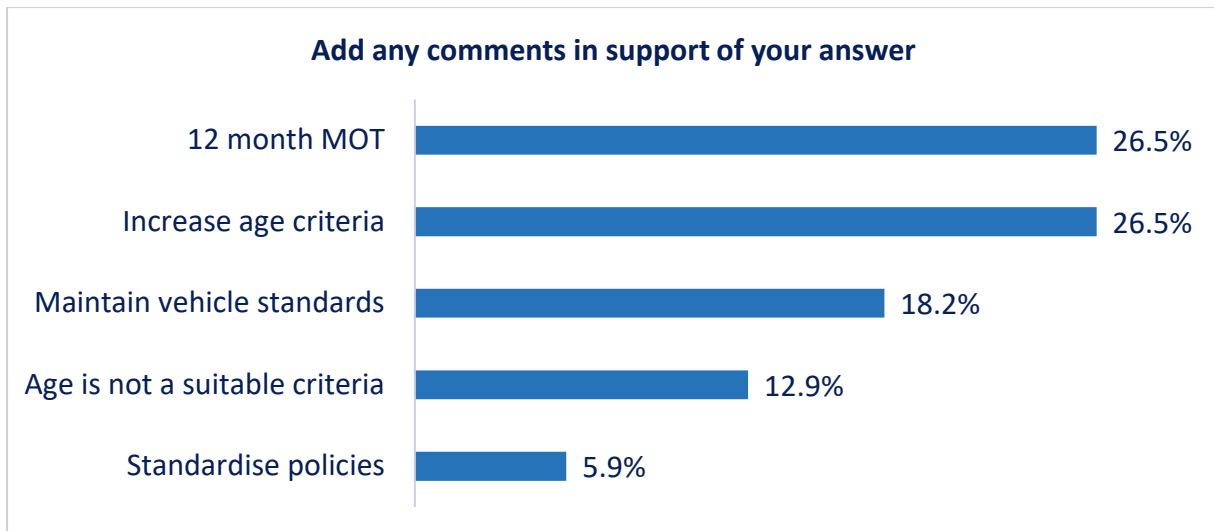


Figure 12: Chart displaying results to “Add any comments in support of your answer”

| Add any comments in support of your answer | Total | % |
|--|-------|-------|
| 12 month MOT | 45 | 26.5% |
| Increase age criteria | 45 | 26.5% |
| Maintain vehicle standards | 31 | 18.2% |
| Age is not a suitable criteria | 22 | 12.9% |
| Standardise policies | 10 | 5.9% |

Table 12: Table displaying the results to “Add any comments in support of your answer”

- **12 month MOT (26.5%).** Respondents suggested stopping the policy of 6 monthly MOTs as they viewed 12 monthly MOTs as being sufficient to maintain vehicle safety.
- **Increase age criteria (26.5%).** Respondents suggested increasing the age criteria (most suggesting to 10 years in line with Hackney Carriages as drivers maintain their vehicles to a high standard and modern vehicles being built to a higher standard.
- **Maintain vehicle standards (18.2%).** Respondents wished to maintain the age criteria or reduce it as they thought older vehicles wear out due to high level of use and testing helps maintain vehicle quality and safety.
- **Age is not a suitable criteria (12.9%).** Respondents suggested similar reasons to the previous questions regarding age not always reflecting the condition of the vehicle and that testing and mileage might be more suitable criteria.
- **Standardise policies (5.9%).** Respondents suggested similar reasons to the previous questions regarding standardising policies with other councils (particularly the LCR) and between Private Hire and Hackney Carriage vehicles, unfair competition with vehicles licenced by other councils and motivation to licence their own vehicles with other councils.

Question 10: A Hackney Carriage Vehicle must be no more than 3 years old to be granted its first licence. Do you think the Council should maintain this age limit?

282 people answered this question. Respondents selected one option that they agreed with. 29.8% of all respondents thought the Council should maintain this age limit whilst 41.1% thought the Council should not.

More non-licence holders thought the Council should maintain this age limit (44.4%) than not (37.5%) whilst more licence holders thought the Council should not maintain this age limit (42.3%) than should (24.5%).

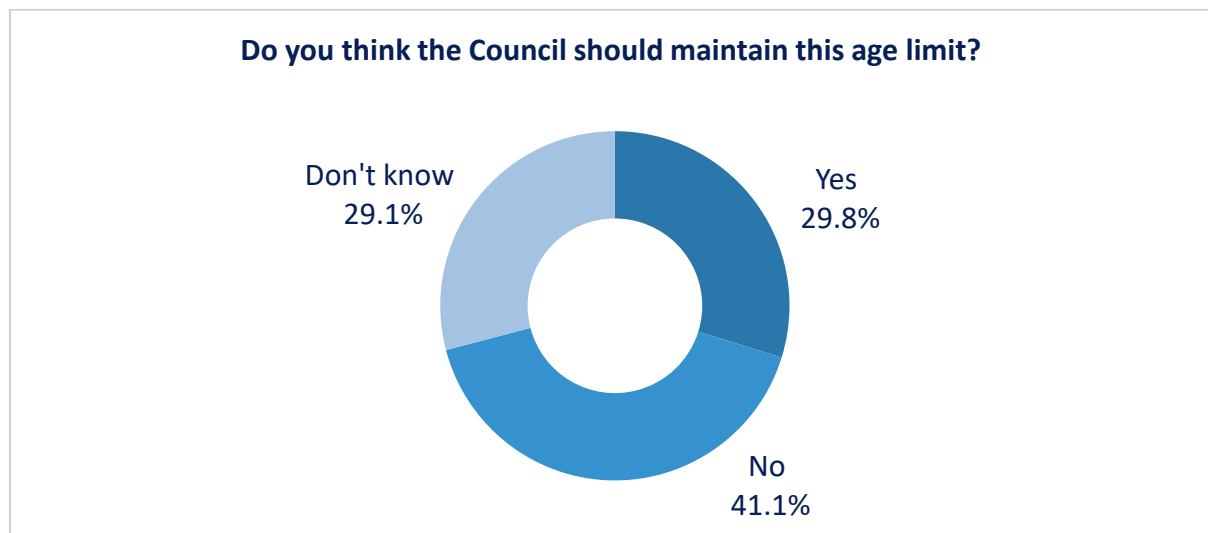


Figure 13: Chart displaying results to “Do you think the Council should maintain this age limit?”

| Do you think the Council should maintain this age limit? | Total | % |
|--|-------|-------|
| Yes | 84 | 29.8% |
| No | 116 | 41.1% |
| Don't know | 82 | 29.1% |

Table 13: Table displaying the results to “Do you think the Council should maintain this age limit?”

Respondents were asked to add a comment to support their answer. 96 people answered this free text question. Below are the top themes that emerged from the free-text comments as a percentage of the number of people who provided an answer to the question. As the percentage reflects the proportion of respondents who made the comment and that respondents may have made more than one comment in their answer, the total percentages may exceed 100%.



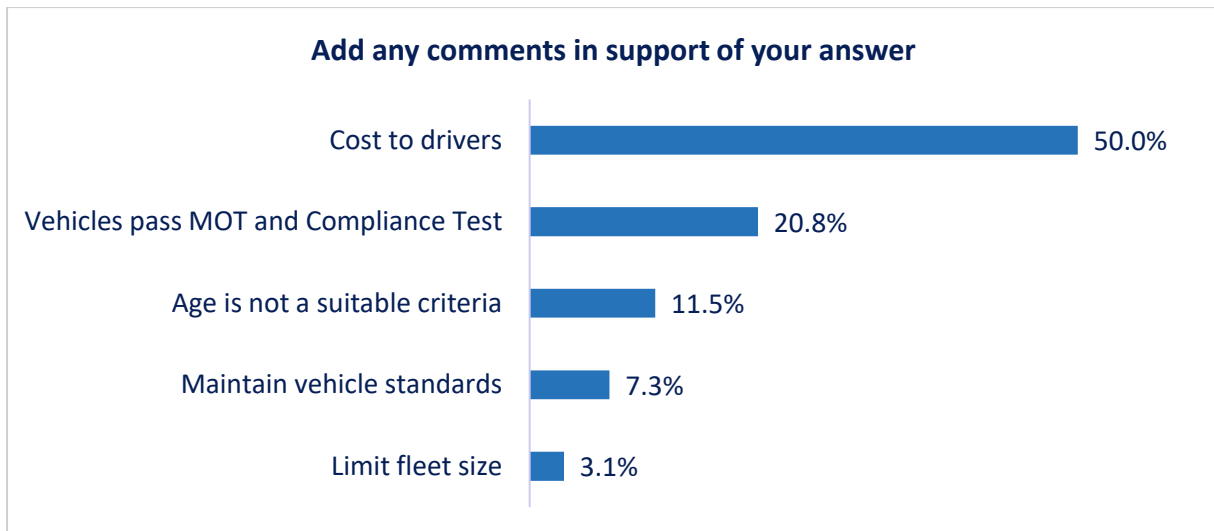


Figure 14: Chart displaying results to “Add any comments in support of your answer”

| Add any comments in support of your answer | Total | % |
|--|-------|-------|
| Cost to drivers | 48 | 50.0% |
| Vehicles pass MOT and Compliance Test | 20 | 20.8% |
| Age is not a suitable criteria | 11 | 11.5% |
| Maintain vehicle standards | 7 | 7.3% |
| Limit fleet size | 3 | 3.1% |

Table 14: Table displaying the results to “Add any comments in support of your answer”

- **Cost to drivers (50.0%).** Respondents suggested similar reasons to the previous questions regarding the high cost of replacing vehicles which are still in good condition. In addition, respondents suggested that Hackney Carriages are rare which make it difficult to find a suitable vehicle and drives up cost.
- **Vehicles pass MOT and Compliance Test (20.8%).** Respondents suggested similar reasons to the previous questions regarding MOT and Compliance Tests indicate vehicles condition better than age.
- **Age is not a suitable criteria (11.5%).** Respondents suggested similar reasons to the previous questions regarding age not always reflecting the condition of the vehicle and that testing and milage might be more suitable criteria.
- **Maintain vehicle standards (7.3%).** Respondents suggested that the policy would mean vehicles would be safer, of a higher quality and with less emissions.
- **Limit fleet size (3.1%).** Some respondents suggested that this policy will encourage only drivers who are willing to invest in vehicles and discourage others from becoming drivers. They suggested this would a benefit by limiting the number of drivers.

Question 11: Do you think the Council should have any age limit for Hackney Carriage Vehicles being licensed for the first time?

Only respondents who answered no to the previous question were able to answer this question. 114 people answered this question. Respondents selected one option that they agreed with. 45.6% of all respondents thought the Council should have an age limit whilst 54.4% thought the Council should not.

The majority of both non-licence holders (63.0%) and licence holders (52.3%) thought the Council should not have an age limit.

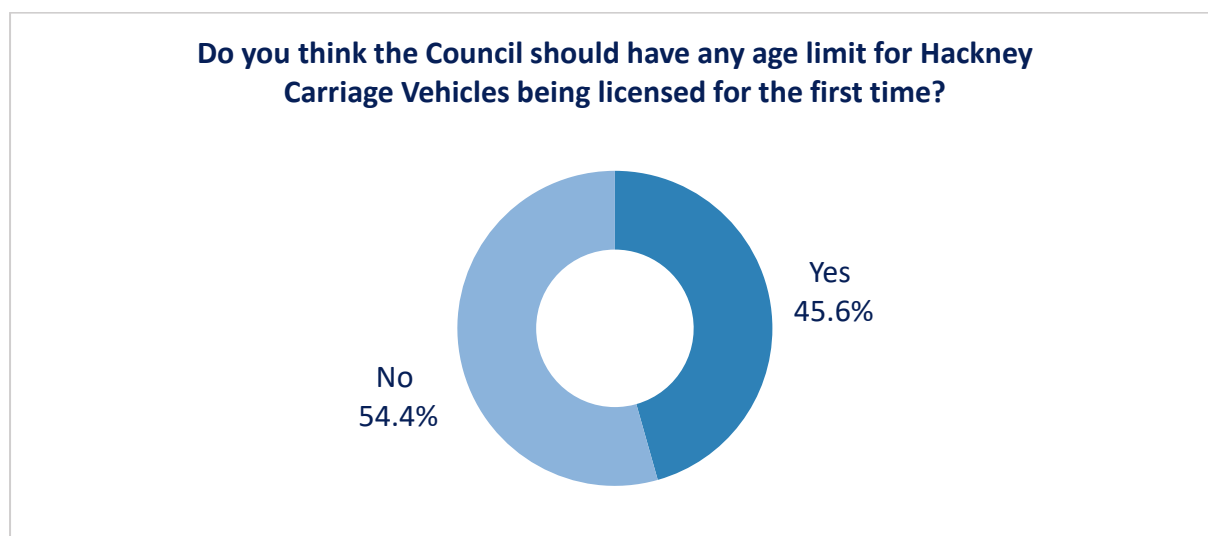


Figure 15: Chart displaying results to “Do you think the Council should have any age limit for Hackney Carriage Vehicles being licensed for the first time?”

| Do you think the Council should have any age limit for Hackney Carriage Vehicles being licensed for the first time? | Total | % |
|---|-------|-------|
| Yes | 52 | 45.6% |
| No | 62 | 54.4% |

Table 15: Table displaying the results to “Do you think the Council should have any age limit for Hackney Carriage Vehicles being licensed for the first time?”

Respondents were asked to add a comment to support their answer. 54 people answered this free text question. Below are the top themes that emerged from the free-text comments as a percentage of the number of people who provided an answer to the question. As the percentage reflects the proportion of respondents who made the comment and that respondents may have made more than one comment in their answer, the total percentages may exceed 100%.



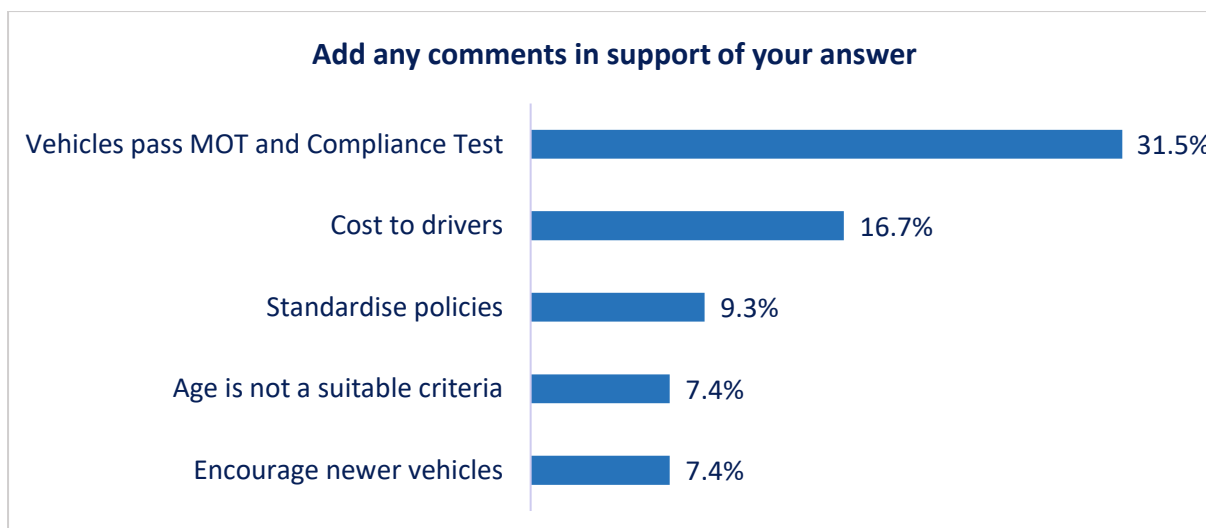


Figure 16: Chart displaying results to “Add any comments in support of your answer”

| Add any comments in support of your answer | Total | % |
|--|-------|-------|
| Vehicles pass MOT and Compliance Test | 17 | 31.5% |
| Cost to drivers | 9 | 16.7% |
| Standardise policies | 5 | 9.3% |
| Age is not a suitable criteria | 4 | 7.4% |
| Encourage newer vehicles | 4 | 7.4% |

Table 16: Table displaying the results to “Add any comments in support of your answer”

- **Vehicles pass MOT and Compliance Test (31.5%).** Respondents suggested similar reasons to the previous questions regarding MOT and Compliance Tests indicate vehicles condition better than age.
- **Cost to drivers (16.7%).** Respondents suggested similar reasons to the previous questions regarding the high cost of replacing vehicles which are still in good condition and Hackney Carriages being difficult to find.
- **Standardise policies (9.3%).** Respondents suggested similar reasons to the previous questions regarding standardising policies with other councils (particularly the LCR) and between Private Hire and Hackney Carriage vehicles, unfair competition with vehicles licenced by other councils and motivation to licence their own vehicles with other councils.
- **Age is not a suitable criteria (7.4%)** Respondents suggested similar reasons to the previous questions regarding age not always reflecting the condition of the vehicle and that testing and milage might be more suitable criteria.
- **Encourage newer vehicles (7.4%).** Respondents suggested similar reasons to the previous questions regarding encouraging the introduction of newer vehicles (particularly electric vehicles) which are safer, more environmentally friendly and provide a better experience to customers.

Question 12: What do you consider that age limit should be?

Only respondents who answered yes to the previous question were able to answer this question. 40 people answered this question. Respondents suggested ages they thought suitable. 40.0% of all respondents suggested the age limit should be 10 years and 30.0% suggested 5 years.

Both non-licence holders and licence holders were close to evenly split between suggesting the age limit should be 10 years or above (50.0% and 48.7% respectively) and under 10 years (50% and 51.3% respectively).

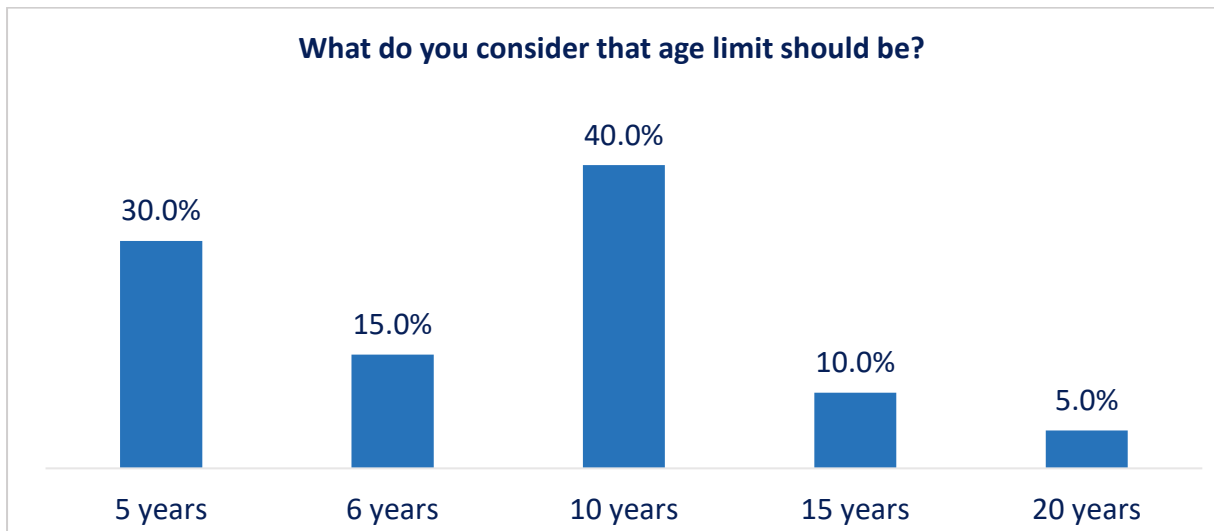


Figure 17: Chart displaying results to “What do you consider that age limit should be?”

| What do you consider that age limit should be? | Total | % |
|--|-------|-------|
| 5 years | 12 | 30.0% |
| 6 years | 6 | 15.0% |
| 10 years | 16 | 40.0% |
| 15 years | 4 | 10.0% |
| 20 years | 2 | 5.0% |

Table 17: Table displaying the results to “What do you consider that age limit should be?”



Question 13: Once a vehicle is licensed as a Hackney Carriage Vehicle it can continue to be licensed with no upper age limit. Do you think the Council should maintain this policy?

281 people answered this question. Respondents selected one option that they agreed with. 50.2% of all respondents thought the Council should maintain the policy whilst 26.7% thought the Council should not.

More non-licence holders and licence holders thought the Council should maintain the policy (47.2% and 51.2% respectively) compared to those who thought the Council should not (37.5% and 23.2% respectively).

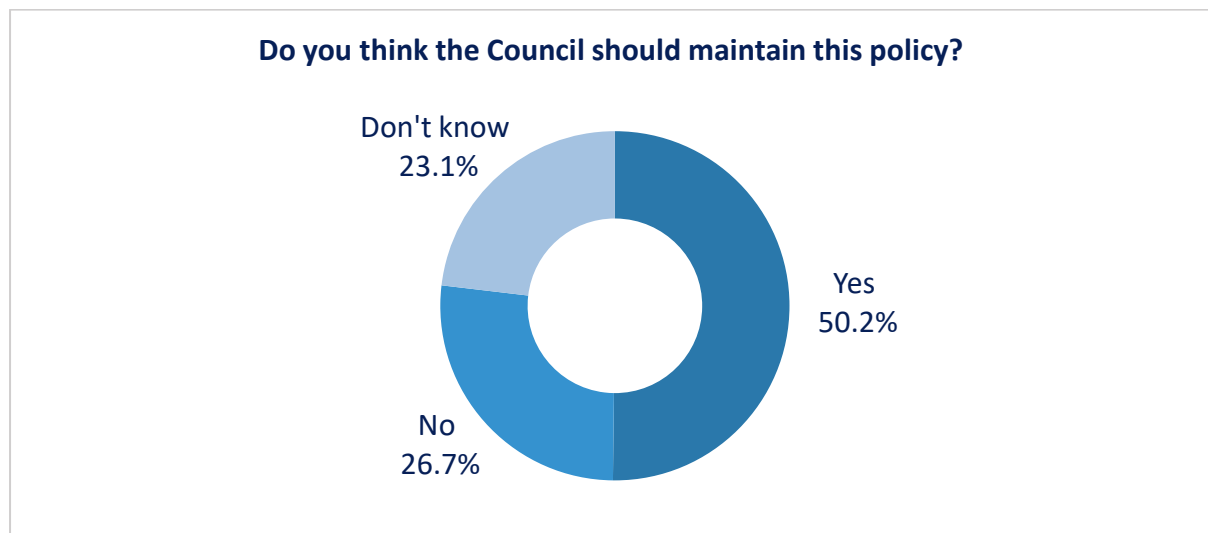


Figure 18: Chart displaying results to “Do you think the Council should maintain this policy?”

| Do you think the Council should maintain this policy? | Total | % |
|---|-------|-------|
| Yes | 141 | 50.2% |
| No | 75 | 26.7% |
| Don't know | 65 | 23.1% |

Table 18: Table displaying the results to “Do you think the Council should maintain this policy?”

Respondents were asked to add a comment to support their answer. 54 people answered this free text question. Below are the top themes that emerged from the free-text comments as a percentage of the number of people who provided an answer to the question. As the percentage reflects the proportion of respondents who made the comment and that respondents may have made more than one comment in their answer, the total percentages may exceed 100%.

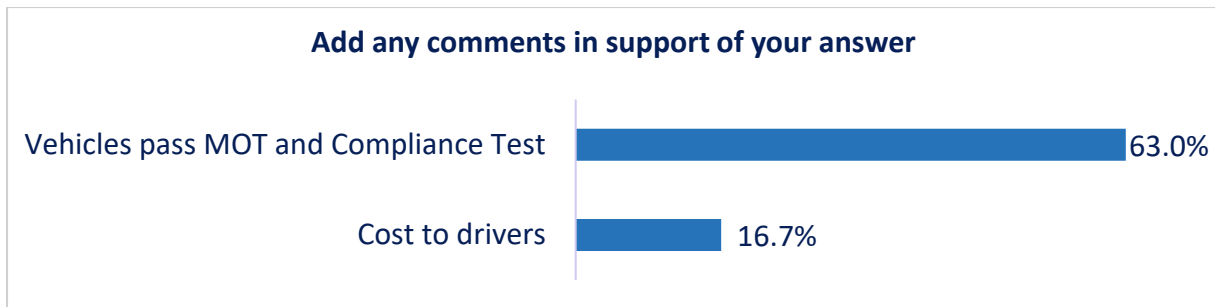


Figure 19: Chart displaying results to “Add any comments in support of your answer”

| Add any comments in support of your answer | Total | % |
|--|-------|-------|
| Vehicles pass MOT and Compliance Test | 34 | 63.0% |
| Cost to drivers | 9 | 16.7% |

Table 19: Table displaying the results to “Add any comments in support of your answer”

- Vehicles pass MOT and Compliance Test (63.0%).** Respondents suggested similar reasons to the previous questions regarding MOT and Compliance Tests indicate vehicles condition better than age.
- Cost to drivers (16.7%).** Respondents suggested similar reasons to the previous questions regarding the high cost of replacing vehicles which are still in good condition and Hackney Carriages being difficult to find.



Question 14: What do you consider that age limit should be?

Only respondents who answered no to the previous question were able to answer this question. 62 people answered this question. Respondents suggested ages they thought suitable. 33.9% of all respondents suggested the age limit should be 10 years and 33.9% suggested 15 years.

Most non-licence holders (87.5%) suggested the age limit should be 10 years or above whilst the majority of non-licence holders (58.2%) suggested the age limit should be 15 years or above.

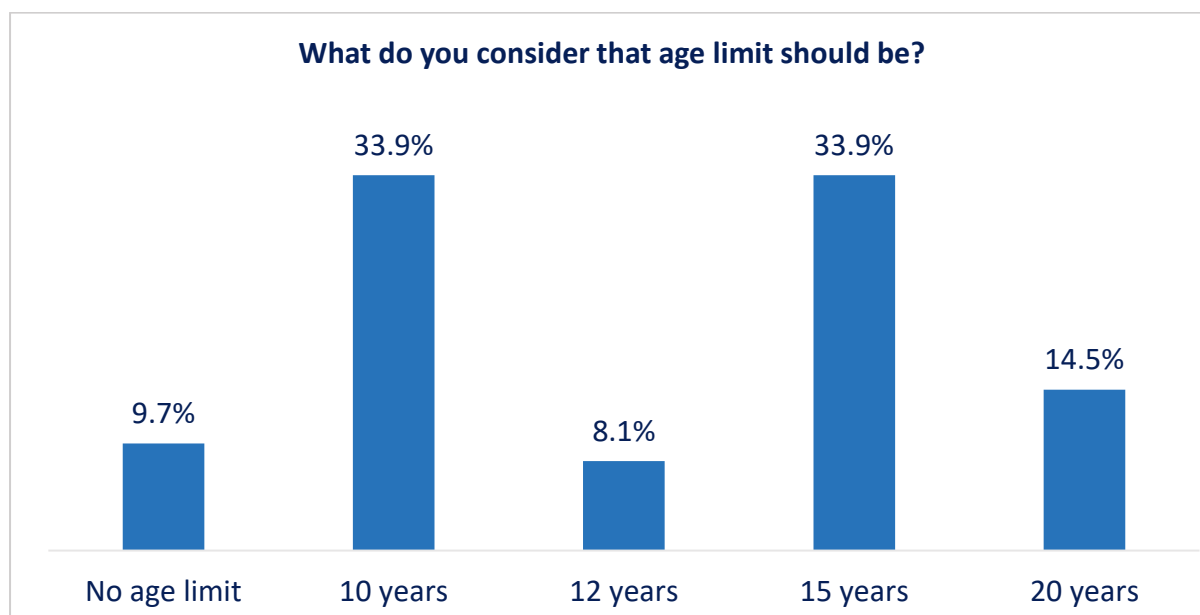


Figure 20: Chart displaying results to “What do you consider that age limit should be?”

| What do you consider that age limit should be? | Total | % |
|--|-------|-------|
| No age limit | 6 | 9.7% |
| 10 years | 21 | 33.9% |
| 12 years | 5 | 8.1% |
| 15 years | 21 | 33.9% |
| 20 years | 9 | 14.5% |

Table 20: Table displaying the results to “What do you consider that age limit should be?”

Respondents were asked to add a comment to support their answer. 40 people answered this free text question. Below are the top themes that emerged from the free-text comments as a percentage of the number of people who provided an answer to the question. As the percentage reflects the proportion of respondents who made the comment and that respondents may have made more than one comment in their answer, the total percentages may exceed 100%.

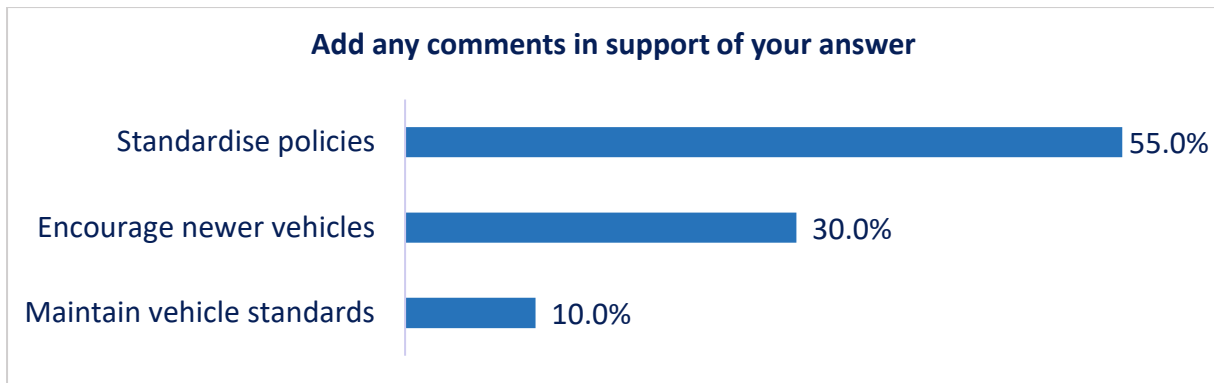


Figure 21: Chart displaying results to “Add any comments in support of your answer”

| Add any comments in support of your answer | Total | % |
|--|-------|-------|
| Standardise policies | 22 | 55.0% |
| Encourage newer vehicles | 12 | 30.0% |
| Maintain vehicle standards | 4 | 10.0% |

Table 21: Table displaying the results to “Add any comments in support of your answer”

- **Standardise policies (55.0%).** Respondents suggested similar reasons to the previous questions regarding standardising policies with other councils (particularly the LCR)
- **Encourage newer vehicles (30.0%).** Respondents suggested similar reasons to the previous questions regarding encouraging the introduction of newer vehicles (particularly electric vehicles) which are safer, more environmentally friendly and provide a better experience to customers.
- **Maintain vehicle standards (10.0%).** Respondents suggested similar reasons to the previous questions regarding older vehicles wear out due to high level of use.



Question 15: Hackney Carriage Vehicles that are 10 years old or more must have an MOT and Compliance Test every six months. Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement?

282 people answered this question. Respondents selected one option that they agreed with. 57.4% of all respondents thought the Council should maintain this requirement whilst 24.5% thought the Council should not.

Most non-licence holders (72.2%) and licence holders (52.4%) thought the Council should maintain this requirement.

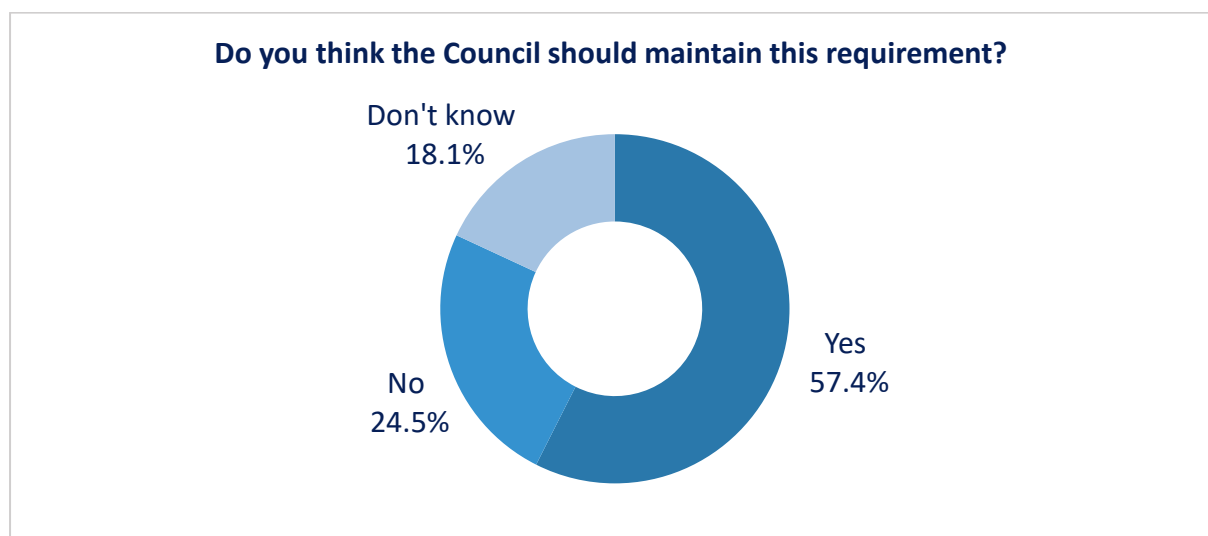


Figure 22: Chart displaying results to “Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement?”

| Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement? | Total | % |
|--|-------|-------|
| Yes | 162 | 57.4% |
| No | 69 | 24.5% |
| Don't know | 51 | 18.1% |

Table 22: Table displaying the results to “Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement?”

Respondents were asked to add a comment to support their answer. 91 people answered this free text question. Below are the top themes that emerged from the free-text comments as a percentage of the number of people who provided an answer to the question. As the percentage reflects the proportion of respondents who made the comment and that respondents may have made more than one comment in their answer, the total percentages may exceed 100%.



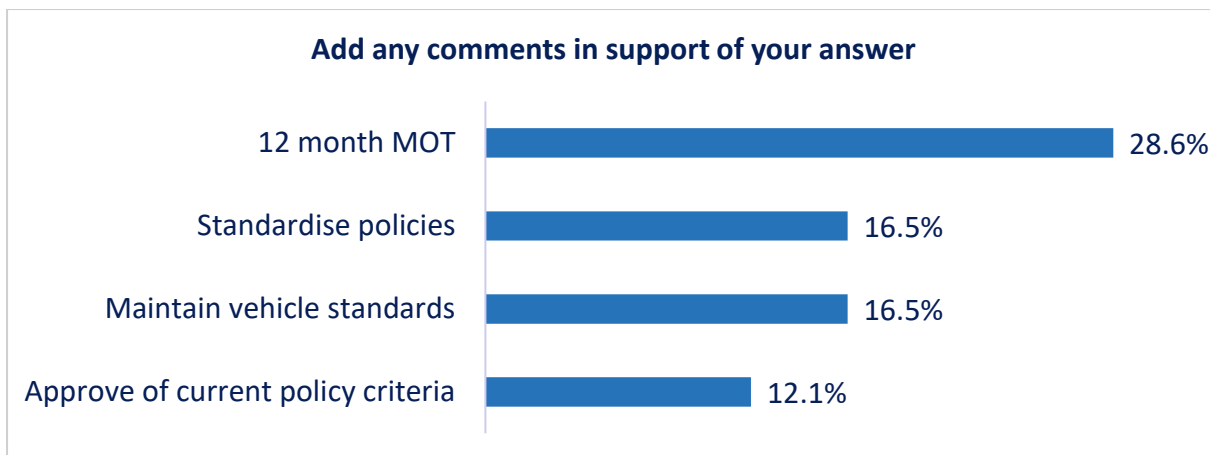


Figure 23: Chart displaying results to “Add any comments in support of your answer”

| Add any comments in support of your answer | Total | % |
|--|-------|-------|
| 12 month MOT | 26 | 28.6% |
| Standardise policies | 15 | 16.5% |
| Maintain vehicle standards | 15 | 16.5% |
| Approve of current policy criteria | 11 | 12.1% |

Table 23: Table displaying the results to “Add any comments in support of your answer”

- **12 month MOT (28.6%).** Some respondents suggested stopping the policy of 6 monthly MOTs as they viewed 12 monthly MOTs as being sufficient to maintain vehicle safety.
- **Standardise policies (16.5%).** Respondents suggested similar reasons to the previous questions regarding standardising policies with other councils (particularly the LCR).
- **Maintain vehicle standards (16.5%).** Respondents suggested similar reasons to the previous questions regarding older vehicles wear out due to high level of use.
- **Approve of current policy criteria (12.1%).** Respondents stated that they considered the current policy criteria to be appropriate.



Question 16: If an owner of a Hackney Carriage Vehicle wants to change their vehicle, the replacement vehicle must be the same age or less than the current vehicle, and in any case no more than 10 years old. Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement?

281 people answered this question. Respondents selected one option that they agreed with. 44.8% of all respondents thought the Council should maintain this requirement whilst 33.1% thought the Council should not.

The majority of non-licence holders (61.1%) thought the Council should maintain this requirement whilst more licence holders (38.6%) thought the Council should maintain this requirement compared to those who thought the Council should not (33.8%).

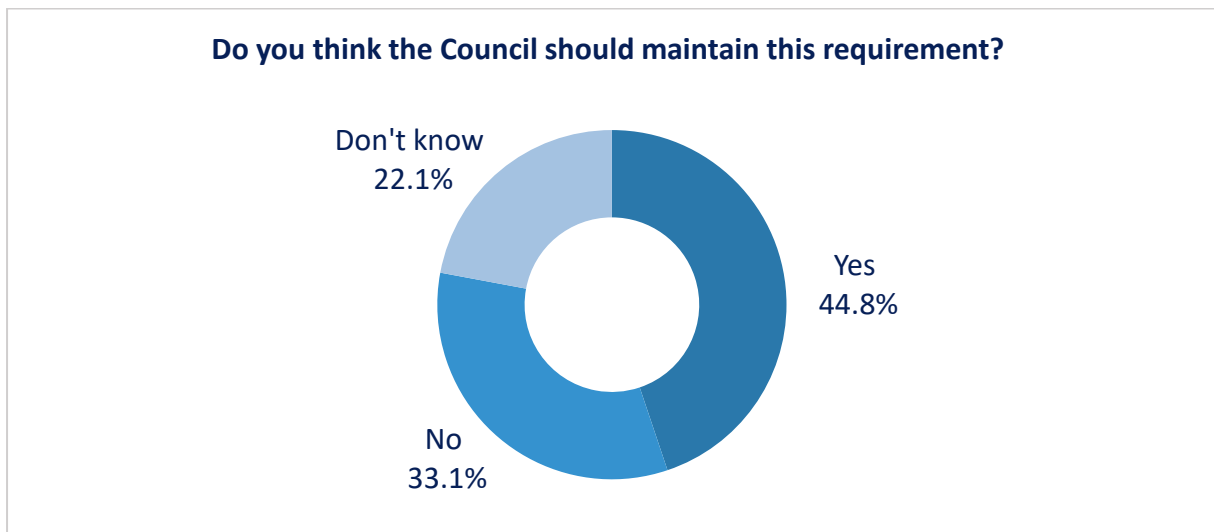


Figure 24: Chart displaying results to “Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement?”

| Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement? | Total | % |
|--|-------|-------|
| Yes | 126 | 44.8% |
| No | 93 | 33.1% |
| Don't know | 62 | 22.1% |

Table 24: Table displaying the results to “Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement?”

Respondents were asked to add a comment to support their answer. 69 people answered this free text question. Below are the top themes that emerged from the free-text comments as a percentage of the number of people who provided an answer to the question. As the percentage reflects the proportion of respondents who made the comment and that respondents may have made more than one comment in their answer, the total percentages may exceed 100%.

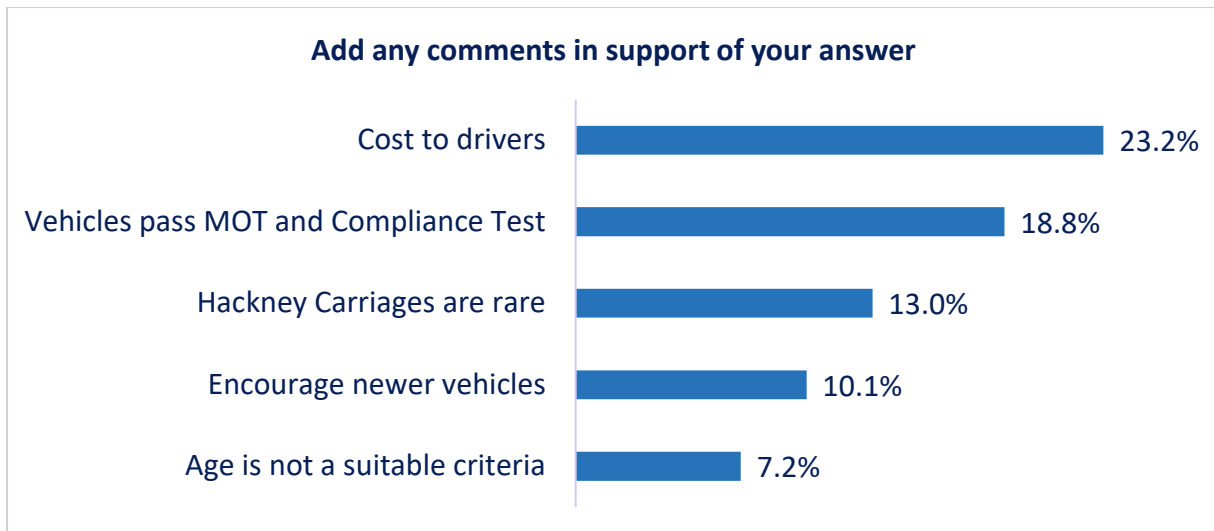


Figure 25: Chart displaying results to “Add any comments in support of your answer”

| Add any comments in support of your answer | Total | % |
|--|-------|-------|
| Cost to drivers | 16 | 23.2% |
| Vehicles pass MOT and Compliance Test | 13 | 18.8% |
| Hackney Carriages are rare | 9 | 13.0% |
| Encourage newer vehicles | 7 | 10.1% |
| Age is not a suitable criteria | 5 | 7.2% |

Table 25: Table displaying the results to “Add any comments in support of your answer”

- **Cost to drivers (23.2%).** Respondents suggested similar reasons to the previous questions regarding the high cost of replacing vehicles which are still in good condition.
- **Vehicles pass MOT and Compliance Test (18.8%).** Respondents suggested similar reasons to the previous questions regarding MOT and Compliance Tests indicate vehicles condition better than age.
- **Hackney Carriages are rare (13.0%).** Respondents stated that Hackney Carriage vehicles are rare and difficult to replace.
- **Encourage newer vehicles (10.1%).** Respondents suggested similar reasons to the previous questions regarding encouraging the introduction of newer vehicles (particularly electric vehicles) which are safer, more environmentally friendly and provide a better experience to customers.
- **Age is not a suitable criteria (7.2%).** Respondents suggested similar reasons to the previous questions regarding age not always reflecting the condition of the vehicle and that testing and milage might be more suitable criteria.

3.1.4 Window Tint

Question 17: In addition to the legal requirement Wirral Council require Private Hire Vehicles to allow at least 70% of light to pass through all other windows. This means that the maximum tint level permitted for these windows is 30%. Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement?

285 people answered this question. Respondents selected one option that they agreed with. 26.7% of all respondents thought the Council should maintain this requirement whilst 68.4% thought the Council should not.

Most non-licence holders (78.6%) thought the Council should maintain this requirement whilst most licence holders (85.0%) thought the Council should not.

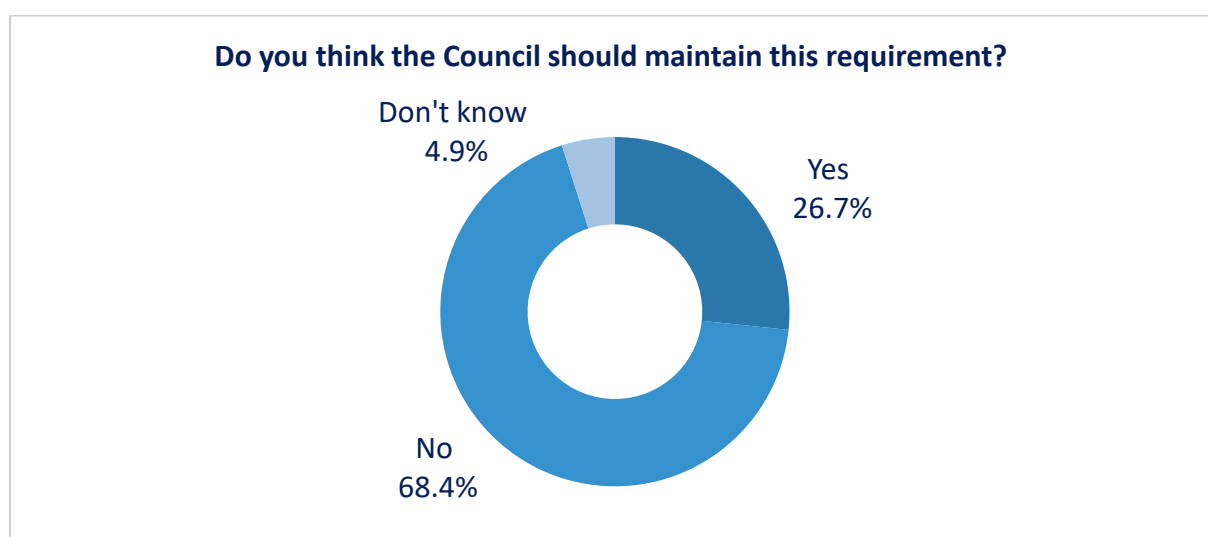


Figure 26: Chart displaying results to “Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement?”

| Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement? | Total | % |
|--|-------|-------|
| Yes | 76 | 26.7% |
| No | 195 | 68.4% |
| Don't know | 14 | 4.9% |

Table 26: Table displaying the results to “Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement?”

Respondents were asked to add a comment to support their answer. 185 people answered this free text question. Below are the top themes that emerged from the free-text comments as a percentage of the number of people who provided an answer to the question. As the percentage reflects the proportion of respondents who made the comment and that respondents may have made more than one comment in their answer, the total percentages may exceed 100%.

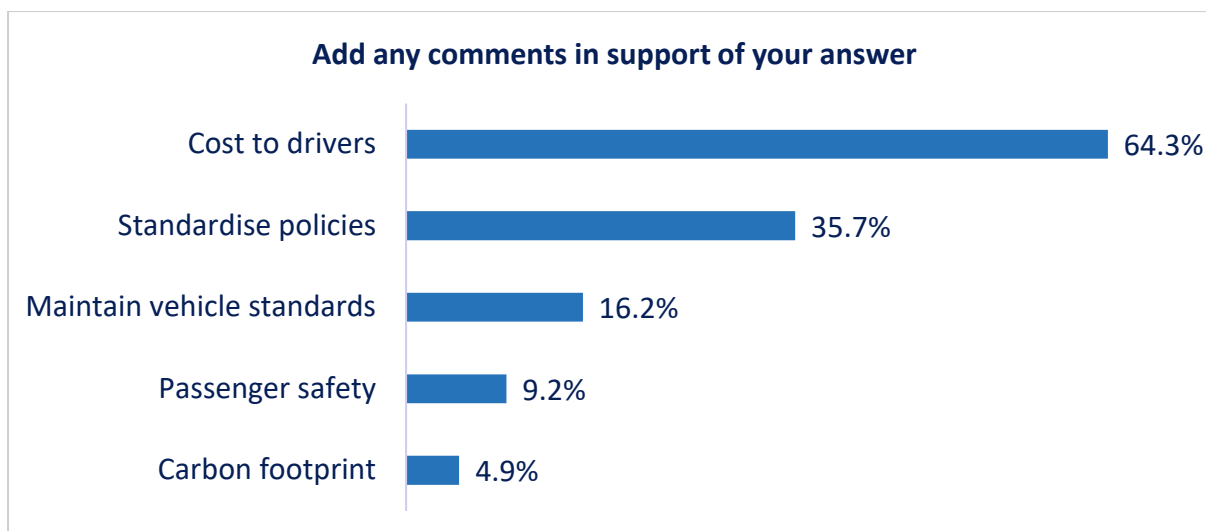


Figure 27: Chart displaying results to “Add any comments in support of your answer”

| Add any comments in support of your answer | Total | % |
|--|-------|-------|
| Cost to drivers | 119 | 64.3% |
| Standardise policies | 66 | 35.7% |
| Maintain vehicle standards | 30 | 16.2% |
| Passenger safety | 17 | 9.2% |
| Carbon footprint | 9 | 4.9% |

Table 27: Table displaying the results to “Add any comments in support of your answer”

- Cost to drivers (64.3%).** Respondents cited cost as being the reason they objected against the policy. They stated that tinted windows are standard on most new vehicles (particularly electric vehicles) so they faced the addition cost of replacing the windows with non-tinted ones. Some stated the cost had deterred them from purchasing new vehicles and has encouraged them to licence their vehicles with other councils which do not have this policy. Some respondents also suggested that as the tinted windows were standard, their insurance policies would not let them change their windows as it would be regarded as an vehicle alteration.
- Standardise policies (35.7%).** Respondents suggested similar reasons to the previous questions regarding standardising policies with other councils (particularly the LCR) and between Private Hire and Hackney Carriage vehicles, unfair competition with vehicles licenced by other councils and motivation to licence their own vehicles with other councils. They also stated that they have lost the business to externally licenced vehicles for customers who prefer increased privacy.
- Maintain vehicle standards (16.2%).** Respondents stated that tinted windows help protect their vehicles by reducing UV damage to the interior and reducing the temperature providing a more enjoyable experience for the passenger. Some also cited examples of special needs passengers, passengers attended hospitals for treatment and corporate users appreciated the privacy tinted windows provide.

- **Passenger safety (9.2%).** Respondents stated that they would prefer low or no tint for Private Hire windows citing passenger safety. They felt it would be safer using Private Hire vehicles if they are able to be seen from outside and would not restrict the drivers view whilst they drive. Some described their own experience of inappropriate behaviour by drivers for why they felt unsafe.
- **Carbon footprint (4.9%).** Respondents suggest that tinted windows help reduce the carbon footprint of vehicles by reducing the need to use air conditioning. Some also stated this policy also deters the purchasing of electric vehicles as using air conditioning can drain the vehicles battery.



Question 18: In addition to the legal requirement Wirral Council require Hackney Carriage Vehicles to allow at least 70% of light to pass through all other windows. This means that the maximum tint level permitted for these windows is 30%. Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement?

281 people answered this question. Respondents selected one option that they agreed with. 27.8% of all respondents thought the Council should maintain this requirement whilst 54.4% thought the Council should not.

Most non-licence holders (78.6%) thought the Council should maintain this requirement whilst the majority of licence holders (67.0%) thought the Council should not.

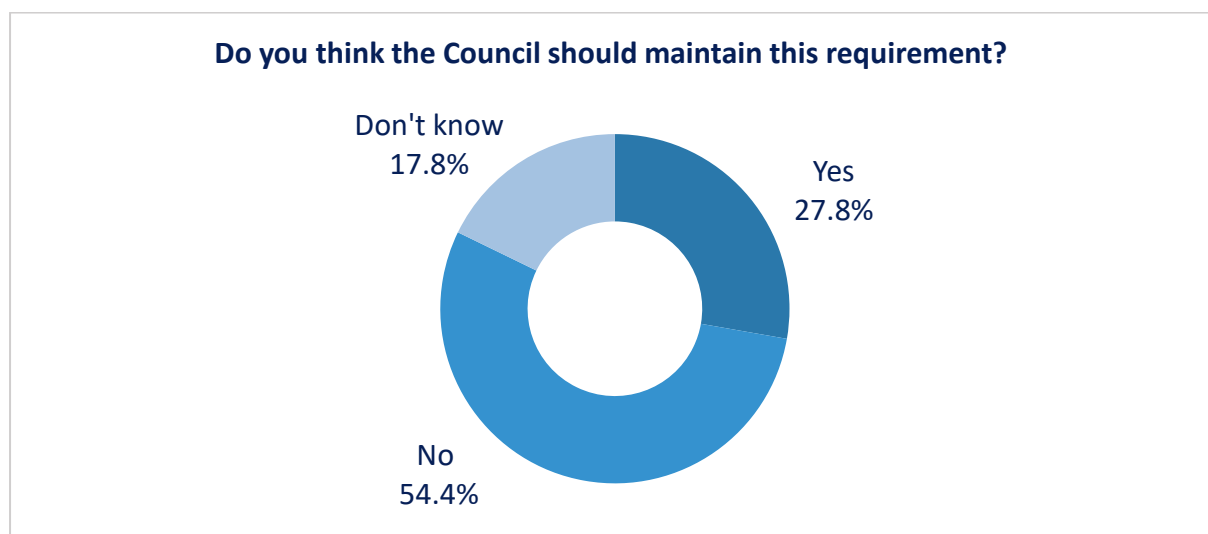


Figure 28: Chart displaying results to “Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement?”

| Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement? | Total | % |
|--|-------|-------|
| Yes | 78 | 27.8% |
| No | 153 | 54.4% |
| Don't know | 50 | 17.8% |

Table 28: Table displaying the results to “Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement?”

Respondents were asked to add a comment to support their answer. 103 people answered this free text question. Below are the top themes that emerged from the free-text comments as a percentage of the number of people who provided an answer to the question. As the percentage reflects the proportion of respondents who made the comment and that respondents may have made more than one comment in their answer, the total percentages may exceed 100%.



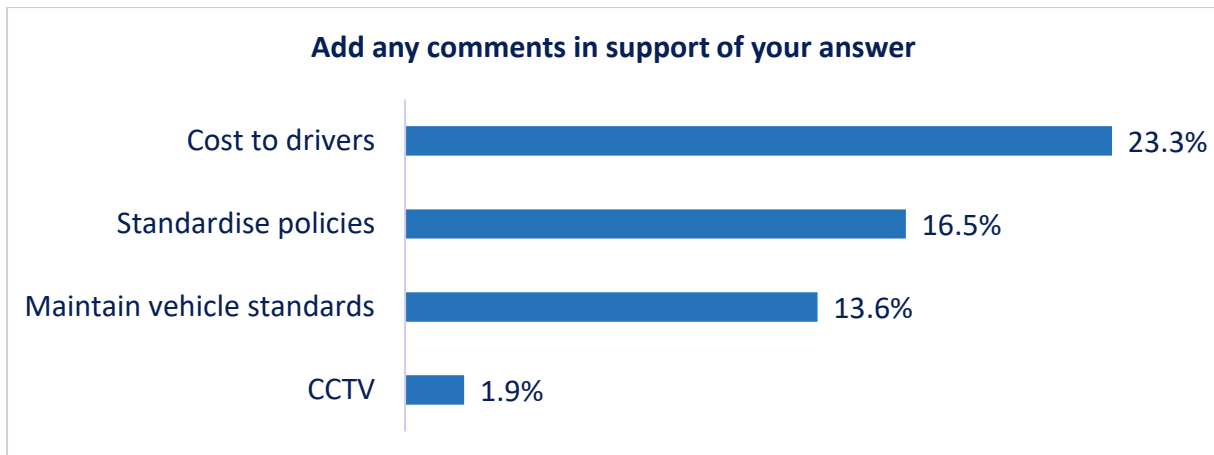


Figure 29: Chart displaying results to “Add any comments in support of your answer”

| Add any comments in support of your answer | Total | % |
|--|-------|-------|
| Cost to drivers | 24 | 23.3% |
| Standardise policies | 17 | 16.5% |
| Maintain vehicle standards | 14 | 13.6% |
| CCTV | 2 | 1.9% |

Table 29: Table displaying the results to “Add any comments in support of your answer”

- **Cost to drivers (23.3%).** Respondents suggested similar reasons to the previous questions regarding tinted windows being standard, the cost of replacing windows, being discouraging from purchasing new vehicles and being encouraged to licence their vehicle with other councils.
- **Standardise policies (16.5%).** Respondents suggested similar reasons to the previous questions regarding standardising policies with other councils (particularly the LCR) and between Private Hire and Hackney Carriage vehicles, unfair competition with vehicles licenced by other councils and motivation to licence their own vehicles with other councils.
- **Maintain vehicle standards (13.6%).** Respondents suggested similar reasons to the previous questions regarding UV damage to interiors, reducing the temperature to provide a more enjoyable experience for passengers and reducing the use of air conditioning.
- **CCTV (1.9%).** Some respondents suggested CCTV could be installed to mitigate feelings of window tints making the vehicle an unsafe space for passengers.

3.1.5 Step Height

Question 19: Do you think it is necessary for a Private Hire Vehicle with an entrance step height exceeding 38cm to have a fitted step or portable step?

284 people answered this question. Respondents selected one option that they agreed with. 49.3% of all respondents thought it necessary to have a fitted step or portable step whilst 19.4% thought it not necessary.

Most non-licence holders (78.6%) thought it necessary to have a fitted step or portable step whilst more licence holders (40.1%) thought it necessary to have a fitted step or portable step compared to those who thought it not necessary (23.1%).

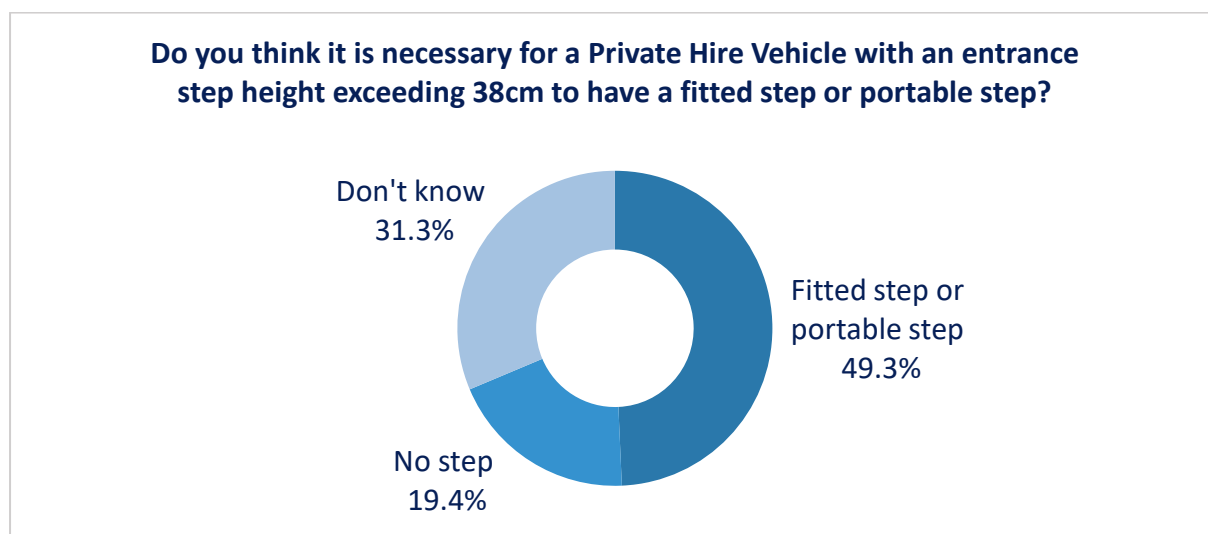


Figure 30: Chart displaying results to “Do you think it is necessary for a Private Hire Vehicle with an entrance step height exceeding 38cm to have a fitted step or portable step?”

| Do you think it is necessary for a Private Hire Vehicle with an entrance step height exceeding 38cm to have a fitted step or portable step? | Total | % |
|---|-------|-------|
| Fitted step or portable step | 140 | 49.3% |
| No step | 55 | 19.4% |
| Don't know | 89 | 31.3% |

Table 30: Table displaying the results to “Do you think it is necessary for a Private Hire Vehicle with an entrance step height exceeding 38cm to have a fitted step or portable step?”

Respondents were asked to add a comment to support their answer. 70 people answered this free text question. Below are the top themes that emerged from the free-text comments as a percentage of the number of people who provided an answer to the question. As the percentage reflects the proportion of respondents who made the comment and that respondents may have made more than one comment in their answer, the total percentages may exceed 100%.



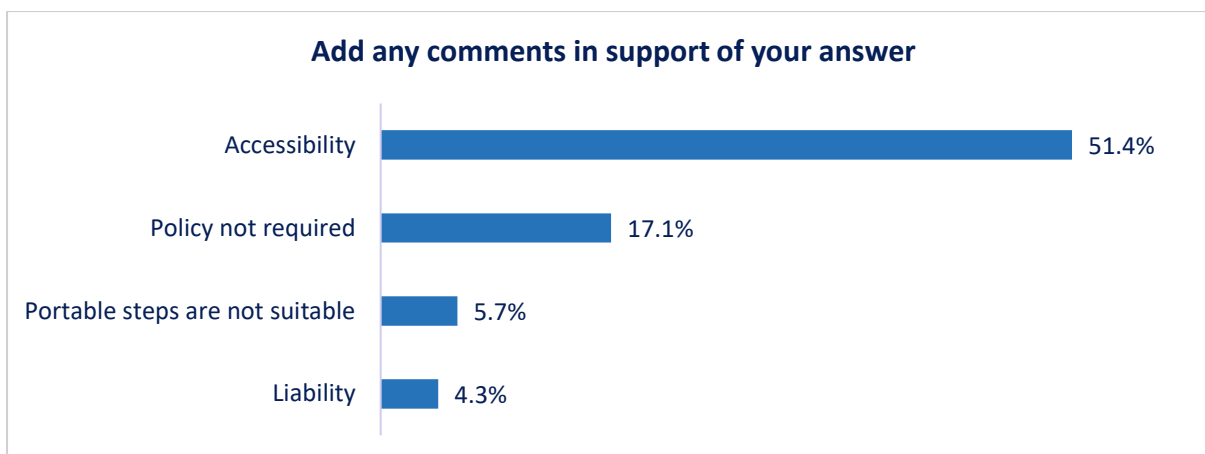


Figure 31: Chart displaying results to “Add any comments in support of your answer”

| Add any comments in support of your answer | Total | % |
|--|-------|-------|
| Accessibility | 36 | 51.4% |
| Policy not required | 12 | 17.1% |
| Portable steps are not suitable | 4 | 5.7% |
| Liability | 3 | 4.3% |

Table 31: Table displaying the results to “Add any comments in support of your answer”

- **Accessibility (51.4%).** Respondents stated they believed a step is necessary to facilitate access for customers, particularly the elderly and disabled.
- **Policy not required (17.1%).** Respondents believed the policy is not required. They stated that customers with accessibility needs can request more suitable vehicles if needed. Some suggest that if steps were required, they would be included as a factory standard.
- **Portable steps are not suitable (5.7%).** Respondents suggested that portable steps were not suitable due to difficulty storing them in the vehicle (particularly if they are also carrying a passenger's wheelchair).
- **Liability (4.3%).** Respondents suggested that use of the portable steps is not covered under insurance and feared they would be personally liable if a passenger was injured whilst using their step.

Question 20: Do you think it is necessary for a Hackney Carriage Vehicle with an entrance step height exceeding 38cm to have a fitted step or portable step?

280 people answered this question. Respondents selected one option that they agreed with. 58.6% of all respondents thought it necessary to have a fitted step or portable step whilst 9.3% thought it not necessary.

Most non-licence holders (87.1%) thought it necessary to have a fitted step or portable step whilst more licence holders (49.5%) thought it necessary to have a fitted step or portable step compared to those who thought it not necessary (10.6%).

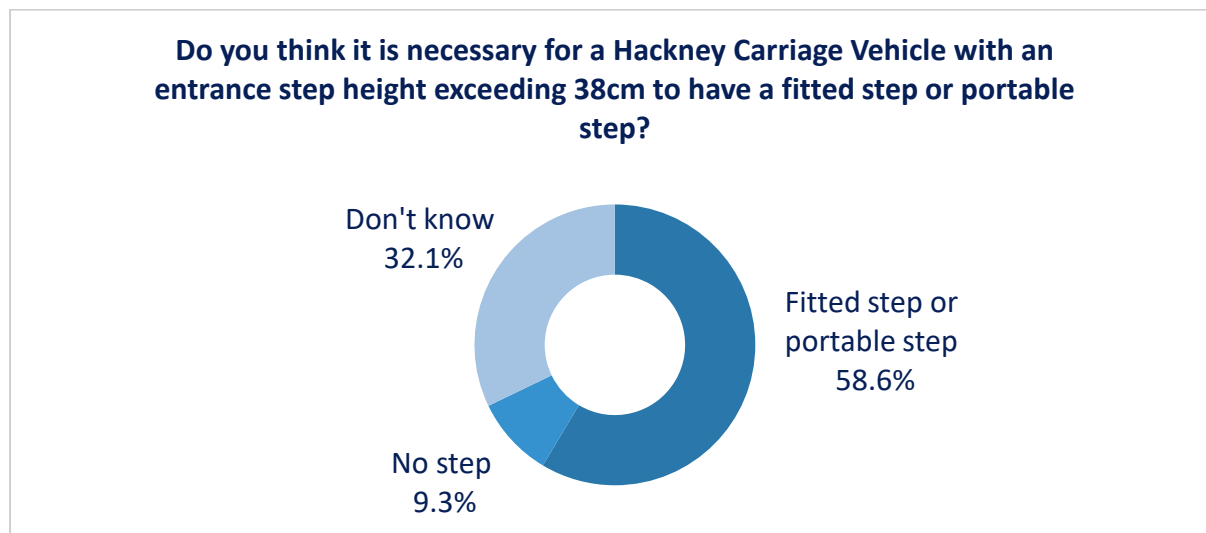


Figure 32: Chart displaying results to “Do you think it is necessary for a Hackney Carriage Vehicle with an entrance step height exceeding 38cm to have a fitted step or portable step?”

| Do you think it is necessary for a Hackney Carriage Vehicle with an entrance step height exceeding 38cm to have a fitted step or portable step? | Total | % |
|---|-------|-------|
| Fitted step or portable step | 164 | 58.6% |
| No step | 26 | 9.3% |
| Don't know | 90 | 32.1% |

Table 32: Table displaying the results to “Do you think it is necessary for a Hackney Carriage Vehicle with an entrance step height exceeding 38cm to have a fitted step or portable step?”

Respondents were asked to add a comment to support their answer. 54 people answered this free text question. Below are the top themes that emerged from the free-text comments as a percentage of the number of people who provided an answer to the question. As the percentage reflects the proportion of respondents who made the comment and that respondents may have made more than one comment in their answer, the total percentages may exceed 100%.



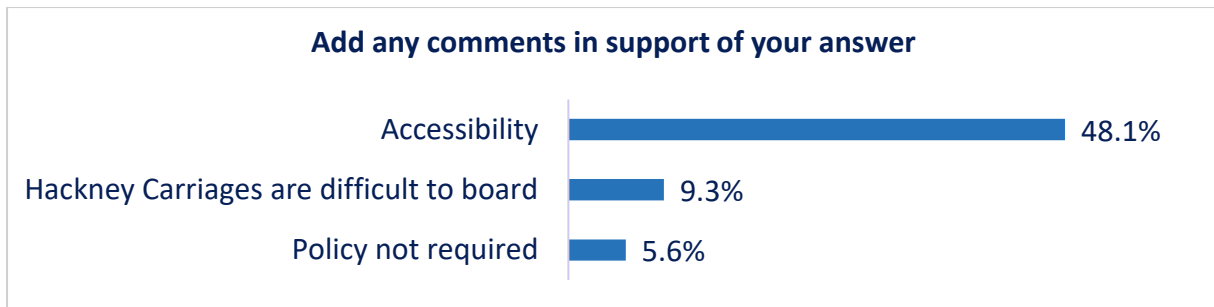


Figure 33: Chart displaying results to “Add any comments in support of your answer”

| Add any comments in support of your answer | Total | % |
|--|-------|-------|
| Accessibility | 26 | 48.1% |
| Hackney Carriages are difficult to board | 5 | 9.3% |
| Policy not required | 3 | 5.6% |

Table 33: Table displaying the results to “Add any comments in support of your answer”

- **Accessibility (48.1%).** Respondents suggested similar reasons to the previous questions regarding steps being necessary to facilitate access for customers, particularly the elderly and disabled.
- **Hackney Carriages are difficult to board (9.3%).** Respondents stated that Hackney Carriages can be difficult to board, particularly because passengers cannot be seated directly from the door but have to enter the cabin. Some respondents also stated that there is limited availability of Hackney Carriages so cannot pick vehicles with easier access.
- **Policy not required (5.6%).** Respondents suggested similar reasons to the previous questions regarding customers being able to request a more suitable vehicle if needed.



3.1.6 Bench Seat

Question 21: Where bench seats are fitted to the rear of Private Hire Vehicles the seat must be at least 48” wide (16” per rear-seat passenger) measured along the front of the seat. Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement?

285 people answered this question. Respondents selected one option that they agreed with. 54.0% of all respondents thought the Council should maintain his requirement whilst 12.6% thought the Council should not.

Most non-licence holders (70.0%) thought the Council should maintain this requirement. For licence holders, more (49.3%) thought the Council should maintain this requirement compared to those who thought the Council should not (14.1%).

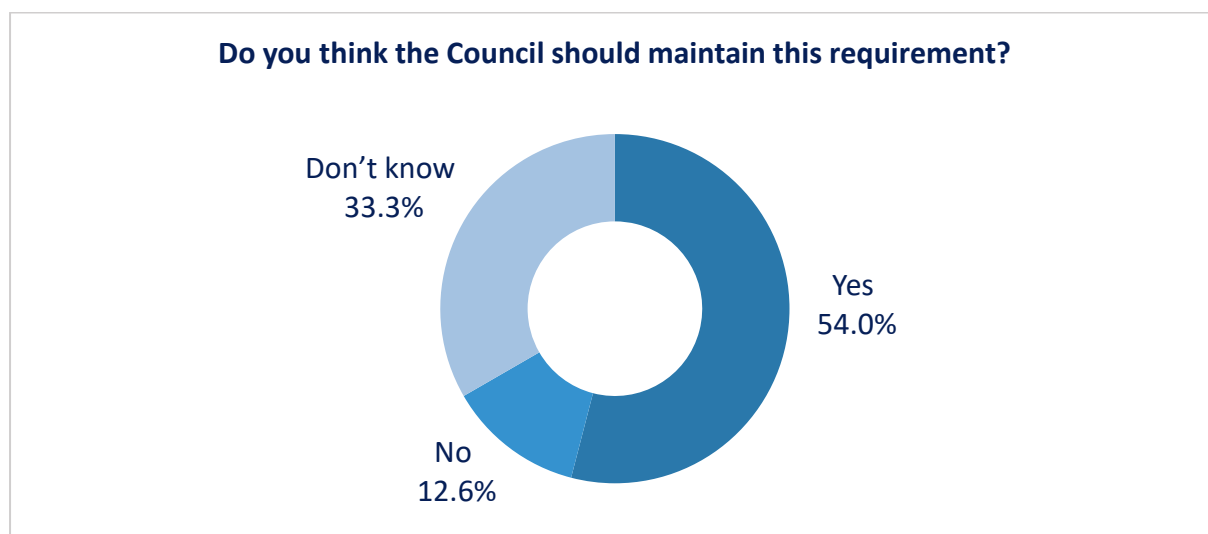


Figure 34: Chart displaying results to “Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement?”

| Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement? | Total | % |
|--|-------|-------|
| Yes | 154 | 54.0% |
| No | 36 | 12.6% |
| Don't know | 95 | 33.3% |

Table 34: Table displaying the results to “Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement?”

Respondents were asked to add a comment to support their answer. 34 people answered this free text question. Below are the top themes that emerged from the free-text comments as a percentage of the number of people who provided an answer to the question. As the percentage reflects the proportion of respondents who made the comment and that respondents may have made more than one comment in their answer, the total percentages may exceed 100%.



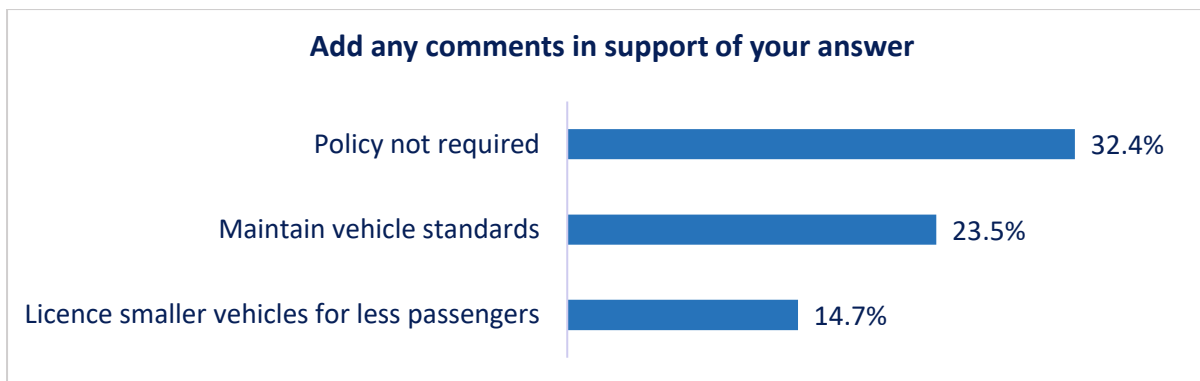


Figure 35: Chart displaying results to “Add any comments in support of your answer”

| Add any comments in support of your answer | Total | % |
|--|-------|-------|
| Policy not required | 11 | 32.4% |
| Maintain vehicle standards | 8 | 23.5% |
| Licence smaller vehicles for less passengers | 5 | 14.7% |

Table 35: Table displaying the results to “Add any comments in support of your answer”

- **Policy not required (32.4%)** Respondents stated they do not believe the policy is required as vehicles are standard sizes (and modern cars are usually larger) and in their experience, seat size as not been an issue.
- **Maintain vehicle standards (23.5%).** Respondents supported the policy as they thought it would increase safety and comfort of vehicles.
- **Licence smaller vehicles for less passengers (14.7%).** Respondents thought that smaller cars should still be licenced but to carry less passengers (for example from 4 passengers to 3).

3.1.7 Additional Comments

Question 22: Additional Comments

Respondents were asked to add a comment to support their answer. 120 people answered this free text question. Below are the top themes that emerged from the free-text comments as a percentage of the number of people who provided an answer to the question. As the percentage reflects the proportion of respondents who made the comment and that respondents may have made more than one comment in their answer, the total percentages may exceed 100%.

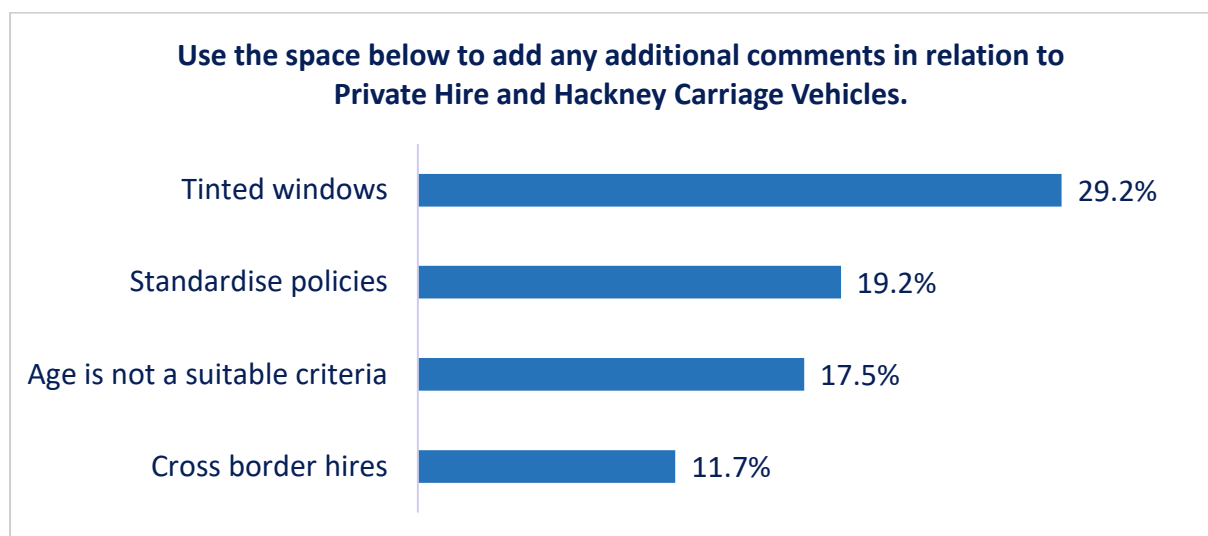


Figure 36: Chart displaying results to “Use the space below to add any additional comments in relation to Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Vehicles.”

| Use the space below to add any additional comments in relation to Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Vehicles. | Total | % |
|---|-------|-------|
| Tinted windows | 35 | 29.2% |
| Standardise policies | 23 | 19.2% |
| Age is not a suitable criteria | 21 | 17.5% |
| Cross border hires | 14 | 11.7% |

Table 36: Table displaying the results to “Use the space below to add any additional comments in relation to Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Vehicles.”

- **Tinted windows (29.2%).** Respondents emphasized previous points made about the difficulty of finding new vehicles without window tints, the cost of changing windows and the motivation to licence their vehicles with other councils to avoid this policy.
- **Standardise policies (19.2%).** Respondents emphasized previous points about standardising policies across councils, particularly LCR councils.

- **Age is not a suitable criteria (17.5%).** Respondents emphasized previous points made about age not being a suitable indication no the condition of vehicles and the difficulty and cost of replacing vehicles.
- **Cross border hires (11.7%).** Respondents stated their wish for cross border hiring to be stopped to prevent vehicles being licenced by other councils to avoid Wirral Council policies.

3.2 Direct Representations

Some respondents stated in Question 1 that they were completing the survey in the capacity of representing an organisation. Their results were included in the analysis in above but their full responses can also be found in Appendix A- Direct Representations.

The public were able to send responses directly to Wirral Council. Their response can also be found in Appendix A- Direct Representations.

4.0 Demographics and Site Traffic

4.1 Demographics

Registration was required to engage in the online Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Vehicles Consultation. The registration form included questions regarding demographics including gender, age group, ethnicity, and sexual orientation, however not all questions in the registration form were compulsory and respondents could choose to select 'prefer not to say' or skip the question. The demographics results are summarised below. The same questions were included on the paper-copy questionnaires.

Most respondents (63.2%) classed themselves as local residents.

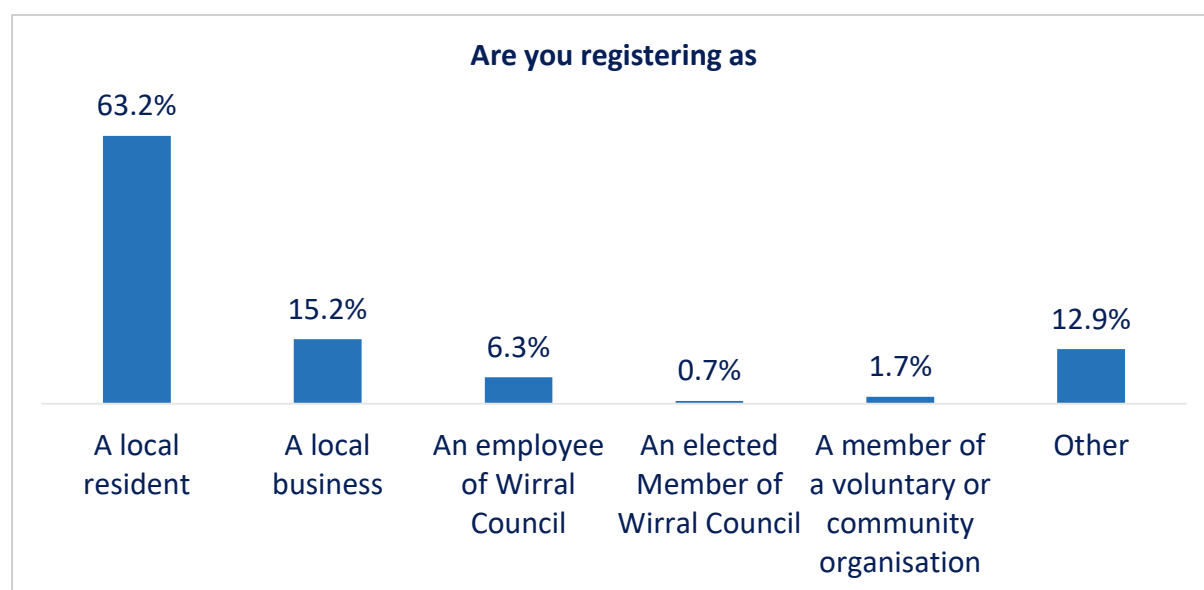


Figure 37: Chart displaying registering



The age group profile is illustrated below with the most common age groups being 55-64 years (31.4%), followed by 45-54 years (24.2%) and 35-44 years (19.9%).

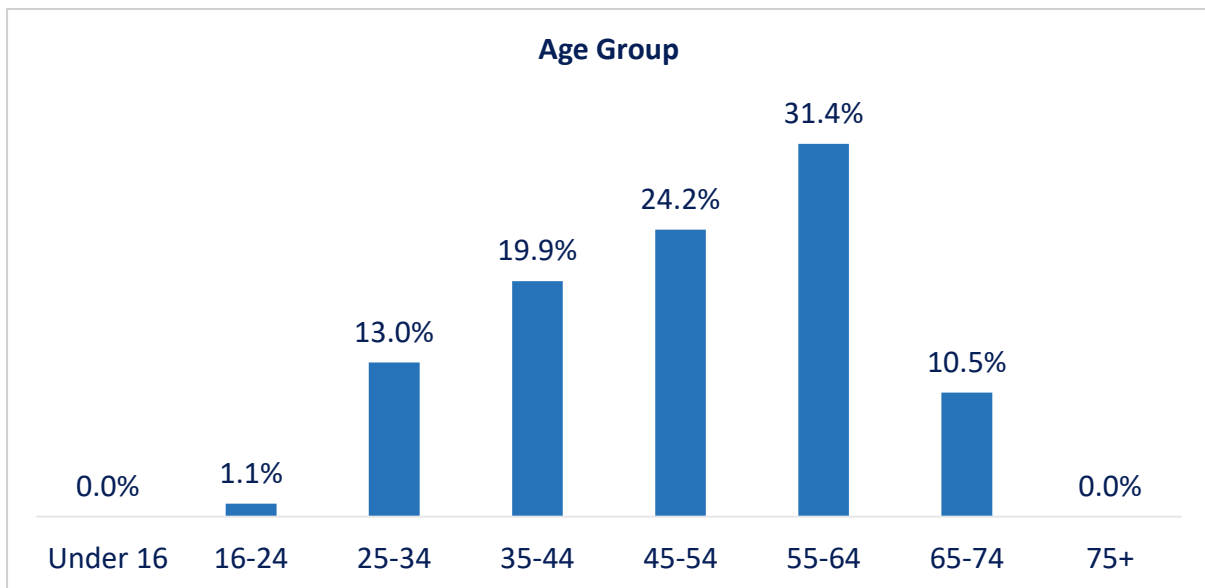


Figure 38: Chart displaying age groups

84.9% of respondents identified as male and, 13.6% female. 1.1% preferring not to say and 0.4% preferring to use their own term.

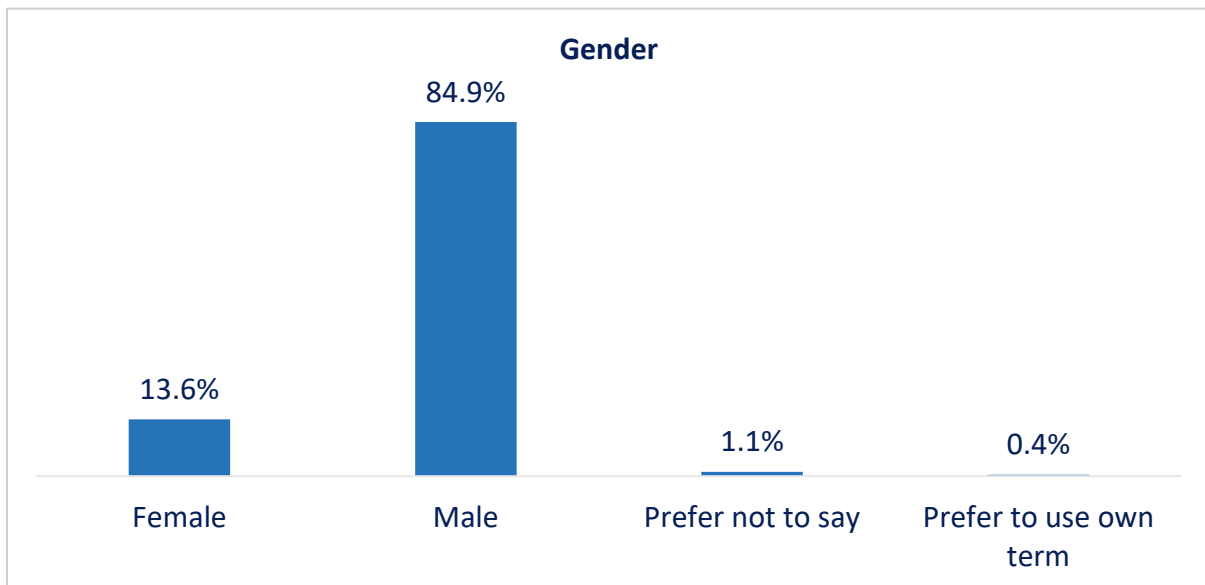


Figure 39: Chart displaying gender

82.4% of respondents were heterosexual, 2.2% were gay/ lesbian, 0.7% bisexual and 14.7% preferred not to say.

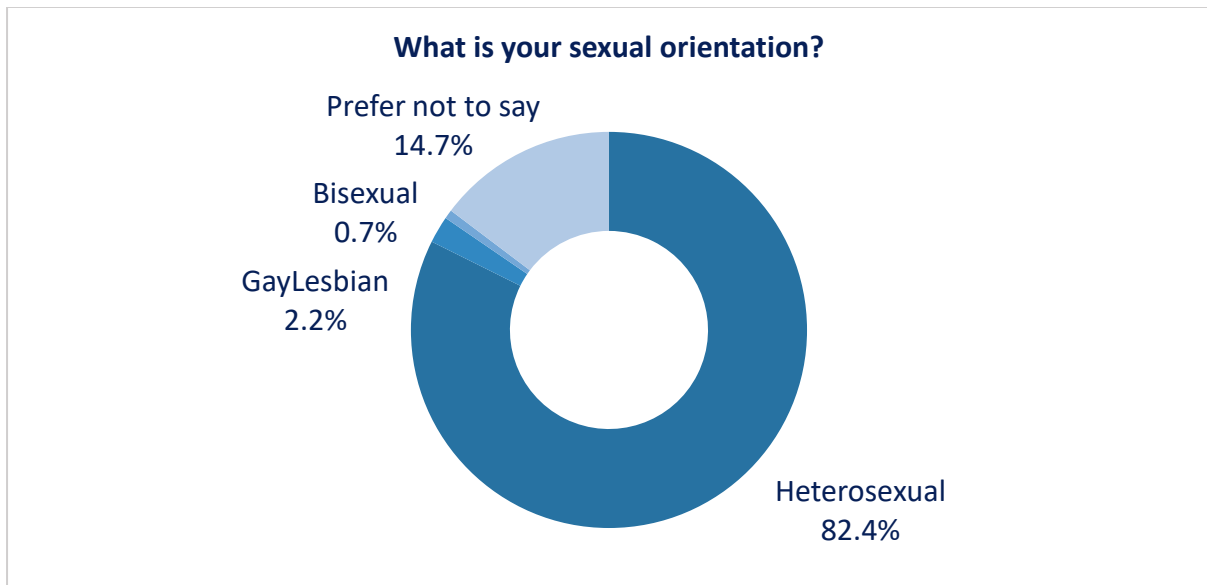


Figure 40: Chart displaying sexual orientation

89.0% said they did not have a disability whilst 6.1% of respondents said that they had a disability. 4.8% preferred not to say.

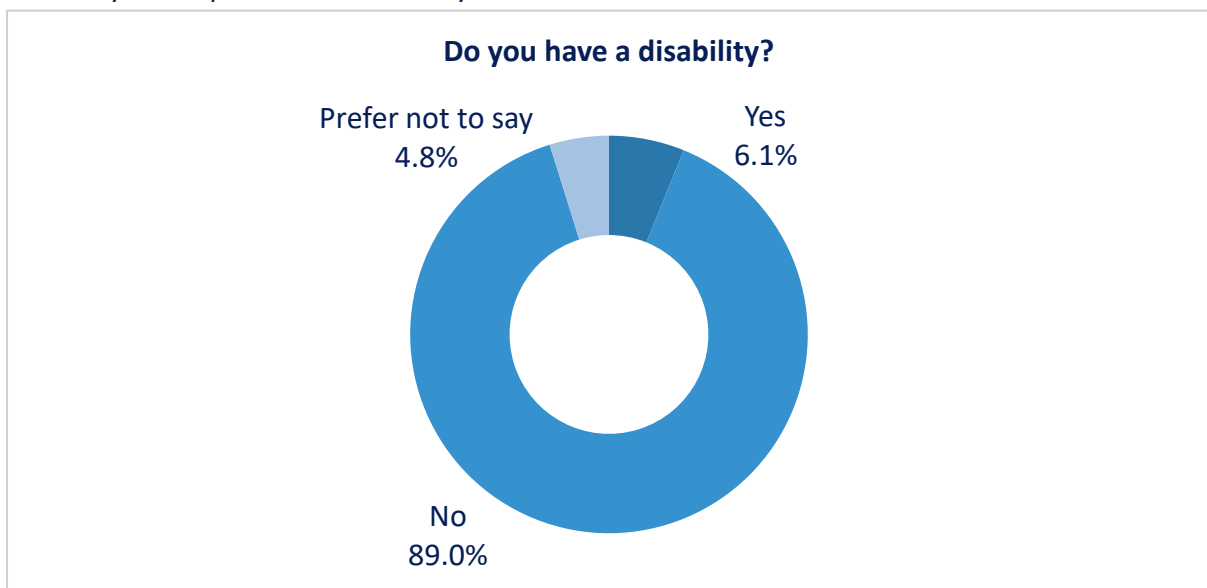


Figure 41: Chart displaying disability



The majority (81.9%) of respondents identified as White – English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish, British.

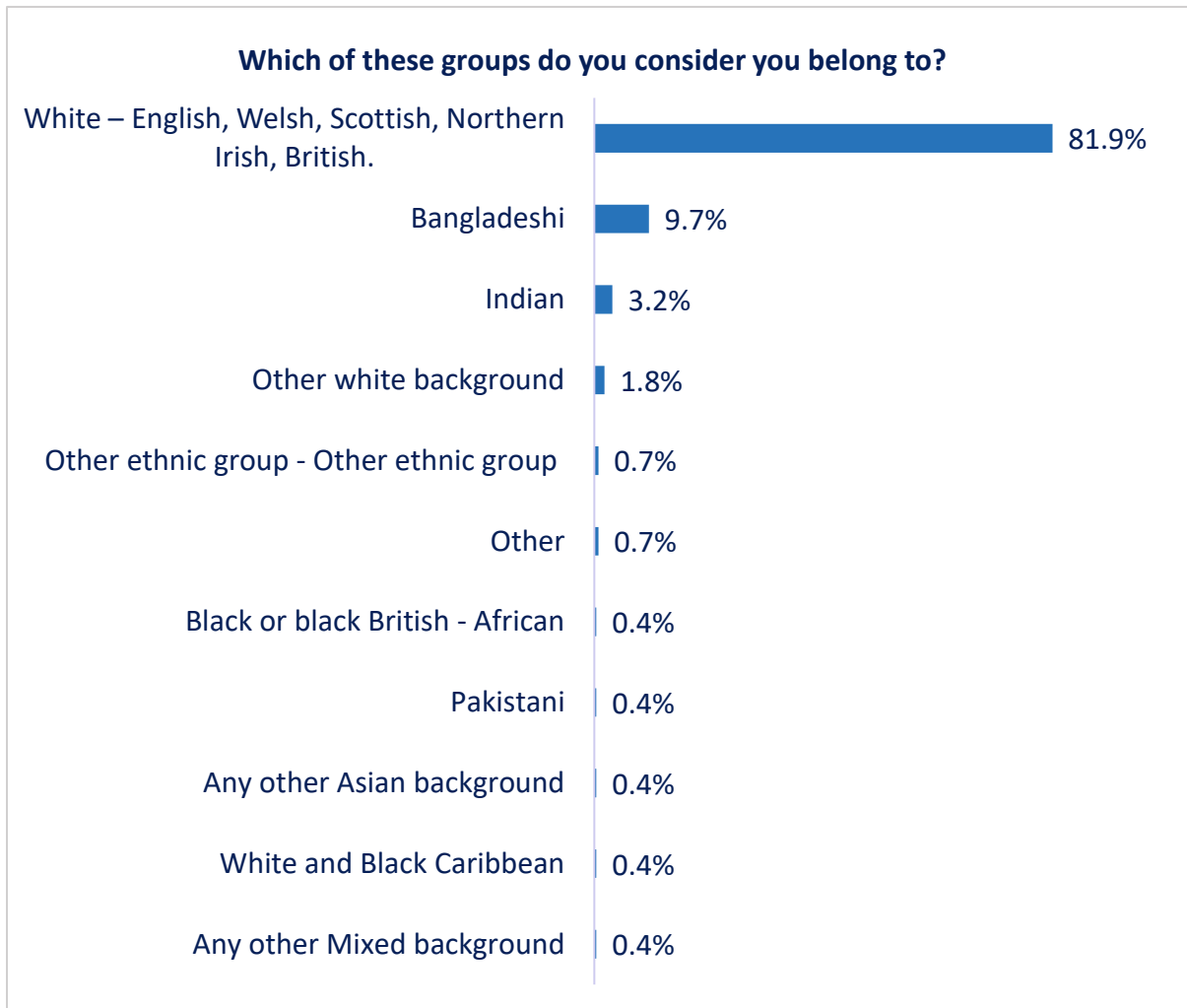


Figure 42: Chart displaying groups



The most represented ward was Birkenhead and Tranmere (12.2%) followed by Upton (8.5%) and Claughton (8.5%).

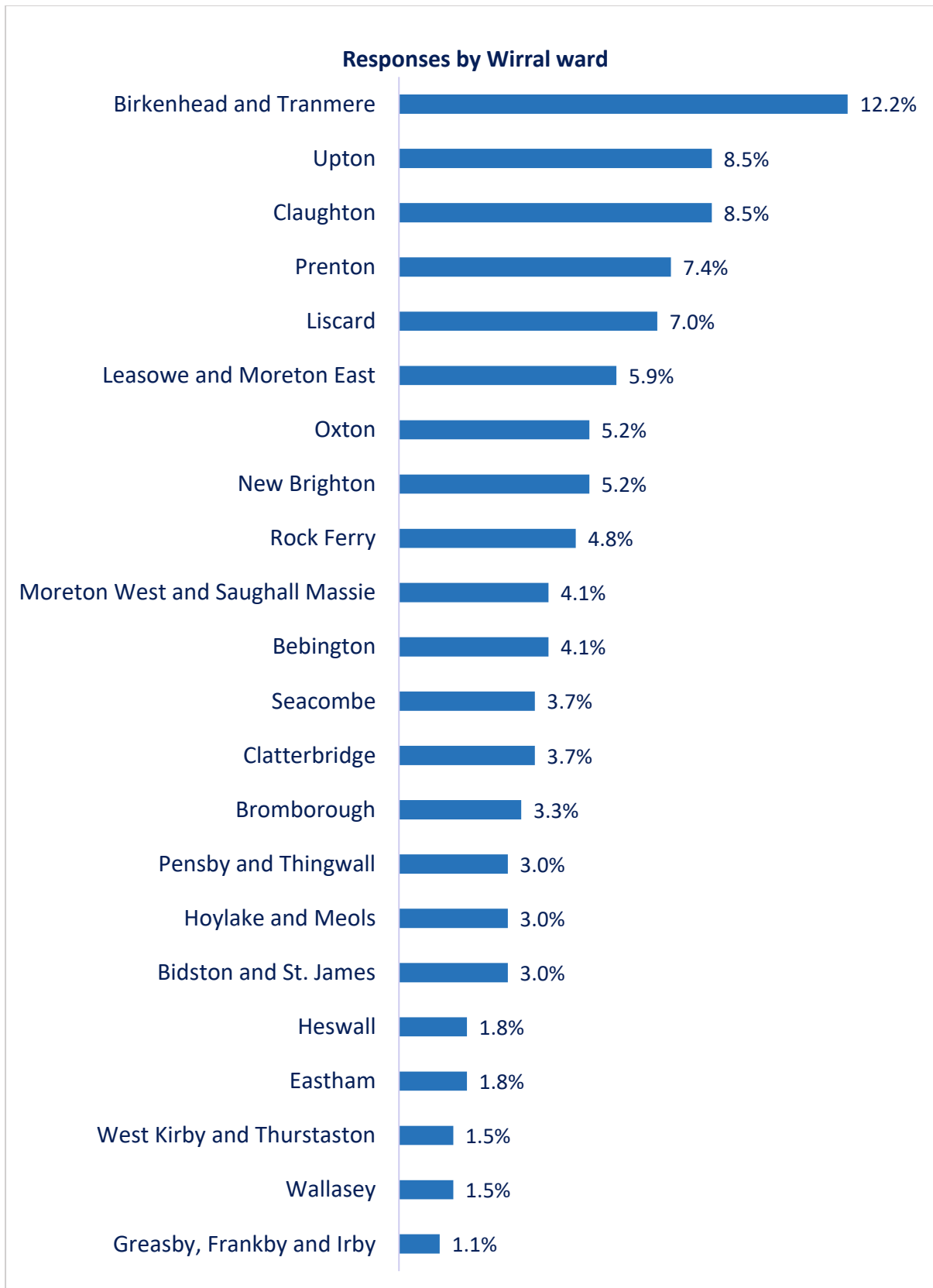


Figure 43: Chart displaying Wirral Ward representation



4.2 Have Your Say - Site Traffic

Reviewing the site activity, visits, and how people visit the site can be useful to evaluate if people are aware of the site, as well as to ensure engagement activities are deployed effectively, and to a wide range of different people – enhancing public engagement in the future. 839 unique visitors viewed the Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Vehicle Consultation of the Have Your Say site. Of these, 669 visited multiple project pages and 234 downloaded a document. 289 people in total completed the questionnaire.

These figures cannot be viewed as definitive as they are based on site tracking through ‘cookies’ and there are a number of factors that can impact on this. These include that cookies may be disabled or deleted, individuals may access the site multiple times through different devices or different browsers. However, the figures can be used to gauge how much interest has been generated in individual projects through the rate of engaged participants.

The route that people access the site is known as the traffic source. The ‘Have your say’ portal allows analysis to be carried out on traffic source, and if they lead to engagement in the site tools such as the questionnaire. This analysis allows a greater understanding of which communication and promotional tools to use to optimise engagement.

For this project a range of traffic sources have been reviewed and summarised in the table below. Most visits to the site were direct visits where people typed the internet address into their web browser (1,385).

| Traffic Source | Aware Visits | Informed Visits (%) | Engaged Visits (%) |
|----------------|--------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| .gov sites | 19 | 8 (42.1%) | 3 (15.8%) |
| Direct | 1,385 | 746 (53.9%) | 203 (14.7%) |
| Email | 299 | 96 (32.1%) | 23 (7.7%) |
| Referrals | 108 | 74 (68.5%) | 14 (13.0%) |
| Search engine | 76 | 40 (52.6%) | 13 (17.1%) |
| Social | 319 | 178 (55.8%) | 33 (10.3%) |
| Total | 2,206 | 1,142 | 289 |

Table 37: Site traffic sources

Appendix A- Direct Representations

Wirral Bangladeshi Taxi Drivers Association (WBTDA)

| Question | Answer | Comment |
|--|------------|--|
| Q6. Private Hire Vehicles must be no more than 10 years old. Do you think the Council should maintain this age limit for Private Hire Vehicles? | No | We as an body who represents vast numbers of Wirral taxi and private hire drivers, believe it is unfair that licence holders from other councils such as Liverpool city, Sefton, Wolverhampton, can come and work here in Wirral with much older cars, yet the Wirral license holders can't. |
| Q7 & Q8. Do you think the Council should have any age limit for Private Hire Vehicles? | Yes | We believe 12 to 15 years age limit will be fair. |
| Q9. Private Hire Vehicles that are 6 years old or more must have an MOT and Compliance Test every six months. Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement? | No | 8 years will be fair inline with other councils |
| Q10. A Hackney Carriage Vehicle must be no more than 3 years old to be granted its first licence. Do you think the Council should maintain this age limit? | No | We believe 5 years will be fair as modern vehicles are more robust |
| Q11 & Q12. Do you think the Council should have any age limit for Hackney Carriage Vehicles being licensed for the first time? | No | Yes should be inline with private hire drivers or no more than 15/20 years due to hackney vehicle costing significantly more to buy new |
| Q13 & Q14. Once a vehicle is licensed as a Hackney Carriage Vehicle it can continue to be licensed with no upper age limit. Do you think the Council should maintain this policy? | Don't know | |
| Q15. Hackney Carriage Vehicles that are 10 years old or more must have an MOT and Compliance Test every six months. Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement? | Yes | |
| Q16. If an owner of a Hackney Carriage Vehicle wants to change their vehicle, the replacement vehicle must be the same age or less than the current vehicle, and in any | Don't know | |

| | | |
|---|------------|---|
| case no more than 10 years old. Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement? | | |
| Q17. In addition to the legal requirement Wirral Council require Private Hire Vehicles to allow at least 70% of light to pass through all other windows. This means that the maximum tint level permitted for these windows is 30%. Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement? | No | Factory fitted tinted window should be allowed, most new vehicle's have standard factory fitted tinted windows, which cost thousands of pounds to replace, and having factory fitted tinted windows does not compromise safety at all, licence holders from other councils are working here in Wirral with tinted windows, we believe it is unfair on Wirral licence holders. |
| Q18. In addition to the legal requirement Wirral Council require Hackney Carriage Vehicles to allow at least 70% of light to pass through all other windows. This means that the maximum tint level permitted for these windows is 30%. Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement? | No | Same answer as previous |
| Q19. Do you think it is necessary for a Private Hire Vehicle with an entrance step height exceeding 38cm to have: | Don't know | |
| Q20. Do you think it is necessary for a Hackney Carriage Vehicle with an entrance step height exceeding 38cm to have: | Don't know | |
| Q21. Where bench seats are fitted to the rear of Private Hire Vehicles the seat must be at least 48" wide (16" per rear-seat passenger) measured along the front of the seat. Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement? | Don't know | |
| Q22. Use the space below to add any additional comments in relation to Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Vehicles. | | We as a association already had a meeting with Mr Andrew Bushell, at the meeting we had discussed and raised our concerns about vehicle age limits and tinted windows, we believe Wirral council are losing money in revenue due to drivers are returning Wirral licences and obtaining licenses from other |

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| | | <p>councils such as Liverpool City, Sefton, Wolverhampton, we had further communication with Mr Bushell via emails, Mr Bushell ensured us that he will share our concerns with the heads of Wirral Taxi Licensing Authority, we believe there is an panel meeting on 24th January 2024, we as an association would like to attend the meeting and share our concerns and suggestions.</p> |
|--|--|---|



The Hackney Drivers Association Ltd

| Question | Answer | Comment |
|---|--------|---|
| Q6. Private Hire Vehicles must be no more than 10 years old. Do you think the Council should maintain this age limit for Private Hire Vehicles? | Yes | |
| Q7 & Q8. Do you think the Council should have any age limit for Private Hire Vehicles? | NA | |
| Q9. Private Hire Vehicles that are 6 years old or more must have an MOT and Compliance Test every six months. Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement? | No | |
| Q10. A Hackney Carriage Vehicle must be no more than 3 years old to be granted its first licence. Do you think the Council should maintain this age limit? | No | "It's a barrier to entry." |
| Q11 & Q12. Do you think the Council should have any age limit for Hackney Carriage Vehicles being licensed for the first time? | Yes | 15 years. The high cost of new vehicles may deter some drivers unless they are given a chance to reclaim some of the cost if not a good part of the cost from government grants |
| Q13 & Q14. Once a vehicle is licensed as a Hackney Carriage Vehicle it can continue to be licensed with no upper age limit. Do you think the Council should maintain this policy? | Yes | "The driver will need that time to recover their expenses." |
| Q15. Hackney Carriage Vehicles that are 10 years old or more must have an MOT and Compliance Test every six months. Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement? | Yes | we know the vast majority of the trade maintain their vehicles some do not. |
| Q16. If an owner of a Hackney Carriage Vehicle wants to change their vehicle, the replacement vehicle must be the same age or less than the current vehicle, and in any case no more than 10 years old. Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement? | Yes | Yes the council must keep control of age of vehicles |

| | | |
|--|-------------------|--|
| <p>Q17. In addition to the legal requirement Wirral Council require Private Hire Vehicles to allow at least 70% of light to pass through all other windows. This means that the maximum tint level permitted for these windows is 30%. Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement?</p> | <p>No</p> | <p>this should be less than 70% we agree with 30% or not at all if the vehicle has CCTV</p> |
| <p>Q18. In addition to the legal requirement Wirral Council require Hackney Carriage Vehicles to allow at least 70% of light to pass through all other windows. This means that the maximum tint level permitted for these windows is 30%. Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement?</p> | <p>No</p> | <p>this should be less than 70% we agree with 30% or not at all if the vehicle has CCTV</p> |
| <p>Q19. Do you think it is necessary for a Private Hire Vehicle with an entrance step height exceeding 38cm to have:</p> | <p>Don't know</p> | |
| <p>Q20. Do you think it is necessary for a Hackney Carriage Vehicle with an entrance step height exceeding 38cm to have:</p> | <p>Don't know</p> | |
| <p>Q21. Where bench seats are fitted to the rear of Private Hire Vehicles the seat must be at least 48" wide (16" per rear-seat passenger) measured along the front of the seat. Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement?</p> | <p>No</p> | |
| <p>Q22. Use the space below to add any additional comments in relation to Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Vehicles.</p> | | <p>Cars and Hackneys are manufactured to a standard. The council wants drivers to start changing them.</p> |



Unite the Union

NORTHWEST REGION/584 Wirral Taxi Branch

Further to your request here is our proposal for amending current vehicle license criteria.

As Discussed at the meeting on Mon 11 Dec

We are of the opinion that the only way to increase and stop the decrease of Hackney Carriages is to adopt the following policies:

An existing licence holder can replace any licensed vehicle with another suitably qualifying vehicle. The replacement must be a minimum Euro 5 Emission Standard and be fully wheelchair accessible.

If a proprietor is unable to license an existing vehicle before the expiry of the existing license the license plate MUST be handed into the licensing office on the last day that it is compliant. The vehicle can be considered for relicensing by the licencing department. Each case will be on its own merit. We would suggest that this concession be limited to thirty days maximum from the expiry of the last license.

Where a vehicle has been written off because of an accident and the driver would face hardship in providing a replacement vehicle, that complies with any relevant policy, an exemption may be permitted. A licensee may licence a vehicle of up to the equivalent age of the vehicle written off where there is no detriment to the quality of the fleet. The vehicle it is replacing must be a minimum Euro 5 Emission Standard and be fully wheelchair accessible.

Applicants who wish to apply for a new Hackney Carriage vehicle license will only be considered for fully wheelchair accessible vehicles that are no more than 5 years old at registration date or manufacture whichever comes first. All wheelchair access must be side loading only.

We are happy to discuss any issues relating to the above at your convenience.



Have your say

Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Vehicles Consultation Report- Comments



Consultation: 6 November 2023 – 29 February 2024

Report: 11 March 2024



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Vehicle Age

Question 6: Private Hire Vehicles must be no more than 10 years old. Do you think the Council should maintain this age limit for Private Hire Vehicles?

| Non-Licence Holder Comments |
|---|
| 12 YEARS |
| Cars are very expensive |
| Should be able to use up 10 years old with only one mot per year |
| car needs to be maintained and looked after, age shouldn't affect it |
| Happy for cars used past the 10 year mark to go through Council Approved MOT centres. Safety is the priority here. |
| I feel in current climate and cost of living crisis if you extended to 12 yes that would allow drivers a little more flexibility. Also other councils are similar with 12years on cars LCC for a start |
| It's very difficult when people start using other licensing authorities because it's more flexible. |
| A well maintained quality vehicle can be better than a poorly maintained 'budget' vehicle. |
| Cars are better made and if maintained well 10 years is fine |
| Taxis should still remain roadworthy There are many that feel unsafe and you don't want to get in. |
| Keeping them in reliable condition. |
| To maintain the safety and quality of all journeys |
| The amount of black smoke coming from a lot of vehicles is dreadful. If this isnt governed, who only knows what state of vehicle we'd be getting into! Its in the intetest of public health & safety. Our lives are literally in their hands. |
| I would like to know that the taxi is safe, insured, MOT. |
| Need to be in good condition |
| VEHICLES SHOULD BE JUDGED ON WHETHER THEY ARE FIT FOR PURPOSE, NOT THEIR AGE. |
| Safe, clean and up to date vehicles. |
| the financial burden it places on the driver |

| |
|---|
| A well maintained vehicle should be able to last longer than 10 years safely. |
| Older vehicles are more prone to breakdowns, poor bodywork, high mileage |
| As long as the vehicle is safe, clean and has passed all relevant emissions tests I see no reason for an age limit. |
| If well maintained, modern vehicles should be fit for service and safely transporting members of the public for at least 12 years. |
| To reduce air pollution and maintain vehicle quality and safety |
| I think that the limit should be 12 years |
| Cars are better built now and can last longer |
| For safety of the driver and the public |
| I think modern cars are more than capable of being run for longer than 10 years and still be safe/clean. Appropriate checks would need to be in place |
| Newer engines tend to burn cleaner, which is important when a car is on the road 24/7, often in residential areas |
| Normal car's are not designed to be used for private hire and have a limited life. 10 years is the point when major problems arise. |
| There should be minimum specification based on euro emissions level categories. |
| They need to be a certain standard. |
| Some cars run and run for years if they're services correctly, as long as they pass MOT and are safety checked, I'd be happy to use them |
| Maybe there needs to be an exception for classic cars |
| I think any vehicles older than this should not be used |
| Taxis do high milage so at ten years old they may be unsafe and look untidy |
| If the vehicle is properly tested and passes, no need for a 10 year limit, as is applicable to buses and coaches. If needs be a six month mot pass could be used for vehicles over 10 years, then the vehicle is retested. |
| I do not know of any other councils that have this rule in place. The age of a vehicle is not necessarily an indication of safety, taxis already undergo more rigorous and regular maintenance and checks so putting undue financial pressure on drivers is uncalled for. |
| 10 years old is too old for private hire. |
| Older Vehicles would have more problems with them |



These days vehicles last longer and we should not be causing perfectly good vehicles to be scrapped because of council rules. Forcing vehicle changes purely on age simply causes increased costs for operators and therefore ends up with increases in price.

Limits environmental impact to air from older technology and modern vehicles have better safety features

Most cars are still in functional use over 10 years., depending on maintenance

Licence Holder Comments

Cars have improved so much they last alot longer

If you're car is in good condition it should be plated til its not basically gives you a chance to make a living and behold to the likes of unscrupulous taxi suppliers

Vehicles can last a lot longer in this age. Add another two years to the limit as long as they pass the mot criteria will help owner drivers financially.

If cars are still roadworthy and pass MOT, older cars should be eligible. In addition to this, a few older cars are still modern looking and haven't been altered for a number of years.

It works well as is

Private hire vehicles that are more than 10 years old and are licenced in different boroughs are allowed to work for wirral companies but wirral registered vehicles can't be more than 10 years old?

With the quality of vehicles available now, this limit is no longer necessary as long as you meet the required standards.

Newer cars are road worthy even after 10 years of first registration

Given rising costs of replacing vehicles and given the longevity of modern vehicles it seems pointless to have to replace a perfectly good vehicle just because of age restrictions. I've seen older PHV vehicles in much better condition than newer hacks the rules for both should be the same

Should be 8 years, but really irrelevant when Sefton/Liverpool private hire can work Wirral firms in older vehicles and tinted windows and cctv. Wirral Council need to get a grip or allow Wirral drivers these also.

If the vehicle is well kept.
Should be longer

As long as a vehicle is week maintained , road worthy and safe a vehicle should be fit for use to transport the public. Buses and coaches can be more than 10 years old and transport many more passengers

15 years as long as its in good condition and looked after.

If a vehicle passes a compliance test it should be eligible to be used.

If the vehicle is good condition and passes an mot it should be allowed to work regardless of age ,the DOT dont make private cars retire at 10 .

It should be down to the vehicle conditions and test. I agree with the six month mot. I am seeing more Sefton taxis working on the Wirral to work around the 10 year age limit.

As long as cars are still in great condition and looked after

I think there should be more clarity to the fact that an over 10-year-old vehicle can be used whilst being checked on a six monthly basis, 90% of drivers will not be aware of this

I think that the vehicle age limit should be increased

The age of the vehicle should be irrelevant, so long as vehicle is MOT compliant and keep clean and tidy

If the vehicle passes MOT and paintwork looks up to standard I don't see why there is ten year limit.

Older cars should be allowed, 6 montly MOTs ensure suitability and safety. Some Hackneys are decades old and in wose condition that 10 year old PH vehicles,

Vehicle age is not a mark of quality or fitness. Vehicle maintenance records, MOTs, regularly quality control checks would be more appropriate

Think they should reduce to 8 years

As long as the vehicle is in good condition I think it should be upto 15 years.

Cars over 10 years old are completely fine to use nowadays. These rules were created when cars were generally much more likely to be unfit for purpose after 10 years. This is no longer the case with modern cars.

Some vehicles are in perfect condition at 10yrs old, also other vehicles from different licensing authorities are working wirral systems & are older than 10 years

All new vehicles if kept clean and maintained they can keep their looks well into 15 years of age

I have been a private hire driver for 33yrs and these I feel forced to leave WBC to go to Sefton because of silly vehicle restrictions. I waiting for an appointment with Sefton.

Some cars need to be allowed

With the living crisis in the country its unfair to put a age limit on the car. Its deemed safe aslong as the car passes its MOT

Vehicles that pass a WBC compliance test should be allowed to remain plated for longer.

But it a big disadvantage to be licensed by Wirral according to everyone I speak to

Every car regardless of age , undergoes an Mot /Taxi compliance check 6 monthly. If the car is fully safe and complaint age is irrelevant.

I would like to be allowed to use cars over 10 years.

If a black Hackney doesn't have an age limit then why should a well maintained private hire vehicle not be allowed to be licensed for a longer period of time.

I believe if a vehicle is able to pass the WBC Compliance test along with MOT then said vehicle should be able to be used as a PHV.

My opinion is that in times of such consciousness regarding the Environment, vehicles should be used for as long as possible and with regular maintenance that is easily achieved as that would be the greenest and cost effective way forward.

Some vehicles of 10 years of age can be in much better condition than a vehicle of 6 years old.

As long as a vehicle passes its MOT and is in good condition inside and out, it should be allowed to be plated.

It's getting ridiculous when I'm working on a system in Wirral competing with drivers plated in Sefton with cars of relatively any age.

Lots of drivers are seriously thinking about getting their badges from another council so they can work on the Wirral with an older car. This in turn will eventually cost Wirral licensing fees.

Think 10 years is reasonably time frame, still get decent vehicle standard from cars / buses 8 years old

As long as the car can pass the MOT, then what is the problem?

I believe that vehicles today, if they are well maintained, will easily be of an acceptable standard even if they are over 10 years old subject to regular MOT inspections.

Modern vehicles are better built and can sustain more than 10 yrs if maintained correctly at least to 12 yrs of age , my own vehicle is now nearly 8 yrs in use but maintained to a high standard and I have no doubt it would last beyond 10 yrs and still be up to standard ,

I think they should be no older than 12 years old

I think it's paramount that private hire vehicles should be no more than 10 years old. The reason for this is that they are not purpose built vehicles. I think they should maintain this age limit

Should be able to use any aged car as long as it passes mot and is in a good standard

For environmental reasons.

With modern vehicles being well maintained they can still be structurally sound upto far longer than 10 years.

Some vehicles, although over 10 years old can be as good as a lot newer vehicles if well maintained and looked afterlp

I think vehicles need to be kept to under 10 years old. There are plenty on the road licensed by Sefton & LCC, some of them are horrendous and falling apart.



If you car pass the mot and road legal then we should be able to use the vehicle as we are in a cost off living crisis and car are get more expensive

Some vehicles over 10 years old are still in very good condition.

Vehicle today are made to last longer. We are already on 6 month tests. All other surrounding councils allow older vehicles which puts us at a massive disadvantage.

If a car is in good condition and passes MOT then why should a driver have to then have the added expense of purchasing a new/newer car needlessly ..

10 is enough

12 years as it is very expensive to buy cars

I think private hire vehicles should do 15 years old cars accepted and after 10 years 6 months MOT . Like other council does it already

As long as pass MOT should allow

Modern vehicles are more robust and reliable should be allowed to use as a PHV even after 10 years as long as the pass the vehicle compliance test, drivers from other councils are working in Wirral in much older vehicles which resulting in Wirral drivers getting badges from other councils and Wirral councils are losing money in revenue

Other councils have older vehicles being used on the Wirral

I think as long as the vehicle is in good condition and passes all required inspections age limit is not necessary

My car is 12 months away from the 10 year licence limit. However my car is in excellent working order and a superb standard interior.I think it should be up to 15 years if your car is in excellent condition, like mine.

The rule puts drivers in an already overcrowded business, into more financial hardship.If your car passes an mot and is in exceptional condition why can't it be used for a fair few more years.

Vehicles of any age, deemed safe by MOT and also pass compliance should be able to be used as a PHV. I'd also add the Mersey Ferries are sixty years old and float. Many aircraft in our skies are twenty years old and fly. I don't see any logical reason to have an age restriction on a car that passes a annual safety test, much like aircraft and ships

As long the car has pass an mot with it compliance why shii the age matter the mot is there for a reason,

Council will fix a combination of age of the vehicles and how much miles each vehicles already runs. Age of the car to be increased minimum 12-13 year. But a car reached a mileage of 150000 -175000 even if the vehicle is less than ten years old it will be scrapped.

Liverpool and Sefton don't have this rule and they seem to be doing fine. Everyone's now moving to Liverpool and Sefton council as it's better

It should be at least 15 years and as long as the is fit to drive and passes MOT than it should be for a 12 months plate not 6 months

I believe if the vehicle can pass a taxi compliance test and is safe and clean it shouldn't matter as long as the vehicle is in a safe road worthy condition it shouldn't affect this as many drivers cannot afford a new vehicle.

Been difficult times for a long time now, I've personally had to move council to plate my car

If the vehicle is tidy and passes the required compliance/MOT I do not think there should be an age limit on a roadworthy vehicle

with the current cost of living and the struggles where all having, as long as the vehicle is well maintained and of good condition I think the 10 year rule should be removed. we have other vehicles from other areas working for local firms with vehicles well over 10 years working on wirral. most of these would not pass the mot test we have on the wirral, so our vehicles would still be in great condition.

Test station should if fit for perpose

P/H Drivers will start using other council's to plate their vehicle and apply for P/H Badge.

Mechanical wear

If a vehicle passes a MOT then that should suffice

Age shouldn't matter as long as the vehicle passes the compliance test

15 years in my opinion 6 months testing after 10 for the final 6

Other Council don't have this criteria.

Newer vehicles are road worth for longer than 10 years and price of vehicles have gone very high

We are in a finacial recession drivers can not afford new vehicles.

Modern cars are designed to last a lot longer.It would be more environmentally friendly to keep them longer.

Cars are very expensive now so as long as the car passes MOT then I don't understand what is the fuss with age of the car.

Most other councils allow cars older than 10 year old and it's not fair because lot of driver go to different council and still work in the Wirral.

There are a lot of cars that are ten years old but are kept in really good condition both inside and out and in this day and age most people are just about making a living driving, and

getting a newer car on finance is getting harder for driver. Also there are Hackney cars that are much older than ten years yet they can stay working. I think this is unfair to private hire drivers as we all do the same job picking up passengers and ferrying them from A to B

I think cars are built a lot better now and as long as they are serviced regularly and kept in good condition and passing its MOT with no problems I don't see why they can't go longer.

As long as it is roadworthy should be allowed

Paying customers prefer to get in to a newer car.

Due to the increasing purchase price of used vehicles allowing older vehicles will help make life easier for some drivers. Reducing the amount of hours worked just to cover the cost of the car.

Age is an arbitrary way of ascertaining the fitness of a vehicle, it does not take into account whether the vehicle has been well maintained, which should be the standard the council are aiming for

They should be MOT'd twice yearly at 6 years old.

To be strict with rules regarding tinted windows on new cars as majority of new cars come with them as standard

Other councils are giving permits to the vehicles irrespective of the age as long as they pass MOT from the approved centre by the council.

I understand that the standards of some vehicles are not up to expectations but if the vehicle is passing an MOT and compliance test then there's no need for the driver to try and sell a high mileage vehicle for pennies and then have the cost of purchasing a new one just because it is 10 years old. If it's road safe then it should be accepted as a private hire vehicle.

New cars not cheap to buy in today's time of inflation.

We want trustworthy cars to convey our fares

Change to 12 year old car in line with other local authorities

If a vehicle is good enough to pass inspection then it should be licenced.

With the advent of vehicles being built to a higher standard with less corrosion, I feel as if vehicles may be able to last up to 12 years.

As vehicles are tested regularly and if they are in a good safe condition they should be allowed to be used longer, you could be making drivers get rid of perfectly good vehicles.

I think vehicles need age unlimited
Very expensive to buy a car now a days
Can't afford to buy new cars always

As long as its Road worthy and safe then this should not be a big issue of age as we have to undertake additional MOT.

Cars are lasting a lot longer now days.

Maybe a max milage with age so a low milage car at 11 years of age is OK

drivers cant afford new vehicles

If Legally road worthy and meets all the criteria for use as a PHV then age shouldn't matter
The 2 main reasons 1 your forcing drivers into a financial commitment they may not be able to afford on top of the financial crisis the country is in 2 Discrimination on the part of WBC you allow drivers from other boroughs who's licencing authority has no age limits to work in the area not only our we being discriminated against we are being punished for being licenced with our local authority being punished for putting money into our own council we're all trying to make ends meet and should be treated equally. If the age limit remains the possibility of me going outside the borough to be licenced is extremely high as the added finance of a new car would make the job pointless as I would be working very long hours for less than minimum wage. Legally you couldn't treat me any different because of my ethnicity race religion or sexual orientation so why treat me different to other drivers working in the area just because I choose to be licenced with my local authority

I think that this age limit should be increased, the reasoning behind this opinion is because myself and some of my other colleagues who own their own vehicles keep them in good condition. I think the age limit should be increased to cater for these people. If it passes the mot and is up to standard every test date then I can't see the issue of the vehicle being in use.

I do think our age limit should be lifted to at least 12 years,
As myself I own mine look after it and along as your service it look after keep it clean. They are fine.

Provided vehicle meets taxi test criteria it should be ok to use

I think as long as a vehicle is in good condition and good working order then there should be a bit more discretion regarding age . There seems to be a little more leeway in councils in Merseyside work in the same Borough .

If the vehicle can maintain good working order and can pass a valid mot and taxi mot in accordance to regulations vehicle should be allowed on road if kept to standards required age discrimination is a thing of the past

You can register an older car in a different area then still work for a local Wirral company

Be inline with all other Merseyside councils

If the vehicle is in tidy mechanically sound condition it should be granted a licence beyond 10 years.



I think 10 years for 12 month licenses and an extra 2 years of 6 month licenses as there are some excellent 10 year old vehicles that drivers are having to part ways with. If it meets vehicle safety standards I believe a 14 year old vehicle is fine.

If it passes mot then it's good enough to work

As long as the car is well maintained and safe and kept in a good condition we should be able to keep are cars for at least 15 years saving us drivers money which in this climate would be a great help

Whilst I agree that there needs to be a standard for the condition of vehicles, operating a strict age criteria seems rather limiting; given tat some drivers maintain their vehicles to a very high standard, mechanically and cosmetically, to then disqualify that vehicle from use, purely on age grounds does not make a great deal of sense. If the vehicle passes the stringent six monthly tests, regardless of age, I believe it should be allowed to be utilised as a PHV. Hackney cabs are not subject to the same criteria and other licensing bodies do not impose a ten year restriction. A policy of consistency should prevail.

As long as car is both mechanically and aesthetically sound it can be older subject to council inspection

Other councils extend the age limit for vehicles past thus limit.

I think each car should be inspected and based on the individual car, my car is 2014 plate and due up next year but only has 98000 miles on it as only been a taxi for the last 2 years.

If vehicle is road legal and in good condition there should be no reason to force PH drivers into purchasing a new vehicle.

The way cars are maintained I think it should be 15 years

I think vehicles should continue up to 12 years without the use of panel and waste of time for everyone. I believe if the vehicle passes MOT then the plate should be given as the MOT is proof

Cars this age are more reliable & in better condition.

Car do have more reliability built into them and rustproofing is so much enter than it used to be

Most councils has no restrictions for the vehicle age

13 years

The council could keep it at 10 years, but with cross border hiring, drivers can plate there vehicles for longer in other boroughs.

Other local authorities do not have this rule so as my car approaches 10 years considering registering with them as I currently do not have the money to replace car. I may well stop driving once my car reaches 10 years old.

| |
|--|
| If a car passes the taxi test it shouldn't matter how old it is |
| Vehicles that pass mot should be ok to use for private hire. Vehicles are very expensive to buy. |
| Vehicles can still be in a good condition for PH driving even after 10 years. Neighbouring councils such as Liverpool allow older than 10 years |
| Vehicles are so much more reliable these days |
| Providing it can pass taxi test age shouldn't matter |
| Depends on condition of a 10year old vehicle maybe your criteria of inspecting a vehicle at the 10year point you can alone visually see if it is In a condition to do the job properly. |
| As long as the vehicle is maintained, maybe introduce safety inspections every eight weeks with an approved garage, prohibitions can be issued by licensing officers where the vehicle can be prohibited until a safety inspection has lifted the issue. |
| I think the age limit on all vehicles should be no older than 8 years old due to the amount of use they are subjected to. |
| Any way cars after 10 years will be very high mileage and not will be suitable for driving |
| Electric and hybrids last longer |
| It should be same across the Liverpool city region. If it is 10 years across the Liverpool city region then 10 years is fine but it must be the same unlike now. |
| Liverpool Sefton Knowsley council's using 15 year old vehicle |
| Should be no limit just like others Liverpool Sefton Knowsley |
| If vehicle is fit for purpose then it should be allowed |
| I believe this should be the case for normal private hire vehicles however this age limit should be increased for purpose built vehicles such as school minibuses / wheelchair accessible vehicles. |
| The age of the vehicle should be at least 12 years ,reason for this is the increasing value of used vehicles |
| Only my opinion but vehicle age eight years or younger |
| Should be like liverpool |
| Today's cars are made to last. If they pass a taxi mot they should be allowed to be used longer. |



At present, there are many private hire vehicles working in the Wirral council area which are more than 10 years old. These vehicles get the license from other councils (even far from Wolverhampton Council) and they work in the Wirral. I think it is time to allow more than 10 years old vehicles to work in our council as a private hire, thanks

Other councils allow older vehicles if in a good condition

If the vehicle is still road worthy and passes its MOT and compliance then what is the issue

I think Wirral Council should impose the same rules for all private hire drivers operating on the Wirral. There should be unity amongst all councils. At the moment there are drivers registering with other boroughs whilst working on the Wirral. They are using vehicles more than 10 years old.

I believe the same rules should be applied to all drivers regardless of where the plate has been issued.

We as a body who represents vast numbers of Wirral taxi and private hire drivers, believe it is unfair that licence holders from other councils such as Liverpool city, Sefton, Wolverhampton, can come and work here in Wirral with much older cars, yet the Wirral licence holders can't.

Other councils have allowed for cars older than 10 years to be used, this is a much better option as due to the cost of living crisis most drivers are struggling and it is not feasible to buy another car in this economy, it may also lead to more drivers dropping out of the field and losing their source of income as they can't afford another car that will have to be replaced again in a few years.

, long as the vehicle is fuel efficient and low emissions and road worthy, surely it's better for the environment to keep the car for longer. Also saving money; and also totally unfair as drivers from other districts are using older vehicles

Most cars are good for at least 15 years

Cars are more reliable and save nowadays.

Vehicle is in perfectly good condition

I think if a vehicle is in good condition it shouldn't make any difference what age it is also the price of new cars



Question 7: Do you think the Council should have any age limit for Private Hire Vehicles?

| Non-Licence Holder Comments |
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| If they pass MOT and Compliance Test they should be considered for licensing |
| Should have any car with one year mot up to 10 years old |
| Cars used past this date should go through additional safety testing, every 6 months. (MOT X2 a year), undertaken by a council approved MOT centre. |
| As above |
| if the bodywork is in very good condition and the car is maintained to a good standard i dont see there being a problem |
| If well maintained, modern vehicles should be safe for 12 years. Making drivers purchase newer vehicles unnecessarily early may not be affordable and scrapping vehicles before the end of their effective service life is wasteful and environmentally unsound. However, I don't think an extension beyond 10 years should apply to diesel vehicles. |
| I think 15 years is reasonable if passing MOT and passing officer checks as long as petrol and not diesel. |
| If a vehicle is safe then it should be OK to continue to be used |
| Again, it's less about age of a car and more about whether it's been looked after and MOT'd etc |
| If the vehicle is properly tested and passes, no need for a 10 year limit, as is applicable to buses and coaches. If needs be a six month mot pass could be used for vehicles over 10 years, then the vehicle is retested. |
| See above answer. |
| I believe 5 years is old enough in terms of vehicle presentation and to ensure the vehicles are the most modern in terms of latest technology and safety. |
| We should not be causing perfectly good vehicles to be scrapped because of council rules. If the vehicle is well maintained and in good condition, it should be able to be used. |
| Most cars are still in functional use up to 15 years |



Licence Holder Comments

As long as its tidy and compatible should not be a problem

With the advent of electric cars, there are no statistics to govern their road worthiness and to impliment age restrictions could be unnecessary

Modern cars are built to last longer with various parts still being available. But should only be granted if the cars are still roadworthy.

When the original limit was set, the quality of vehicles was far below current standards

Under 15 years to plate first time with age restricted to 20 years.

Vehicles that are well maintained & looked after should be allowed as PH

To keep a decent fleet on the road for paying public. Pointless again when a Sefton car could turn up for them

As long as car is in good condition, you can get a car that's 5 years old and one in better condition at 12 years. Like Ellesmere port and other councils.

An additional two years is not an unreasonable addition

Times are hard ,economic down turn ,many drivers can't afford a new car.

I think this is maximum

If the vehicle is kept to manufacturer specifications and kept clean and tidy and is MOT compliant there shouldn't be a limit

Regular checks should be enough, once a vehilce doesnt meet safety/MOT requirements then a licence can be declined

Perhaps on first licence a vehicle should be no older than 6 years old

some of the cars on wirral look unkept and tied mainly ,more so other area cars

Like I said, it would be better to have a 15 year age limit as vehicles are expensive

As long as the car is fit for purpose why should the age of the car matter?

As long as the vehicle is road worthy 15 yrs old is fine

some cars are good even they are 15 years old

If vehicles are looked after they can last quite a while. So aslong as the car passes its MOT is should be road worthy.

Vehicles are now better made and are able to cover higher mileage so if able to pass a WBC test they should be allowed to remain plated.

Same as the above

The condition for issuing a licence must be the overall condition of the vehicle. (Or an extension for 12 years)

As the previous question if black Hackney's don't have a limit private maintained vehicles should be the same

If things don't change Wirral licensing will lose a lot of revenue.

Pass MOT

If vehicles are subject to regular MOT inspections then this should be adequate to ensure a vehicle is acceptable. Perhaps a more stringent MOT for older vehicles might be prudent.

I think 12 is possibly an age we're a vehicle may have run it's course as a ph vehicle but later cars may be able to sustain further years , again all down to maintaince and driver

My personal vehicle is 18 years old and is safe and tidy

I think 12 is a sweet spot, however, should be in very good condition

Ev and cars are getting more expensive to finance

Any age could have problems in safety

If a vehicle passes the enhanced compliance test then it is fit for purpose.

As above .. Think this should be extend to 12-15.. also agree that this age limit shouldn't be abused as customers should still be travelling in a clean fit for purpose car .

Newer cars are very expensive and other licensing authorities allow older cars hence why a lot of drivers are going there.

15 or 20 years car should be ok

There should be no age restrictions as long as the vehicle is fit and proper maintained properly and passes the required test, Wirral council should look up to Liverpool and Sefton council who have no restrictions on vehicle age thus resulting in Wirral drivers getting badges from Liverpool and Sefton

If in good condition should be allowed to get extensions

As long as the vehicle is in good condition and passes all required inspections there should be no limit

As I have said if its in excellent condition it should be extended. There should be a fair and reasonable way to allow older vehicles to continue to be licensed.

Any allowable vehicle which passes MOT and compliance is insurable in the UK and therefore should be allowed as use for a PHV. The requirement for two test per year should be maintained for vehicles over six years old to facilitate increased inspection of older vehicles



If it road worthy and pass it mot with it compliance , why should it have age limit on the vehicle.

13 Years a reasonable period for normal wear and tear cosmetic, comfort of the vehicle . Within these period a lot of technological and safety features to be changed within the industry.

Good condition & as long as pass the mot

As above, as long as the vehicle is of a good standard & compliant to carry passengers this should not effect the service of transport.

A lot of older cars are in great condition not like they used to be

If the vehicle is tidy and passes the required compliance/MOT I do not think there should be an age limit on a roadworthy vehicle

no I think the 10 year rule is dated, with so many other areas now working the wirral with vehicles well over 10 years we are being victimised by a ridiculous rule.
as long as we pass the mot and compliance test it shouldn't matter about the age of the vehicle.

The cost of new vehicles (electric).

vehicles are able to do 15 years if looked after

If the MOT is valid, no need Age limit

Age of vehicle has no bearing on this. Older vehicles can often be in excellent condition.

You can buy a car 10 years old with only 50000 miles on the clock or one 3 years old with 90000 miles on the clock. Meaning the 3 year old car has more wear and tear.

Most modern cars are designed to last 300000 miles at least.

As long as it passes MOT there is no need for age limit

If the car passes it's MOT and the Council test then it should be ok after 12 years the council could ask the driver to bring his car in for inspection one a year

Maybe checks if it gets to a certain age an seen as unfit to be used anymore breakdowns ect then struck off

If a car is well maintained and looked after, and tested every 6 months. Hackney carriages have no age limit, why can't private hire be the same.

See answer 4

As long as the vehicle is roadworthy and ina good condition, it is OK

As per my last answer, if the vehicle has no major defects then it doesn't affect its use as a private hire vehicle.

| |
|--|
| like other neighbouring councils the vehicle should not have upper age limit until passing MOT and Compliance test. |
| Other local authorities nearby have 12 years. |
| If a vehicle is good enough to pass inspection then it should be licenced. |
| 15 year's |
| Also on a case by case basis. |
| As vehicles are tested regularly and if they are in a good safe condition they should be allowed to be used longer , you could be making drivers get rid of perfectly good vehicles. |
| As it goes by dvla standards if its Road worthy and clean then should not affect ability to carry passengers. |
| You need a high level of maturity and a understanding of how to deal with public that only comes with age |
| with older cars when maintained,they drive as good and are as safe as newer cars,and their production carbon foot print is already made ,however a new car to replace the older vehicle will produce another production carbon footprint,so better for environment to slow down making new cars,and save resources,and look after the cars we already have. |
| If Legally road worthy and meets all the criteria for use as a PHV then age shouldn't matter it doesn't make sense to punish drivers who keep their PHV in the condition needed to meet ALL the criteria set out by yourselves again compared to drivers from other boroughs allowed to work in the area we're being discriminated against being punished for looking after your vehicle |
| I think this would be a reasonable age limit because in my own experiance I have a couple of colleagues who's vehicles are on the limit but have passed their mot with flying colours, I think it should be increased because we have a strict policy for this but other licensed vehicles from other areas are able to operate in our region with older vehicles |
| I think cars have improved alot over the years. And we do require mot every 12 months. |
| As above answer |
| As above age discrimination is wrong as long as passes relevant tests should be allowed on road costs of buying new vehicles is to much now |
| Cars are much better quality than 10 years ago |
| Be inline with all other Merseyside councils |
| No. Should be able to run as long as tidy and mechanically sound. |



Vehicle standards are a lot better in recent years in terms of safety and achieving a lot higher mileage. Don't see the point in forcing debt onto drivers when other local authorities have licenced vehicles working Wirral. Local drivers are being punished I feel.

It all comes down to cost to the drivers

As per my answer given in Section 4, if the vehicle is maintained correctly and passes the stringent six monthly test, its use should be allowed.

Same answer as above

Each car should be inspected and if it's passes the lot and compliance test then it's should be allowed

I think 15 years is good enough

Vehicles when serviced correctly can easily have a usable life up to at least 15 years

As above

If the vehicle can pass the private hire mot, then that should be good enough.

Provided vehicle is well maintained and meets the compliance test requirements should be allowed.

If it passes the taxi test any age

As long as the vehicle passes the private hire MOT , should be able to use it for private hire, especially since the cars are so expensive to buy now

As above, a well maintained vehicle should be fine

An older vehicle can be just as good if not better than a 5 year old one if maintained correctly

If the vehicle is bought from new & maintained as above there should be no age limit.

I have said 15 years but see my comment in section 4.

As long as MOT is passed then the vehicle should be able to be used as a private hire vehicle

No there should not be a age limit on private hire vehicles. As long as the vehicle passes an MOT and compliance test then it should be deemed fit for purpose. Maybe when they buy a new vehicle it should be younger than 10 years old.

A 10 year age limit seems fitting for Normal private hire vehicles but I believe that purpose built vehicles such as school minibuses should have a higher age limit.

Any vehicle in sound condition over 10 years old that can pass a compliance test and government mot test every 6 months should be suitable

If the car passes a taxi mot, or any mot, it should and is allowed on the road

there are people who work part time as private hire drivers, these vehicles do only less mile in an year, so in 10 years time these cars do only less than average miles

Maybe 12years

As long as the car is maintained, in a good clean condition for passengers comfort and roadworthy then there should be no limit imposed. The council should concern themselves with how well presented the vehicle is rather than its age.

We believe 12 to 15 years age limit will be fair.

Giving the car an extra 5 years will benifit the driver an his out going an also the environment.

12 years is a good age ,

We keep it fully maintained and service.

Most vehicles now are built to last ...if there looked after and serviced regularly there shouldn't be any reason why they can't last 15 years at least

As long as the car is upto standard it shouldn't matter what age



Question 9: Private Hire Vehicles that are 6 years old or more must have an MOT and Compliance Test every six months. Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement?

| Non-Licence Holder Comments |
|--|
| 10 years |
| MOTs are for 12 months |
| Should have any car with one year mot up to 10 years old |
| 10 years is fine. |
| Again to encourage more drivers to join the profession and enable a steady amount of costs a yearly test should be suffice |
| 6 months is excessive and is expensive for owner drivers. |
| Maybe this could be mileage related too. For example some of these cabs are used round the clock. Maybe say every 6 months or 25,000 miles whichever comes first |
| A lot can happen to a vehicle in 12 months if the milage is high. |
| All vehicles must be of the best quality especially with the cost charged to passengers |
| As above |
| Same as above |
| TO ENSURE THEY REMAIN SAFE |
| Safety |
| as stated above well maintained and kept clean and tidy |
| More frequent checks are required due to the high mileage driven by these vehicles |
| Saint Helens and Sefton areas do not work to this rule. Why should Wirral be any different ? |
| I would expect a vehicle that I am paying to be transported in to be well maintained, safe and compliant. All vehicles have to have an MOT every 12 months so every 6 is not unreasonable. |
| To reduce air pollution and maintain vehicle quality and safety |
| Agree with this. They do a lot of miles so more regular checks seems sensible |
| I refer to my previous answer |
| Safety reasons. High mileage and possibly multiple drivers |
| Maybe this should be more than 5 years old |

Taxis do more mileage so should be checked more often

It should be about the presentation of the complete vehicle not the age.

This should be maintained ONLY if the age limit is scrapped

I think this should revert to 5 years.

once a year should be good enough cars are designed and built to last longer than 6 years
some have 7 year warranties

An annual MOT and compliance check is sufficient. Doing it more frequently simply increases operator costs and therefore forces fares to go up.

Safety First and a lot can occur between annual MOTs

MOT is the standard for vehicle maintenance



Licence Holder Comments

I get a UK mot for 12 months yet have to do it every 6 crazy waste of money and resources

As long as under ten years old and the vehicle passes a standard MOT and compliance test it should remain one unless vehicle is been in an accident.

It passes a 12 month mot it should stand otherwise we lose on renewal and test amount

It's a punitive/ cautious approach. Mot testers cannot predict if a car will fail once it leaves the testing place whatever the age of a vehicle

All cars should be subject to a health/compliance check regardless of age depending on the mileage the vehicle has completed. However the cars should not be limited to a 6 month plate.

I personally think yearly would be fine

I've owned my vehicle from when it was only 6 months old and it has been maintained exceptionally. It's now coming up to 7 years old and it is still in very good condition with regular services. I strongly feel a mot 6 monthly is unnecessary and a mot once yearly is fine.

An MOT is valid for 12 months, therefore a compliance test should be valid for 12 months.

If the age limit increased then the six months MOT should be increased to 10 years old

As long as standards are maintained, annual tests should be adequate up to 10 years old.

6 months MOT should be increased to 10 years or older to be in line with Hackney carriage.

If the restrictions were increased I think 6 mth plates at 10 years and older would be appropriate

8yrs would be sufficient

I personally think at least 10 years old for this ruling in well maintained vehicles

Same as Hackney cabs 10 years.

It helps to maintain the cars roadworthiness

The DOT don't require a vehicle to be tested ever 6 months after it reaches 6 ,all private hire vehicles are kept in excellent condition as it's their livelihood.

I think this should be for taxis of any age due to their mileage and wear and tear.

With modern cars most taxis will exceed mileage by that time anyway however, I still think if I got an MOT test is good enough and legal than that should be the case for taxis between six and 10 years old

Compliance test every year for 3 years then MOT and compliance every year until 10years old then 6 monthly

Maybe 6 month vehicle check but do yearly plates.

Regular check with no age limit will ensure safety and suitability

As stated previously regular MOTs and vehicle maintenance checks are a better way of ensuring vehicle safety and quality

I think it should be from 8 years every 6 months because most drivers look after their vehicles.

If the car passes its MOT then it should be licensed for the year. Again, with modern cars the difference between 6 months and a year, and the likelihood of a massive difference in deterioration over this time is not worth the extra MOT per year.

It's highly unlikely a vehicle is more likely to develop a more serious problem in 6 months than 12 months no matter the age

If a car has passed its compliance test then there is no need for 16 months later

10yrs

It should be a yearly check instead of every six months

Eight years for more modern vehicles would be more appropriate.

As long as you the license office keep random spot checks on the Wirral

Up to 10 years old, vehicle should be tested every 12 months. A fit and proper licence holder would ensure the car had regular checks of safety and compliance by their service provider.

I think it should be once a year

I believe once a vehicle is 8 years old it should go onto 6 month plates.

This will help maintain standards of older vehicles.

Maybe 7/8 years as standard has got a lot better with efficiency & safety

Don't have a problem with this

A vehicle which is 6 years old is still a relatively new vehicle and probably does not require to have two MOTs a year at such an early age. Maybe linking an additional MOT to mileage might be a fairer method?

For the same reasons as I have given in the above post.

Every 12 months don't see why there is a discrimination between neighbouring boroughs

For safety reasons.

This is absurd and realistically needs to be scrapped, a 6 month requirement should be for 10 years or older vehicles this ensures that they're not deteriorating at a faster rate due to age, with most modern vehicles they are in almost perfect condition 7/8/9 years after purchase. IF NOT then mileage should be taken into consideration at least, if an 8 year old vehicle has

done 10000/15000 miles it technically is in better condition than a 4 year old vehicle with 80000/90000 miles

8 years just like hackneys is a good age

I think an MOT & Compliance test should be yearly rather than 6 monthly, this will be time and cost saving.

A normal car that has passed an MOT does not have to

MOT for 12 months is good enough for the government

Vehicles over 10 years old should have a test every 6 months.

6 year old car is still fairly new why not extend to 8-10 years then every 6 months

vehicles don't require a MOT by law until 3 years old. They should then start there 10 years

Should be 8 years or older as Liverpool and Sefton doing similar

Should be given full 12 month license up to 10 yrs

MOT should be every year

If your car passes an MOT and is excellently maintained, it should qualify for 12 months whatever the vehicle age. If vehicle testers pass the car I would assume they would be able to judge like any car it is safe for 12 months.

See answer six

Six months MOT should be increased to a car is ten years.

It should be increased to 9 years. but council enforcement team randomly inspect internal neatens of the private hire vehicle and issue warning letters, fines and stop memo for vehicles with minimum standards.

Follow Liverpool council

As long as the vehicle is fit to drive and passes MOT than I don't see any issues why not give TEST EVERY 12 months!!

I think this is necessary to keep within compliance & keep passengers & the driver safe.

12 months is good enough for normal people

I think there should be the same rules for any licensed vehicle. ie what makes a PHV less roadworthy than a Hackney Carriage

again this is a dated rule that is just added cost that we have to swallow, if it passes its MOT it should be for the 12 months with spot checks carried out if a complaint is made about the vehicle, we are all supposed to be professional driver's and should be trusted to maintain our vehicle

| |
|--|
| As above |
| Today's vehicles are much safer/ better construction/ anti corrosion. |
| Yearly would be suitable, as per normal, however also it could be seen a garage profiteering |
| 12 months is ample |
| The mot rules should be the same as any other vehicle |
| 1 year MOT is fine |
| 6 months mot should be only on the vehicles that are over 10 years old just like the Hackney carriage |
| This is a safety issue to make sure vehicle are in good order |
| Most modern cars are better than when these rules were brought in. |
| That makes more sense doing MOT every 6 month on older cars than having age limit |
| If the car is well looked after and passes its MOT and compliance test. It should be ok for that year twice a year is just costing the driver more expenses |
| As long as the vehicle in very good condition it should be once a year |
| Maybe increase to 10 years depending on the type of vehicle petrol/diesel/hybrid/electric |
| A yearly mot and a once a year inspection should be enough. |
| Because of the high mileage taxis do I agree with the 6 months testing after 6 years old. |
| Every vehicle in this country is giving 1 year MOT. |
| In my thoughts I think the 6 monthly tests would make more sense if you scrapped the 10 year limit and then when the Vehicle turns 10 make the 6 month tests compulsory. At the end of the day our vehicles are our livelihood and the majority of us really look after them as we don't want me to be out of work, |
| I have recently just renewed my plates and the vehicle is now over 6 years old so I'm on 6 monthly plates. Both MOT tests that have been completed since it's been a private hire vehicle and both been passes with no advisory's so having 6 monthly tests is just another overhead for the driver that on most cases I believe isn't needed until the car is at least 10 years old |
| This should be every year. |
| We maintain our cars well, it's the licensing that should do more random checks rather than us do 2 mots a year |
| Change to 4 years old or more |
| There's no evidence that a vehicle over six years old wears out faster. |



| |
|---|
| Should be 1 year |
| Cars are not that old at 6 years to warrant tests every 6 months |
| Once a year should be enough but yet again around six Months time may just have checked out without additional charges. |
| Again down to milage. Not the age of car |
| A 6-10 year old car cannot deteriorate to the extent of needing an MOT every 6 months , it's an unnecessary expense |
| safety always comes first |
| Again extra financial commitment forced on drivers the age limit for cars should be scrapped and replaced with MOT and compliance from 10 years old every 6 months that would make it fair and reasonable |
| I don't think this should be maintained because if we are gunna extended the age limit to 12 years maybe increase the mot limit from 6 years old to 8 years old. |
| I think if we did move to say 12 years we could say 8 years of 12 monthly plates the 6th monthly for the remaining 4 years. |
| MOT every 12 months up to 8 years old an then yhe last 2 years every 6 months. An as long as it passes an MOT should able to keep as a taxi as long as its in top condition |
| Annual testing is quite sufficient |
| 1 yearly is suffice |
| More likely for thing to be worn after 6 years |
| If a car is roadworthy no need for all these rules |
| Some 6 year old cars are in better condition than younger vehicles. I believe it adds an unnecessary expensive to owner drivers. |
| Vehicle safety is a lot better over recent years. I think 10 years of 12 month licenses. |
| Should be every 12 months as cars tend to be better looked after. |
| Modern cars have greater life spans and longer warranty |
| As per my answers in Sections 4 and 6. |
| If the car is well maintained and looked after, clean and tidy no tears in seats major dents or scratches |
| Just putting more cost on drivers |
| Up to 10 years to have it every year instead of six month and the last 2 years up to 12 years to have it every six months |

I personally look after my vehicle extremely well & feel a 12mth test is suffice, every 6mths costs more money & time renewing plate.

I believe plated vehicles should be plated every 6 months if they are doing a high mileage over 30000 per year

Mot and complaint test should be ones a year

Again if it can pass the private hire mot, it should be good enough for 12 months

Good idea as keeps cars to a good standard

Yes but over 10 years

After 10 years , vehicles should have MOT every 6 months.

MOT and compliance are not expensive so every 6 months will not be bad. I would say the outside condition should be reviewed as too many cars fail because they have to look to good.

Every twelve months would be better

Maybe extend the 6 years to 8

12 months is enough

I think vehicles built today are well able to be tested yearly up to 8 years if maintained and cleaned regularly.

Since the cross boarder hire has been implemented we have vehicles older and different conditions working in the area the present rules discriminate both Private hire & Hackney owners.

This will make sure that the vehicles are kept to a high standard.

I think once in the year is more than enough

Once a year

Again if this is a Liverpool City region requirement.

Prefer having MOT once every year

With recession

Its difficult to m.o.t every 6 months

A vehicle these days at the age of six years is still in good condition. Maybe this could be moved to 6 monthly MOT after the vehicle reaches 12 years.

Over 10 years every 6 months

12 month MOT is sufficient for vehicles that are well looked after and don't mis service requirements



10 years of age should be the requirement for 6 monthly mot tests

This should move to 8 years old. Especially with current vehicle prices.

If the vehicle is serviced and maintained often or as a minibus provided then we would be happy to provide documentation to show this

As previously stated as long as the vehicle is maintained, presented well and mechanically sound 12 months would be better.

8 years will be fair inline with other councils

A normal one year MOT would be a better option

Should be 8 years

To ensure the safety of the vehicle, as it ages may be prone to more wear an tear on safety features

Once a year should be sufficient until 10 years old

If the mot lasts 1 year so should the licence,

I think it should go on the make of the vehicle if the car is well built ie German makes it should be at least ten years befor going to 6 monthly mot,s

I think after 10years every 6 months

Question 10: A Hackney Carriage Vehicle must be no more than 3 years old to be granted its first licence. Do you think the Council should maintain this age limit?

| Non-Licence Holder Comments |
|---|
| They're built to last |
| Should have any car or hackney the same with one year mot up to 10 years old |
| 10 years then every 6 months, by an approved MOT centre, |
| A hackney is built for the job and can handle it better than a private hire car. |
| Doesn't seem a sensible restriction. |
| To maintain quality and safety of all vehicles |
| Public health & safety |
| As long as it's maintained, road worthy. |
| IT SEEMS AN ARBITRARY RESTRICTION THAT WILL RESTRICT CHOICE AND RAISE COST. |
| Safety and reliability. |
| same as all the comments above |
| The mechanical condition of the vehicle should be more important than the age of the vehicle. |
| I see no reason not to increase this to 5 years, but don't imagine this would need to apply in many cases. |
| To reduce air pollution and maintain vehicle quality and safety |
| There is a decline in Hackney licensing and we shouldn't make it harder to register vehicles as long as they comply with other requirements |
| in general made for harder work life |
| As above |
| Up to 5 years would be better |
| It should be about the presentation of the complete vehicle not the age. |
| See first answer. |
| I didn't even know that this rule was in place. It simply seems ridiculous. Granting a licence, whether it is the first licence or a repeat licence should be based upon the vehicle condition and roadworthiness, not its age. There will be vehicles that are 10 years old that are in better condition than others that are 3 years old. Use common sense! |

5 years is more practical for first time drivers and affordable and still reasonably modern

3 years seems rather arbitrary

Licence Holder Comments

Again its all about cost if vehicle passes criteria age shouldn't matter

As long it passes an MOT and compliance test, it should be granted a licence.

The cost of newer vehicles these days is quite prohibitive.

The cost of these specialist vehicles is just ridiculous and not everyone is able to afford the huge outlay

Because you've forced current drivers this so should stay the same

In todays financial climate, it's not economically viable.

See reply to answer 8

It's expensive to buy new or under 3.

Hackney Cabs are generally well maintained by owner drivers. Costs are so high to purchase new ones so people are financing them for 5 years then no used hackneys are suitable for plates

I think the same age restrictions should apply to both hackney & private hire

Doesn't make sense that you can only plate a hack under 3 years old yet you can keep it as long as you want as long as it's in good condition. This should be abolished especially with the price of vehicles and there is not as much work as there was.

If the vehicle has been maintained properly and fits the safety criteria as set out by the council and passes a compliance test it should be allowed to be plated .

Not sure why Hackney Carriage Vehicles should be treated differently to Private Hire Vehicles?

It's just a safety issue. It wouldn't look good turning up to plate an old vehicle

Affordability there are absolute money pits on the road and could be replaced with a vehicle that is less of a money pit for cheaper maybe it would save the Hackney trade a bit

As long as the compliance MOT and other requirements are met then age should be totally irrelevant for a vehicles first license being granted

Prices of hackneys under 3 years old is prohibitively expensive, should be just like ph cars and no age limit on new licences, however, a maximum of 10 years would be good

Drivers are struggling on the road due to lack off fairs

This restriction prevents drivers from upgrading or joining the trade due to expensive vehicles

Hackneys are hard to come by. Most can't afford a new vehicle



There are lots of good clean cabs available but cannot be plated because of the restrictions. When replacing a cab that is not in good condition or has been damaged you should be able to replace the cab upto 10yrs old with your existing plate.

Any Hacknet which passes MOT and compliance will be insurable. The lower costs of buying used vehicles to plate as Hackney's will help reduce the cost of business for rhses drivers

To be given Five Years

It should be at least 10 years

As above with private hire, this should not be the case as many drivers simply cannot afford to aquire a new vehicle. This is the reason for compliance testing to assure all vehicles are kept safe & road worthy.

Makes it to dear to get into the job

I think there should be the same rules for any licensed vehicle. ie what makes a Hackney Carriage less roadworthy than a PHV

vehicles under 3 years are priced ridiculously high because they know you have to pay it to get a vehicle licenced, if this was removed and a stricter mot put in place for older vehicles it would help driver's to save money

It seems very draconian, these vehicles are well designed, and very expensive, i would allow up to 10 years

As long as it passes all tests

there is a shortage of vehicles in the market place and the economy on Wirral doesnt justify £65000-£80000 on a new vehicle we need support from the council to purchase Electric or Hybrid

It maintains a realistic fleet size. Only drivers who are committed to invest will be incoming to the trade.

Due to the increased cost to purchase a used vehicle. Not all drivers can afford the cost, or they may have to work ridiculous hours to afford it.

It is common practice throughout the country to limit taxis on qualitative criteria primarily because of lack of ranking space

The cost of a Hackney of that age is very high and the work load across the Wirral is low if it was like London then fair enough but it's not

Cannot purchase new anymore and if you can they are very expensive. There should be no age limit on zero emission hackney

I think this is correct

People cannot afford a vehicle under 3 years old

| |
|---|
| Change to 5 |
| We're down to 170 wheelchair hackneys. We need more. |
| I feel this is restrictive purely on economical grounds. |
| Again same depends on vehicle standards. |
| These are very expensive and becoming unachievable for most drivers |
| drivers will think twice about coming into the trade and maintains a balance with in the trade. |
| Again if the Hackney meets ALL the criteria why force a financial commitment of drivers |
| I'd say 5 years old due to yhe price of a new one |
| Again age discrimination is wrong if passes tests nothing wrong |
| 5 years would be fine. Price of new and nearly new vehicles has almost doubled in the last few years..... |
| Prices of specialised vehicles are going up. The age should be increased. |
| At present there is a real shortage of new Hackney Carriage vehicles at an affordable cost. Drivers in Wirral simply can't afford those costs as they can't earn enough to pay for a new vehicle. I believe cabs upto 10 years old is a realistic age for newly licensed cabs. This gives new drivers the option of entering the trade without having a massive debt, or just not entering the trade due to high costs. |
| There is very little choice at the moment for new cabs. |
| Again it all about the cost |
| Cost implications are too much |
| Hackney are built to last for the job |
| no new hacks coming through |
| Who in this day and age can afford 30 or 40 thousand pounds for a new or 2 to 3 year old hackney / van. The money is just not there any more, unless you are prepared to work 60 or 70 hours a week. |
| The council has a list of vehicles that are fit to be plated as hackneys carriages on the wirral it should bare any relevance when the get there 1st plate as hackney have no age limit, with the price of a 3 year old hackney being so high it put off new drivers wanting to be involved in the hackney trade and makes them go to private hire. |
| Too expensive to buy 3 year old cab |
| Very expensive to buy Hackney carriage so therefore 3 years old hackney would be too expensive to buy |



Hackney vehicles are expensive. Allowing a small change such as 5 years will not endanger the public.

I believe all vehicles Hackney & private hire should only get a license on new vehicles only, this will show commitment and will set a standard.

No comment

This ensures new drivers enter the trade with a decent vehicle

I think as far in very good condition it should be alright

Second hand Hackney's are also in good condition

If this is the same across Liverpool City Region.

The increased value of second hand cabs

We believe 5 years will be fair as modern vehicles are more robust

It should be 5 years as the cost of newer cars has gone up and most drivers struggle to buy a new car

Didn't know about this rule. Seems senseless on what grounds. There are hackneys over 20 years on the Wirral. Roads. A hackney under 3 years old is well over 20k, and are terrible for the environment

As long as vehicle is upto standard

Question 11: Do you think the Council should have any age limit for Hackney Carriage Vehicles being licensed for the first time?

Non-Licence Holder Comments

MOT and Compliance Tests should determine if they're licensable

Should have any car with one year mot up to 10 years old

10 years then every 6 months, by an approved MOT centre,

As above.

As above

Because other surrounding local council do not have this rule.

Age restrictions should apply as per private hire.

Issuing a licence should be based upon the vehicle condition and roadworthiness, not its age.



Licence Holder Comments

Again if vehicle passes criteria it shouldn't matter

If it passes a taxi compliance test and Mot then it's fit for work regardless of age

See answer 8

So long as vehicle is MOT and compliant then age shouldn't matter

No because they are made for the job. The cost of living is getting harder so as long as it's in good condition it shouldn't matter.

Properly maintained vehicles that pass compliance should be plated at any age

All vehicles should be treated the same and be subjected to an MOT to determine their suitability for the job. Again mileage may be a better indicator of a cars suitability and could be an indicator for how stringent an MOT should be?

I often look on the market at vehicle there are plenty out there that could benefit Wirral drivers and affordable

As long as the compliance MOT and other requirements are met then age should be totally irrelevant for a vehicles first license being granted

I think 10 years is ok, however any age limit could mean a Hackney 25 years old and fit for the bin could be plated

To make it fair with private hire

This again allows drivers to upgrade or join the trade

6 years

As above, if an existing Hackney cab needs to be replaced it is getting harder to do so due to cost of living

If it can pass MOT or compliance at an approved testing station and be maintained to applicable standards, then it should be allowed

As long a Hackneys are passing Mot that should be enough

10

I think there should be the same rules for any licensed vehicle. ie what makes a PHV less roadworthy than a Hackney Carriage

6 years would be a reasonable age to buy for a first plate, the cost wouldn't be as high and if its good enough to pass its mot then it shouldn't matter

Test station should say if fit for perpose

Ive mentioned the cost and build factors, i think a better way would be a a very thorough MOT / compliance test

just 1 year inspection/MOT/Compliance

Affordability

If a cab can pass the compliance test and mot then I don't see why it can't be plated

The current system works well enough.

Same reason as above

discrimination if you allow a hackney to be licenced any age then why different for first time licence holders

Run similar to private hire

Again above

Vehicles under 3 years age are hard to come across now due to lack of options for brand new cabs. The vehicles that are available are priced unrealistic for Wirral drivers as you simply can't make enough money to buy a new vehicle.

Many of the older hackney's smoke and rattle and can be noisy due to age

As above

Again if it passes the taxi mot then its good enough.

No i happy that we are restricted in what can be used as a hack age shouldnt stand in our way!

As long as euro 6

6

As previous answer all vehicles should be new to be issued first license this is the best way to invest in business and sets a good standard.

10 years to in good condition

Hackney carriage vehicles are very expensive even second hand. Upping the limit to 6 years would help the cost reduced. You can still buy good vehicles at 6 years old.

If it passes all tests it should be suitable

Yes should be inline with private hire drivers or no more than 15/20 years due to hackney vehicle costing significantly more to buy new

Give the drivers a more realistic chance of changing there vehicle , be a fraction of the price. An still newer than a lot of vehicles on the road

Depending on the condition of vehicle





Question 13: Once a vehicle is licensed as a Hackney Carriage Vehicle it can continue to be licensed with no upper age limit. Do you think the Council should maintain this policy?

| Non-Licence Holder Comments |
|---|
| They're built to last and are tested |
| As long as the vehicle is in good condition and regular serviced. |
| It should be no conditions on car or person age as long as there in good health. I'd like a taxi driver to show a medical form showing he's safe to drive, since most medical tables people take will say do not drive or operate machines. It's my safety. |
| FIT FOR PURPOSE ISN'T NECESSARILY AGE-DEPENDENT. |
| Why not? |
| As above |
| So long as the vehicle is in roadworthy condition. |
| As long as the vehicle is safe, clean and has passed all relevant emissions tests I see no reason for an age limit |
| Age of vehicle less important than appearance and safety of vehicle |
| As long as it's maintained and MOT'd it's fine |
| It should be about the presentation of the complete vehicle not the age. |
| As long as the vehicle is road worthy and in good condition, it should be able to be used. |
| I agree that there should not be an upper age limit once a hackney cab is licensed but this should also depend on the mileage and passing the MOT |



Licence Holder Comments

The cost of running a vehicle to maintain high standards doesn't warrant having to go into debt for another vehicle cost of living is affecting us all

See answer 8

As above for private hire.

Hackneys are generally well maintained by owner drivers unless vehicle is in disrepair it should be able to continue

Hackneys and Private hire vehicles should have the same rules regarding age and testing,

Vehicle maintenance, MOTS and regular quality control checks are more reliable

Like I said above, as long as it's in good condition it shouldn't matter

Again it comes down to safety, and compliance testing

The Wirral needs Hackney carriages to help some people who can't get into a car. So as above 15 years should be acceptable providing they are in good condition.

as long as it passes mot and compliance and is in a respectful condition what's the problem

It's up to the M O T testing to determine whether it is safe to carry on being licensed

As long as the vehicle is properly maintained and passes the required test there should be no restrictions

As long as the vehicle is in good sound condition

Like I said if it passes Mot and is of an excellent condition then it absolutely should be allowed to be licensed.

Vehicles maintained and kept in tidy order should have no age limit as long as they pass MOT and compliance are an approved testing station

If the vehicle is tidy and passes the required compliance/MOT I do not think there should be an age limit on a roadworthy vehicle

the mot and compliance test for vehicles are quite strict on wirral, therefore we have some of the best kept vehicles, if they pass its because driver's take pride in them and should be rewarded by keeping it for as long as possible

The cost of new vehicle.

First there are fewer vehicles to buy to fit a criteria that limits choice. Secondly age of vehicle has no bearing on this. Older vehicles can often be in excellent condition. Just look at the cabs coming from London. If you adopt a policy with an upper age limit the taxi fleet will diminish even further. Look at the current numbers and ask why this has happened.

See answer 4

| |
|--|
| So long as it has 6 monthly MOT's. |
| If it passes a compliance test it should be used until it can't pass a test |
| as long the vehicle is passing MOT and compliance there shouldn't be upper age limit. |
| Replacement vehicle costs |
| It is hard to find a cab that is a true Hackney cab, the older cabs where specifically built the LTI TX1/ TX2/TX4 as Hackneys but the later ones are converted by different companies from vans,yes they look modern but tend to be very unreliable and expensive to repair. |
| Yes IF it meets ALL the criteria set out by yourselves |
| As long as it passes 6 monthly test |
| I feel the current system works as it is. Most older Hackney's naturally leave the trade once they reach their lifespan |
| Most have regular services. |
| Along as the cab is well maintained and safe |
| Again, as per my responses in Sections 4 and 6. |
| As above |
| Hackney cars very expensive to buy drivers need to get full use out of them |
| Introduce a safety inspection policy as the ministry of transport do with PSV |
| Buses operate in the area with no age limit and are perfectly roadworthy to high standards. |
| The cost of these vehicles is very high |
| Hackney carriages are very expensive to buy. They also cost a lot to run. A lot more than a private hire vehicle. Hackney Drivers would struggle to afford to change the vehicles if an age limit was to come in. Most would not be able to afford to buy another vehicle even second hand due to cost. This would simply put them out of a job. Also less work on ranks etc in the town centre due to shops closing doesnt help at the moment. However the council still needs Hackney taxis to be wheelchair accessible. |
| A similar approach should be given to the private hire school minibuses that are restricted to such work and again are purpose built for their job the same as a hackney. |
| And that is why as a private hire I think we should be the same |



Question 14: What do you consider that age limit should be?

| Non-Licence Holder Comments |
|--|
| There should be no difference in policy regardless of private hire or Hackney carriage. |
| Corrosion. |
| There are many older hackney's that look like they are tatty and yield fumes |
| Hackneys should be govtened in the same way as private hire cars. Too many are expressing thick black smoke, not only adding to pollution, but also in the interest of public safety. |
| An upper age limit will improve the quality of Hackney Carriage Vehicles on Wirral. |
| To reduce air pollution and maintain vehicle quality and safety |
| Any older could compromise safety of passengers. |
| This would be consistent with my thinking on private hire vehicles |
| As mini buses and converted vans are now permitted to be used then 15/20 years should be the maximum with a 6 monthly test after 10 years. If a car requires a 6 monthly test after years a van type should have the same after 10 years |
| Older hackney carriages that are belching out black smoke should be condemned and not continue to be on the road with out modification to be bev. |
| surely there is a difference in safety standards over 10 year period |
| This should be the same for all cars |
| Hackney vehicles are purposefully designed as a passenger carrying vehicle however 10 years appears a suitable length for such vehicles which many are worked 24 hours a day 365 days per year. |
| why should hackney be different from Private Hire Vehicles are they build to a higher standard No |
| Higher risk age when carrying passengers. |
| Same as private hire vehicles |

Licence Holder Comments

As long as it meets licencing standards and emmisions but to have vehicles that are 25 years old is excessive.

There built no better or stronger than private hire vehicles

You should treat Hackney carriages the same as Private hire vehicles

It should be the same for hackney's as it is private hire there should be no difference we both do the same job

They should be the same as ph

Same standard as private hire

Again, I don't understand why a Hackney Carriage Vehicle should be treated differently to a Private Hire Vehicle?

There is plenty of Hackney taxis on the road that are to old.

I cannot see the justification for treating HCV's more favourably than PHV's.

20 years is a good age, however car must be still in very good condition and not held together with a wrap or filler

Some of the older TX look really bad

Im not an expert, but there should be some form of limit, as eventually mechanical wear becomes a safety issue

Nearly all vehicles are built in the same way using the same technology and materials there fore why should a Hackney car be any different from any other

Why 10 for cars and 15 for hakneys, please explain

15 should be the new limit on all cars depending on milage

Should be same criteria as private hire they both carry fare paying passengers

No different than a car to maintain

Many of the older hackney's smoke and rattle and can be noisy due to age

If a private hire vehicle has an upper age limit then so should a hackney carriage.

I think 10 years is about the lifespan of a Hackney maybe longer for the electric ones

To be in good condition

Again if this is the same across all Liverpool City Region.

A Hackney vehicle is the same as any other vehicle with the same defects, if any, as anything else on the road



Don't know why a Hackney has unlimited age for use. Yet a private hire. Is 10 years there both cars at the end of the day.



Question 15: Hackney Carriage Vehicles that are 10 years old or more must have an MOT and Compliance Test every six months. Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement?

| Non-Licence Holder Comments |
|--|
| MOTs are 12 months |
| Should have any car with one year mot up to 10 years old |
| 10 years then every 6 months, by an approved MOT centre, |
| Again the rules should be the same for both vehicle types, given my answer for private hire I think yearly is sufficient. |
| 12 months is enough. |
| Definately!! To ensure of our safety. All vehicles should be regularly checked and compliant. And drivers and council liable. Its publ8c safety. |
| 12 months like a car is fine |
| TO ENSURE PUBLIC SAFETY. |
| Safety reliability and reinsurance. |
| as stated if bodywork is in very good condition and well maintained then once a year is enough |
| More frequent checks are required due to the high mileage driven by these vehicles |
| Because some of these cabs are worked 24 hours a day using 2 drivers. |
| I would like to know the rationale behind the difference in the age of the hackney carriage or private hire vehicle for this requirement |
| MOT and Compliance test should be every 6 months for every vehicle. |
| Same as above - high miles mean more testing |
| I refer to my last answer |
| Definitely to make sure the vehicles are safe |
| Taxis do lots of miles so should be checked |
| It should be about the presentation of the complete vehicle not the age. |
| The same rules should apply for normal taxis and Hackney cabs |
| once a year should be ok |



Once a year is sufficient.

Safety of public



Licence Holder Comments

Again its passed 12 months mot so it should stand

If there are any doubts about road worthiness, tighten up the compliance/mot criteria for private hire and hackneys

Yearly would work just as well

Where is the logic with a private hire vehicle needing 2 mot's a year after 6 years. When a Hack doesn't?

6 same as PH

Once a year is adequate.

Regluar check with no age limit will ensure safety and suitability

I believe it should be after 6 years to keep both hackney & private hire vehicles harmonious within licensing

I think 12 months is more than adequate

It should be yearly like a normal Mot

Maintains standards of older vehicles.

7/8 years

I think mileage would be a better indicator of when further or more MOT inspections should take place.

I have been in this six month M o t situation and i just thought it kept you on top of your maintenance. As much of a nuisance that it was. Unfortunately it is the back and forth to the council office and trying to make an appointment that is an issue. Especially when you can't get through to the office to make an appointment. When the council don't answer the phones. It gives you terrible anxiety.

Have a compliance every six months and have mot like any normal car every 12 months

Although I do not consider HCV's older than 10 years should be licensed if they are I actually consider from 6 years old they should be tested every 6 months in line with PHV's .

Older vehicles need more maintenance and need regular checks

As long as it's passed it's mot like any other vehicle

The M O T is for 12 months so should the compliance be

They should still comply with VOSA 1 year MOT

I think Hackney car and private car should be same age and MOT limit because every car owner have to be do same MOT and maintainins



| |
|---|
| If it can pass an mot and comply to council regulations it should be 12 month plate |
| See above. |
| Common sense to inspect older vehicles more frequently to protect the safety of the passenger, driver, other roads users and the general public |
| Because they suffer from rot much more than cars |
| 10 years as compared with 6 for a PHV seems to make sense as vehicles do deteriorate, but again this should be across the board. |
| I think private hire and Hackney vehicles should be 2 a year at 10 years old, to ensure they keep to standards, all councils should have the same rule for this |
| If its good enough for an mot it should be the same |
| As above |
| Same as any other vehicle |
| common sense |
| This is a safety issue to make sure vehicle are in good order |
| Just like any other car if a Hackney passes it's MOT and Council compliance test once a year should be sufficient again after 10 years you could ask to see the vehicle every 6 months just to have a member look it over ,if the is a problem then this can be fixed |
| If it can pass a test then it should be the 12 months it's test is for |
| As previously answered |
| It is to expensive for the owner 50 pounds for m o t and still have 6 months left that goes to weast and then we have to pay 100 pounds twice a year for a plate it's a joke just a money maker |
| Maybe increase to 15 years. |
| Once a year is reasonably enough |
| safety issues |
| As cars get older wear and tear happens so after 10 years every 6 months to check it meets its criteria is fair |
| Same as private hire |
| I agree but some of them out its a wonder how they've passed a test |
| Things more likely to need replacing after 6 years |
| Again, I feel the current system of compliance tests work. |

| |
|---|
| Should be 12 months as they are well looked after and good service records |
| Just have a compliance test mot last 12 months |
| Again, as per my responses in Sections 4 and 6. |
| Hackney's seem to be a closed shop given there being a finite number available. New blood should be encouraged |
| If the m o t is passed it should last for the year |
| Taxi and private hire testing is very thorough, 6 monthly plates are just another burden on drivers. |
| What I said for private hire |
| The same ages should be used for both PH and hackney vehicles. 6 monthly testing from 6 years. I've seen some awful hackney carriages |
| As previously mentioned introduce a safety policy. |
| I think the age limit should only be 10 years old |
| Should be same as any other car |
| Once a year is enough |
| The same across all the Liverpool City Region |
| A vehicle these days at the age of ten years is still in good condition. Maybe this could be moved to 6 monthly MOT and compliance test after the vehicle reaches 12 years. |
| Should be same rules as private hire |
| Why can't this be the case for the regular private hire vehicles |
| An MOT EVERY 6 months is just as effective and more efficient. |
| Should be no different than a private hire, every 6 years |
| There should be no discrimination between private hire and Hackney |
| These vehicles are usually van based, and emissions get worse with age |
| As previously stated I think private hire and Hackney should be tested every 6 months after 10years old |
| Should be the same as PH after 6 years old |



Question 16: If an owner of a Hackney Carriage Vehicle wants to change their vehicle, the replacement vehicle must be the same age or less than the current vehicle, and in any case no more than 10 years old. Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement?

| Non-Licence Holder Comments |
|--|
| Renewed licences have no age limit, so change of vehicle should be the same |
| Should have any car with one year mot up to 10 years old |
| 10 years then every 6 months, by an approved MOT centre, |
| Why else change the taxi |
| As above |
| The taxi if sold should have 12 months MOT, and a service. |
| SAFETY AND EFFICACY SHOULD BE THE RLEVANT CRITERIA |
| put's financial on driver |
| Why, when there is no upper age limit to the licensed hackney carriage vehicles? |
| It doesn't seem logical given the presumed long service life of taxi cabs. |
| To reduce air pollution and maintain vehicle quality and safety |
| I think it's reasonable to increase the 10 years to somewhere between 12-15 years |
| Older vehicles are fine ax long as mechanically sound and well maintained inside and out |
| To have a good stock of hankney carriage vehicles serving the wirral public, there needs to be an age check on vehicles picking up off the street and nott attached to a company (private hire company base. |
| Should be a new vehicle policy to ensure the quality of fleet for Wirral. |
| This is a ridiculous requirement. It should be based upon the vehicle's road worthiness and condition, not its age. |
| Encourages use of cleaner vehicles with modern safety ratings |



Licence Holder Comments

Its about what people can afford

Agree with statement

That seems reasonable.

Too much emphasis on age , there's no reason why a 10 year old vehicle can't be in better condition than a 5 year old vehicle particularly if it's a low mileage example

For many drivers it's not economically viable to buy a new Hackney,especially the eclectic hacks £50k+

If the replacement vehicle meets compliance then it should be allowed to transfer from/to any compliant vehicle

I believe any vehicle should be less than 6 years on first licence

No. This needs to be abolished

As long as vehicle is road worthy it should be able to be licensed

Some driver /owners can't afford to buy newer vehicles so I think they should be able to change their vehicle , for older or younger as long as it fits the criteria and compliance

There should be a rule of common sense that it's unfit for purpose after 10 years.

Money is tight for everyone flexibilities are needed at the moment to help maintain a fleet of hackney vehicles on the Wirral.

Be replace with any respectable vehicle regardless of age

Seems sensible as should maintain and possibly improves the quality of HCV's licensed by WBC.

I would say as long as it's newer by any amount then that's better than stumping up for a pricier vehicle. Hacks are always more than a private hire car

Some times you can not find the same age vehicle and can not afford a new one

Sometimes drivers have an opportunity to buy a better vehicle that is older than they have

Once a plate is purchased it should be allowed on any vehicle up to 10 years old. Newer or older

There are lots of decent cabs available as long as it comply with regulations we should be able to swop it regardless

If reading between the lines this is for a plate transfer. I have never understood why you can plate a 2 year old Hackney then transfer same plate to an older vehicle. The older must be compliant to transfer the plate so why not just allow it to be plated to begin with?

if a driver has a 4 year old vehicle and is struggling with the payments, why should they be penalised by a rule that won't allow them to buy a cheaper vehicle which is still within the compliance rules and passes the MOT and compliance test

the pay doesn't justify large expense we can't afford £65000-£80000

There are very few vehicles on the secondhand market to purchase that meet the requirements of "under ten years old". Most manufacturers have left the taxi market. LEVC are the main players but vehicle price at £70000 is out of reach for most Wirral drivers and owners. If there is nothing available to buy when replacement is required you lose them to either the private hire trade, usually licensed in Sefton or Wolverhampton or they leave the industry altogether. Everyone that goes takes a wheelchair accessible vehicle of Wirral residents.

A further issue that has helped reduce the number of hackney cabs is revoking a license if it can't be tested before it expires. This practice helps nobody. Look to your nearest neighbour across the river. They have it right.

There seems to be a difference between Private and Hackney in many ways yet both do the exact same job. In the present climate with everything going up in price if a vehicle passes its MOT and compliance test then that should be sufficient till the next year also why is private hire 6 years and Hackney 10 when they are built using the same technology and materials it does not make any difference if the vehicle is 6 or 10 years old a car is a car

Because the assumption that a 'younger' cab will be better is not supported by any evidence

The vehicle can be older, so long as it meets the remit and safety.

If it can pass an MOT then it should be allowed a plate

Nobody is making ICE engines any more

The old system was better.

again to expense is the issue, the bigger the age gap the more choice for the right cab, eg no good having a fleet of eight seater Tourneos trying to get in and out of Tranmere you need to have a diverse fleet.

just no more than 10 years old

If it meets current test criteria does it matter how old it is?

No as long as it passes tests you need to move on as long as car is clean tidy and passes test why can't it be on road

I feel as long as the vehicle is 10 years or younger that would be sufficient. Again, there is a shortage of hackney carriage vehicles at the moment at a reasonable price. I feel over the next few years cab numbers could drop due to lack of availability which will affect customers, especially those who rely a lot on cabs, like wheelchair users.

There is very little choice at the moment for replacement cabs and too expensive.

This seems to me to be common sense, although as a Private Hire Vehicle owner, I do not possess an extensive understanding of Hackney cab arrangements.

I am currently driving a renault traffic voyager conversion, i dont do airports and much prefer round town work, i would be much more suited to a tx4 but i wouldnt get a tx4 under 10 years old for the money i could sell my traffic with tx4 no longer being in production they are mone expensive 2nd hand

As long as newer

Have an upper limit of maybe 8 years so someone needing to change in a 7 year old vehicle can use an 8 year old one

Only need to be less than 10 years old. The same age or less is too limited, owner might have difficulty finding a similar cab and milage may be less in an older cab. New cabs can have lots of problems, mine had a few, new cabs aren't perfect, Owner may want a different make.

Drivers find it difficult to replace these vehicles when involved in RTAs or deterioration as long as a vehicle is deemed fit for the road then the plate should be transferred regardless of age.

No comment

In my humble opinion, I think providing the vehicle is of a better standard I think replacement should just have to be of the same age or newer

20

The same across the Liverpool City Region

Drivers at the moment are struggling to pay bills and rent or mortgages. These limits make it very expensive and a lot of the time unaffordable for drivers to change vehicles for Hackney carriages. This should be changed to be able to buy taxis of any age as long as it passes an MOT and compliance test.

So if there 5 year old vehicle brakes beyond repair or is wrote off. What happens if they are financially unable to replace with a new Hackney ?

As above



Window Tint

Question 17: In addition to the legal requirement Wirral Council require Private Hire Vehicles to allow at least 70% of light to pass through all other windows. This means that the maximum tint level permitted for these windows is 30%. Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement?

Non-Licence Holder Comments

all private hire vehicles are most booked through an app/ operator which means vehicles are tracked and noted on a system - this promotes safety. most cars are made with tinted windows and drivers may find it hard to purchase a new vehicle without tinted windows. This means most drivers will go for an older car but this stops them from getting a full 12 month licence.

Most cars are factory fitted windows

I think this rule is outrageous 90 percent of cars made today come with tinted windows and the cost of getting them changed is in the thousands and is not fair when you can just go to sefton council and get badge there and plate the car with tints and work on the wirral so wirral are losing drivers and not bothered about it

I think for safety reasons the tint should be limited.

People are moving to Liverpool, Sefton etc because they can buy cars cheaper and of their choice and drive them as a taxi in Merseyside.

Are Wirral losing money because drivers aren't renewing their licenses?

Safety of passengers and driver in case of trouble

Tinted windows shouldn't be allowed as it is still a mode of public transport.

It seems a sensible requirement for safety reasons.

Visibility. Too many dosdy drivers around. I have been propositioned and grabbed on 2 separate occasions by a taxi driver 'wanting a kiss'. Please keep us safe!!!

IT ADDS COST AND IS CONTRARY TO THE LATEST NONSTATUTORY GUIDANCE FROM THE GOVERNMENT.

some cars come out the factory with privacy glass as standard cost's thousands to replace

Because this excludes certain vehicles that are approved and would pass an mot test from becoming private hire vehicles. Surely VOSA have more knowledge about vehicles than a bunch of councillors that approve these rules.

For the safety of the passengers in the rear of the vehicle

To ensure passengers or potential passengers feel safer.

I think it should probably be higher - visibility is very important for a driver, and may also make passengers feel safer

Not really sure but driver vision is of utmost importance. Also important to be able to see into a vehicle for passenger safety

I wouldn't want the windows to be too tinted in a taxi

This lets people see in and out the vehicle as well as the driver having more light

Most cars now come with tinted windows

Other councils do not have this requirement and their vehicles are regularly spotted working on the Wirral. If this is to be enforced it should be for any works vehicles that enter the Wirral

If windows are any darker they will pose a risk for passengers.

passengers need to feel safe in vehicle and able to see clearly out of the windows and inside

It should be the same as normal cars as the safety implications are the same!

I wouldn't feel comfortable in a cab with darkened windows

Tinted windows could hide all sorts of things



Licence Holder Comments

Tinted windows block a significant portion of harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays from the sun. UV rays can cause skin damage, premature aging, and increase the risk of skin cancer. Tinted windows help protect both passengers and the interior of the vehicle from UV radiation, plus most new vehicles come with rear tinted windows as standard due to the above reason and many other benefits

Other councils don't

Most modern and upper range vehicles come with a higher tint as standard which limits driver options when forced to change vehicles.

All new cars come with factory fitted tinted windows and cost drivers money to change and times are hard enough already

Most new vehicles with decent specs have tints. All factory fitted privacy glass should be excepted. Especially considering all the other local councils allow tints.

Some manufacturer privacy glass is darker than 30% and the majority of new vehicles come with privacy glass as standard, therefore it is very difficult to obtain a suitable vehicle without privacy glass, also vehicles licensed in different boroughs working for wirral companies are allowed to have privacy glass but wirral licensed drivers aren't?

As factory fitted

It is an unnecessary added cost to PH drivers, as most cars come as standard with tinted windows.

If A vehicle comes from factory with tints it should be allowed to be plated . Most cars now come with standard factory tints , this protects passengers from uv rays and to expect a driver to go through the cost of vehicle replacement to then have to pay another £1-2k to have clear glass fitted is ridiculous. Again if a car passes an mot it should be fit to be plated

It's difficult to buy a modern car without tinted windows, & it is expensive to change them to clear glass

Your stopping Drivers from buying top of the range models as most come with privacy glass and full leather interior what is need for the job. But Sefton and Liverpool can work over here with tints. The nonsense about police saying they need to see whos in the car doesn't add up, hackneys and Ph are moving Dealers around on a daily basis with clear windows so its really irrelevant.

Most modern vehicles come with tinted windows as standard
So we have to pay to have them replaced
Why?

Wirral council is the only licensing authority to have this rule, yet they allow drivers licenced with other councils to work Wirral council area.

It is getting harder to find vehicles without tints, and the additional cost to replace is very expensive.

Most modern cars leave the factory with rear tinted windows, this makes finding a car with clear glass very hard or the glass needs to be changed the cost is £1/£2k depending on make model, an expense that many can't afford

I think this is good for passenger safety, especially for lone riders.

Most New cars come with window tints as std... other councils allow these tints and are allowed to work in Wirral. So I think it's a bit costly and unfair on WBC plated vehicles. When other councils allow it.

Most modern cars do have some sort of tint on them. Many private hire drivers are striving to improve their car and make them more top end. This is a dated rule, and many drivers are now going to Sefton, Knowsley, Wolverhampton and Cheshire West, to gain a plate license is due to Wirral Borough councils failure to review this

Difficult to find vehicles without window tint and costly to change and if changed insurance issues as it is a modified vehicle

Most new vehicles have tinted glass now, as part of the eco drive. Any executive vehicles will be a struggle to find one without tints. If it's factory spec glass it should be allowed

Limitations on vehicle choice and cost is affected by this current requirement. I am not aware of any increase in safety concerns from other councils who allow tints

I believe that factory fitted should be acceptable. WBC have not provided any evidence to support their belief that untinted windows help prevent crime. In contrast to police reports saying that window tints makes no difference to crime levels or safeguarding. Tinted rear windows are 'the norm' nowadays so finding suitable vehicles is becoming more difficult. Some drivers buy vehicles with finance and not all finance companies will allow the modification of their vehicles. There is also the question as to whether changing the glass changes the integrity of the vehicle.

As 99% of the car come with factory tinted windows it's hard to find one with no tinted windows and Wirral it's the only council with this requirement as the other in Merseyside don't have it

You allow other taxi's from outside the region to operate on the Wirral and they do meet this requirement, no issue with drivers from other areas but need adhere to same rules

You can not buy new electric vehicle now without tinted glass and it costs between £600 to £800 to replace with clear glass



No because most new cars these days have window tint. It's very hard to find a car without it. And the cost to change the windows is expensive and just another expense we don't need.

I think this is an unfair rule, most modern cars are made with tinted windows & to request none tinted comes at a higher price.

Also your allowing vehicles from other licensing authorities to work Wirral systems that have tinted windows so it should be one rule for all or none at all

Sefton don't.

Now a days most of cars comes factory fitted tint windows, make us spend more to look for replacement, in some cases it cost £1500-3000

Most cars under 10 years come with manufacturers window tint is hard and costly to have this replaced and unfair

This policy is a farce that puts WBC badged drivers at a disadvantage compared to out of town drivers that are allowed to work the area with new vehicles that have tints but are plated outside of the area where there is no such a regulation. I have wanted to purchase a new vehicle for almost four years but have not done so because I refuse to pay upwards of 25k for a new vehicle only to then have to pay an additional circa 2k to have the factory fitted tints replaced with clear glass, clear glass that you cannot see through in the dark and therefore is no different to tinted glass.

Makes no sense at all this is why most of the drivers I know have moved to different licensing areas but still work Wirral

Vast majority of newer cars come with tints as standard, which means an additional cost of up to £1000 for the driver to hit WBC compliance. You could allow tints on the basis CCTV is installed.

It is difficult to find a vehicle on the market that meets the requirements. It cost me £1400 to change the tinted windows.

A lot of new vehicles are coming factory fitted tinted windows making drivers get these removed is a disgrace or if it has to be done then the council should be paying for this to be done. Some vehicles are being used to private work I.E personal chauffeur work and need to have the tinted windows and should be able to get as darker tints on the windows as required.

The window tint rule from WBC in my opinion is massively outdated and makes no sense. The reasons are as follows.

The main operators on the Wirral have licensed drivers from neighbouring councils working their systems. This in turn results in 100% of said drivers not facing the same limitations when choosing a suitable vehicle to us as a PHV. Not only is this unfair for Wirral licensed drivers but is also inconsistent for passengers. A passenger can book a PHV vehicle via a Wirral operator and may be greeted with an out of town plated vehicle with privacy glass.

Other licensing authorities around us are allowing it....again if you don't change drivers will get licenced and plated elsewhere eventually costing Wirral council revenue.

The Wirral is currently getting overrun with plates from all different areas due to this rule. I would go as far as saying you see more Sefton plates on the Wirral than you do Wirral plates now. You see less and less smarter cars on the road due to this rule as most cars now have them factory fitted. The Wirral council should want more decent cars on the road and that would 100% happen if this rule is changed! It infuriates many many drivers.

Majority of cars now have window tints, so we will either have no cars or have to pay out thousands to have the windows replaced

Tint should be relaxed. With new cars, tint is standard on the better models and expensive to change. Newer electric cars come with tint as standard in most cases and helps reduce the need for heaters etc thus getting better range on the EV. Drivers will not change to EV or Hybrids unless we can have tints due to cost

I believe that as long as tinted glass is within the law and factory fitted then it should be acceptable for Private Hire Vehicles.

Taxi drivers are now facing trouble purchasing new cars as most new cars come with privacy glass, you can get a taxi badge with cheshire or Sefton and still work on the Wirral with tints so makes a mockery of the rule, I have put a brand new car on the road at a cost of £44000, if I went for the model up to what I have got (which is the one I wanted) it would have cost an additional £2500 to change the glass.

Drivers are trying to put newer and better cars on the road and wbc seem to block this from happening as not everyone can afford to change the glass.

Absolute nonsense you have other vehicle operators working Wirral areas and Wirral firms with tinted windows the Wirral driver has to spend more money again

Rule always seemed to me to restrict an executive vehicle offer to consumers.

Window tints shouldn't really be a councils problem, it should be taken up with the car manufacturers, until then it is not right a driver has to spend possibly thousands of pounds to replace perfectly good windows. It is now simply cheaper to take an entire new test in a different district (Sefton Knowsley Wolverhampton etc) and work for the same company than to spend a stupid amount of money to replace windows to obtain a WBC license

Every other council around us allows window tints. I understand the reasoning by Wirral council for not allowing tints, but why not allow tints and have all vehicles with cctv. That being said every other council in surrounding areas has tints, so a Liverpool/sefton registered car can work a wirral firm with tints whereas a wirral plated car working the same company cannot. That's not just bizarre, it's stupid! Plus window tinting keep passengers cool in



summer, reduces amount of air con needed, saves fuel and saves the Planet.

I think we should allow window tints, it gives the customers more privacy and help health benefits, window tints block 99% of the suns harmful UV rays.

It's hard trying to find a vehicle that dos not have tinted windows and most new cars come with them and as we are trying to go carbon neutral

Again some drivers can buy cars cheaper but the car has tinted windows so restricting them

It is almost impossible to find a large new vehicle that does not have tinted windows. Yet again all surrounding councils allow tinted windows. New vehicles are fitted with tinted windows as an eco fixture.

The most ridiculous rule ever.. nearly every top model car comes with tint .. this rule is now hampering the car a badge holder can purchase if not wanting the extra cost of needlessly replacing all windows...easier and cheaper to change license council without this rule .. which I am in no doubt WBC are aware is happening already

If vehicles are supplied with tints by manufacturers then tints should be allowed. People will not buy new vehicles which then causes older vehicles on the road

Other licensing authorities allow full tints or at least 25% and also newer cars have tints as standard.

It becomes really expensive when replacing a car and you have to replace the windows.

Drivers are going to other licensing authorities as they allow tints.

All of new vehicles tinted windows made by factory fitted, so if anyone needs to change for council, they can't do it, its big problem. So I think tinted windows not problem, also others council allowed

Allow 70%

Most vehicles comes with tinted windows and it cost a lot of money to get them removed which is why lot of drivers are getting badges from other councils, having factory fitted standard windows does not compromise passenger's safety at all

Newer vehicles come with factory fitted tinted windows , these should be allowed

Almost all new cars comes with company fitted tinted windows nowadays. Council should allow company fitted tinted window

So many modern cars come complete with tinted windows which enhances comfort for driver and passenger and should be allowed in my opinion.

This is an unfair cost to business and severely restricts the ability to buy high specification models without having to pay for the removal of privacy glass. My current car which I bought new, I was unable to purchase the highest specification model as it came with privacy and that would have cost me significant money to replace all the glass to meet current tint specifications. Furthermore, if a driver is forced to replace privacy glass to buy their preferred choice of vehicle then the carbon footprint left by changing windows is going to impact net zero. Vehicle costs have soared. My model was £369/mth when purchased. The exact same model will now cost just over £600/mth. Many councils have reversed this requirement in recent years to ease the burden of costs and to ease the lack of availability in cars without tinted windows.

I am also aware as an engineer that tinted windows will be used heavily in electric cars to help facilitate air conditioning performance and to reduce UV heating of the internal airspace of the vehicle which will help to conserve battery power and thus energy consumption.

It is an unnecessary added cost to PH

Drivers, as most cars come as standard manufacturers tinted windows,

Expecting Wirral council will keep a uniformity with other councils in the Liverpool City Region. Hope at least in Liverpool city region all councils will follow the same policy. A lot of other councils' vehicles with tinted glass operating in the boundaries of Wirral council.

Every time we buy a new car it costs us lots of money to change the windows. That's why many drivers are saying they're moving to other councils so they can have tinted windows. So I hope you can remove that load for tinted windows.

I really don't understand this reasoning, as other authority plates whom are working on the Wirral have & are allowed tinted windows which exceed 70%. Even to buy a new vehicle the majority come already fitted with tinted windows as standard.

Drivers are getting licenced in other areas (Sefton) and working the Wirral because of this and vehicle age policy

Most vehicles come with factory fitted tint as standard. These vehicles are obviously road legal.

For me, cost of living and cost of vehicles are rising, if the legal requirements by law are set we should be able to comply with that law.

We should be able to buy a vehicle with factory tint on all windows and not be restricted by a rule that only we locally have to abide by,

Today's manufacturers fit tinted glass to rear windows. To help stop UVA / UVB rays entering rear of vehicle. This helps to keep people safe from harmful rays.

It's a ridiculous requirement, which causes drivers to change to other councils to get better quality cars.. as far as safeguarding goes it might cause drivers to be less vigilant due to resentment. The driver MUST be trusted to act on and report any suspicions. Many



other councils are changing this idiotic and pointless requirement. Privacy glass has no beneficial impact on safety

Newer cars have a tint

Ridiculous rule if factory fitted it should be allowed I've recently bought a brand new car and the difficulty trying to find one without tints was Ridiculous

when a vehicle is built by the manufacturer it comes with M1 approval then if converted to a Hackney it has a secondary approval they are fitted with slight tinted glass as enviromentally safe this also helps retain battery life of new electric vehicles all other local authorities allow manufactures specification except Wirral which is crazy as a result drivers cant afford upto £3000 to change glass to clear. Drivers are now taking there badges and licencing vehicles in different councils ie Sefton/Liverpool,Knowsley even Wolverhampton to safe the cost of this crazy measure also means Wirral loose plate and badge fee we end up with vehicles of which WBC has no juresdiction over

Most vehicles now are manufactured tinted and this law is very unreasonable. I have not seen in any other council such law.

This rule restricts the amount of cars available to buy and most of the time cars with easy to clean leather seats come with privacy glass in the rear windows.

Lot of cars now have tinted windows, I can never understand why Wirral council doesn't allow it. Every other council in the world allows it.

There are cars working on the Wirral from as far as Wolverhampton,Liverpool,Sefton, Chester Uber all these cars have tinted windows and you say you can do nothing about this and that the police advised you not to allow any taxis to have tinted windows because you can not see in the back ,has there been a large number of drivers on the Wirral in the last couple of years convicted of rape or sexual assault drug dealing .90% of cars now have tinted windows including the police cars yet you are saying drivers on the Wirral can not be trusted .The police in all these other places have not told there councils to do the same.Does this mean that the police here are saying that taxi driver and Hackney drivers are the main people on the Wirral braking the law. And if so where is there proof and why has no one heard or seen any of this in the news.

If the wirral council allowing drivers from other council using the tinted window vehicle and working on the wirral than why is the rules are only for wirral drivers.

Most brand new cars now windows are tinted as standard so as long as not breaking any laws should be ok

It's good enough for other councils to approve tinted windows so Wirral should do the same. It's nearly impossible to buy a new or nearly new car that hasn't got tinted windows. I had to pay £850 to change the windows of my current car..

It is becoming increasingly difficult to find cars without factory fitted tinted windows. Generally the cars that do have clear windows are the base models. We all spend a lot of hours in our cars and deserve to have the choice of a luxury model without having to spend in the region of an extra £1000 to change the window glass. Sefton and Ellesmere Port plated vehicles are allowed tinted windows and work for Wirral taxi companies so the ruling no longer has any meaning.

More research and better explanation is required by the council why they pursue this policy. Is it contrary to manufacturers' specifications? What is the police opinion etc

I drive PHV for Sefton, I have more options to buy cars.
Most new cars come with window tint.

I really don't understand the requirement for the 70% light from Wirral council, as a driver it would benefit us if this was scrapped for many of reasons.

If we was to do higher end work then the executive passenger would prefer window tints for privacy.

Window tints block heat entering the vehicle which then would mean air con wasn't used as much, this would then lower the emissions produced by the vehicle.

Most new cars that are suitable to be used as a private hire come as standard with tinted windows, which again, is yet another cost to the driver to have all the glass replaced on the vehicle before it can be tinted.

And lastly I know a lot of drivers have moved to another council to be plated because of this requirement so that must have reduced income for Wirral council as they have lost all the fees from them drivers but it also means that them drivers are still working on the Wirral with tinted windows so it's unfair that just because they are with another council they can get away with working on the Wirral with tinted windows.

If you continue with this policy you will lose drivers, the safety glass is there to withhold heat in the vehicle and lower CO2 and keep the vehicle cooler in the summer to prevent air conditioning. Asking for M1 approval and then changing the vehicle of its M1 status is not affordable and adds to the cost of the vehicle which drivers are already struggling with. The policy is not possible to continue in this vein.

rules should be equal for all the vehicles not only taxis.

Most manufacturers tint nearly all vehicles, restricting us as to what vehicles we can choose.

Other local councils allow windows tints



Every other council in Merseyside allows tints. WBC is losing drivers who get badged elsewhere to get around this.

It is very difficult to source a vehicle without tinted glass. This has been a trend from the manufacturers due to the advent of air conditioning being efficient in such vehicles. It just creates a difficulty to replace vehicles , at present, on the Wirral.

Should allow factory fitted tinted windows as it cost me £1000 to change to clear

Most cars now a days come with tinted windows
And if we replaced new windows it's cost more money

That is absolutely wrong as Wirral Council maintain this but yet allow other Council vehicles with tinted windows.
As for tinted windows it's more ideal for passenger safety.

This is putting pressure on drivers when looking for a new car a 2000 bill for changing windows is unfair,
There is a lot of talk of many drivers jumping ship to sefton because of this one reason

The rear window tinting should be increased to allow more protection for passengers from exposure to the sun

Pretty much all new cars are being made with tinted windows now to protect the interiors and protect the passengers from harmful UVA rays to replace these can add up to £2000 to the cost of the car adding more costs to the driver in times of financial crisis again by not allowing you are discriminating against all drivers licenced with you as you allow drivers from other boroughs to work in the area with tinted windows and again being punished for putting money in to our local council if this is not remove the possibility of me going to another borough to be licenced if I can't find a car without tints is guaranteed

I don't this is a bad option in regards to requirements but my opinion on this is that vehicles come out of the factory with certain tint on vehicles and that is what is stock so I think there should be a little bit more leeway for this.

I think with alot of cross county lines inplace for safety we should keep somethings in place, Bus myself I only do Airports Transfer and also corporate travel, were some of my customers like the idea of tint so they cannot be seen when travelling.

I can't believe I had to go to panel to approve my tint's because I have high profile passengers who don't want to be recognised going for cancer treatment yet I can be badged and plated in Seton, Knowsley, Chester and work for the Biggest taxi firm operating on the Wirral and have a car over 10yrs and have privacy glass! It doesn't make any sense!

If a car comes off the production line with rear privacy glass we should be able to plate the vehicle with factory tinted windows. If it's after market tints shouldn't be aloud



I think as long as the uk spec vehicle leaves the factory with rear tints or privacy glass should be passed as it is not breaking the law

This is ancient all other borders and licensing committed allow privacy glass in taxis and this needs addressing quickly Wirral council MOT stations and drivers are losing a lot of revenue as new cars and buses come with tinted glass and it is driving more and more drivers taking out Liverpool Sefton and Wolverhampton badges to get round this therefore you are limiting your ability to control numbers working in and around Wirral we are really struggling with this please have common sense and allow privacy glass without us solely doing business transfers

Can register under different council and still use for Wirral based companies

This MUST change. Cars are very rarely made with clear glass anymore. Making drivers pay thousands to change glass is ridiculous. The factory fitted tinted glass is standard on almost every car these days. Get in line with all other Merseyside Councils!

This is a bad decision that makes it difficult for drivers when replacing their cars as a lot of cars come with tinted windows as standard. Carrying on with this policy will push drivers to use neighbouring councils to licence their vehicles which in turn loses revenue for wirral licensing department and wirral mot stations.

Most modern cars come with window tints as standard. It limits what vehicles are available to wirral drivers. Also local authorities surrounding wirral have drivers working Wirral with no tints. This puts local drivers at a financial disadvantage to other drivers surrounding them. I know some drivers have and some in the process of getting licenced at Sefton council because of this issue.

It's a silly requirement and not practical on new cars.

An outdated policy as high number of modern cars have tinted windows....whst is the purpose of the rule how does it improve the safety or comfort of passengers I can't think of any reason to have the rule in the 1st place

All new cars come with tinted windows so your making drivers pick an older car or go to another council for there licence



Given that the Department of Transport considers that licensing authorities should not require the removal of windows rear of the B-pillar if they have a minimum light transmission of 30% or above, I am at a loss to understand why Wirral Council persist with this regulation. If the policy is maintained on a 'safeguarding' basis, then it should be recognised that any vehicle window that is factory-fitted is already complying with pre-existing laws around tinting which are proportionate in keeping individuals safe.

A second consideration is that the majority of taxi licensing authorities adjacent to Wirral do not insist on this regulation, instead allowing manufacturer's factory-fitted windows to be permitted. This inconsistency is a travesty, given that a vehicle and driver can be registered in Sefton (for example) but trade on the Wirral. Wirral Council are losing control of licensing a Wirral-based driver and vehicle, and, just as importantly, driving revenue out of Wirral to surrounding areas.

The act of replacing manufacturer's factory-fitted tinted windows can be interpreted as an act of modification to the vehicle in question, this could potentially render the vehicle uninsurable amongst certain insurance companies who do not allow for any vehicle modification to be carried out. There is a possibility that, there are a number of vehicles licensed by Wirral Council, which have been modified at the behest of the Council, currently in use which have invalid insurance if the modification has not been declared by the driver.

Furthermore, as vehicle manufacturers develop more awareness for the potential harm all vehicles cause to the climate, the prevalence of manufacturer's factory-fitted tinted windows becomes more common-place, by maintaining this policy, Wirral Council are effectively diminishing the stock of vehicles which can be utilised as PHVs and forcing drivers to utilise less climate friendly vehicles. From a personal point of view, I am currently considering upgrading my vehicle to a hybrid model, but I am unable to identify any suitable vehicle, which is an estate model, that does not come with manufacturer's factory-fitted tinted windows. Effectively I am being pushed to either register a new vehicle elsewhere outside the Borough or compromise and accept purchasing a less environmentally conscious vehicle.

Many new cars come with tinted glass as standard also other councils allow them

I believe it should be upto the driver if they want window tint or not

Other councils don't have this rule so a lot of drivers are going to them for their licence because of this, that's why there is so many Sefton plates on the Wirral, the council are losing out on licence fees because of this rule

Just adding more cost to drivers

How is it safe for people of Wirral when vehicle with the tinted windows from LCC, Sefton and Knowsley comes and work with our local firms? I think if that's the case then Wirral should not allow vehicle to be used in the area with tinted windows regardless of authority

I feel slightly tinted windows are adequate when carrying children & elderly. Especially during Summer months & even this time of year in winter when the sun is very low. Also I have found when purchasing new cars from a specialist taxi company, windows already come tinted which prevents being able to purchase them due to the Wirral rule.

Manufacturing standards of vehicles should be taken into account.

Most top of range vehicles now come with factory fitted tints to the rear glass the car is our place of work and top of range cars are better for driver and passenger alike most other councils allow this that's why so many drivers are leaving g WBC in favour of other licencing authorities

Most of new vehicles sold as factory fitted tinted windows so if the council doesn't accept that drivers have issues finding it

I think Private Hire Vehicles should be allowed tints because most new vehicles and decent spec vehicles come with tinted windows.

If you buy a new car that has factory tinted windows that means you have to pay more to get none tinted windows put in

All new cars come with rear tint windows and it's very difficult to source cars without tinted windows

When looking for cars this makes finding a suitable vehicle very difficult.

No as most new vehicles have rear tints that's why I am doing the Sefton badge

No because this law is baseless, never seen any other council do that , most cars are now manufactured tinted

Many vehicles come with a standard different to that of the council, this then costs more money to get different windows put in.

Because most cars come from the factory with tinted windows already done

Many vehicles are fitted as standard with tinted rear windows limiting the choice of vehicle you can use to change them to clear is very expensive

I'm aware the reason the owners are struggling in Wirral is because the more expensive cars are fitted with tinted windows and they are restricted to cheaper models. If the council want higher end cars then the rule needs to change or keep the drivers buying cheaper cars.

Tint levels should not apply to rear windows - makes no sense at all and is certainly not the norm nationally

As a driver for wirral for over 30years I think this is one of the most ridiculous rules implemented in recent years in the executive marked audi,bmw,mercedes 90% of these vehicles are factory fitted with this Glass aswell as many electric cars when these vehicles are as safe as any it would make more sence to stop plating vehicles that can't fit folding



wheelchairs or walkers.many drivers are leaving to other councils at a loss of revenue to wirral Council s shorts sighted rules. Majority of the public just want a clean comfortable vehicle to travel in I personally have used a vehicle with this glass for 18years before this ruling and not one customer has ever complained or even mention it. You need to start play the same game as other councils I.e get rid of front plate no use what so ever just extra cost to doing the job as other councils still use are roads bus lanes etc with no front plate . When I started S a driver in the early 90s wirral council licencing was much better run and more equal to all others I feel we are penalised with what vehicle we can use make or model should not matter providing it is large enough to carry out the requirements needed.

Drivers are getting licensed outside the Wirral to avoid ridiculous policies such as this, resulting in other areas benefitting from the Wirral economy.

I think that the tints on windows should be allowed as myself who drives a 9 seater Mercedes tourer with no drop glass in the rear of the vehicle suffer with the sun and heat. I also have lost corporate work due to the fact that I cannot provide privacy for corporate clients. It is uncomfortable for passengers in the rear. Also many new vehicles don't offer clear glass as an option. Or added cost to have that option

There is hardly any new card left on the market that don't have window tint. Lots of cars working the Wirral now are not Wirral plated and don't need to worry about window tints or age of the vehicle. It's a very unfair playing field.

There no reason for it. it just put the driver in alot of stress to find car as most of the cars now come with tinted windows and alot of driver now going to deferent council to avoid that

For the safety of both the passengers and the driver and should be applied across the Liverpool City Region

It's difficult to change glass
Cost lots of money for nothing
I have 3 pairs of glasses at my attic
If the council needed them for nothing
Cost me over£3000
For what
Scandulas
Should same as others council

Factory fitted windows should be allowed

There is not many tintless cars available on the market. Most of them are factory fitted. Also sefton, knowsly, Liverpool all accept tinted window and they are working on the Wirral for the same company so why not Wirral cousin approve tinted windows ?

The rear passenger windows should be allowed the factory tinted level for that car. If this means the car comes with privacy glass then it should be allowed. You can't really get near

clear glass anymore and the cost if removing the glass is just unacceptable. Plus surely this would be classed as vehicle modification which you aren't supposed to allow. The rear passenger windows should be allowed the factory tinted level for that car. If this means the car comes with privacy glass then it should be allowed. You can't really get near clear glass anymore and the cost if removing the glass is just unacceptable. Plus surely this would be classed as vehicle modification which you aren't supposed to allow.

For normal private hire I would potentially agree but for school minibuses I have spent a considerable amount of money changing windows that are tinted to clear in order to comply with licensing criteria but in our work of transporting children from home to school for Wirral I believe a level of tinted windows can sometimes be a help for some passengers.

When vehicles have factory fitted from new they should be allowed . Also if they are more of MPV type or chafffer vehicle

Most modern vehicles are fitted with privacy glass ,also phv drivers use their car for personal use

Manufacturers produce most vehicles with Sun Protection glass nowadays this definitely provides adults and children sitting in the rear of a vehicle you can clearly see both inside out outside in my opinion this is a benefit to my clients. I would also be against any driver who retrofits non standard window tinting using the incorrect tint. Sun Protect is a must have especially for children.

In many other councils there are no such restrictions

Most modern cars have rear tinted windows. It is all extra cost to the drivers to have them changed to clear windows. If the government allow manufacturers to legally fit tinted then there should be no reason to change them

Currently most vehicles have tinted rear glass. This WBC requirement makes sourcing new vehicles extremely hard especially if you require an automatic. So many drivers are now plating cars in Liverpool causing WBC to lose 10s of thousands of pounds per year in lost revenue. With at least another 20% of current WBCplated drivers looking to move to Liverpool in the near future including myself as it is near impossible to find an automatic vehicle that meets these requirements.

Where is the evidence to support that window tints cause an issue for the passengers

I think the UK standards agency and car manufacturers know more about tinting than Wirral Council. UK law should be followed.

Factory fitted tinted window should be allowed, most new vehicle's have standard factory fitted tinted windows, which cost thousands of pounds to replace, and having factory fitted tinted windows does not compromise safety at all, licence holders from other councils are working here in Wirral with tinted windows, we believe it is unfair on Wirral licence holders.



Should be allowed to use tinted glass.

The licencing are limiting drivers to certain cars they can get, other councils dont have this rule, also the council must be losing revenue as driver are going to other boroughs

I'm at the point now. Looking for a vehicle to use. Most vehicles now have a slight tint on the rear from the front. An the cost to replace these windows is massive. Thousands.. yet other vehicles registered in other councils . (which there is a hell of a lot of them on the Wirral) are driving about with tinted windows. Seems totally unfair an should be allowed, all cars used on Wirral roads should obied by the same rules. I'd say 70% for the front an 50% for the back would be reasonable.

Most premium models of cars, include tints as standard, if you want to buy a higher spec car ,you can't

Don't think tinted windows should make any difference....so long as the car is safe and legal it should be OK..

As all new cars have a tint on the windows this needs to be changed

Many new vehicles now come with tint in rear windows as standard, WBC private hire drivers should not be restricted or forced to spend thousands of pounds having to change the glass on new vehicles especially as half the vehicles working on the Wirral are now registered in other councils & don't have these restrictions . If this doesn't change I'm seriously considering getting a badge & plate for another borough council & then continue to work the Wirral.

tinted windows can create a better driving environment, keeping glare from the sun lower than regular glass and keeping the interior temperature cooler. Both of these advantages contribute to an improved driving experience, with greater driver visibility and comfort.

It is basically discriminating against drivers buying or hiring a lot of modern vehicles. Tinted windows are legal and as such have to pass initial standards as written in law



Question 18: In addition to the legal requirement Wirral Council require Hackney Carriage Vehicles to allow at least 70% of light to pass through all other windows. This means that the maximum tint level permitted for these windows is 30%. Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement?

| Non-Licence Holder Comments |
|---|
| Only if factory fitted |
| I think this rule is outrageous 90 percent of cars made today come with tinted windows and the cost of getting them changed is in the thousands and is not fair when you can just go to sefton council and get badge there and plate the car with tints and work on the wirral so wirral are losing drivers and not bothered about it |
| This is a safety aspect for both passenger and driver. Is it enforced |
| Same as comment above. |
| As above. |
| For the same reason as previous. |
| To ensure passengers or potential passengers feel safer. |
| I think it should probably be higher - visibility is very important for a driver, and may also make passengers feel safer |
| Same as above, I wouldn't want a cab with tinted windows |
| This lets people see in and out the vehicle as well as the driver having more light |
| Yes as these are designed as taxis |
| See above |
| As per previous. |
| passengers need to feel safe in vehicle and able to see clearly out of the windows and inside |
| It should be the same as normal cars as the safety implications are the same! |
| I wouldn't feel comfortable in a cab with darkened windows |
| All windows should be clear |
| As above |



Licence Holder Comments

Other councils don't

Its the expense of having to change tinted windows in new vehicle

Same as above relating to private hire vehicles.

As factory fitted

Hackneys don't come with privacy glass anyway

See answer 20

Most vehicles have tinted glass, hackneys also have disabled passengers on board in wheelchairs etc who have said they often get people looking in at them while stationary

I am not aware of any increase in safety concerns from other councils who allow tints

For the same reason I don't agree with it for private hire vehicles

Same like private hire

It shouldn't matter if the windows are tinted.

As above (Private Hire)

I currently transport young adults to college in my Hackney cab, they are uneasy with people looking at them , when stopped at traffic lights and junctions, I think tints would make my current young adults journey more pleasant and without any further stress.

During the summer tints will help keep my vehicle cooler, air con uses a diesel pump which adds to the emissions the vehicle emits .

****Enhancing Airport Private Hire Operations with Tinted Windows: A Comprehensive Analysis****

The implementation of tinted windows in airport transfers has emerged as a prevalent practice, driven by a multitude of advantages that elevate the overall taxi experience for both drivers and passengers. This comprehensive analysis delves into the multifaceted benefits of tinted windows, underscoring their positive impact on safety, comfort, privacy, UV protection, vehicle longevity, and energy efficiency.

****Safety:****

Tinted windows play a pivotal role in enhancing driver visibility, particularly during harsh daylight conditions. By effectively reducing glare, tinted windows enable drivers to navigate the road with greater clarity, thereby minimizing the risk of accidents.

****Comfort:****

Tinted windows effectively shield the taxi's interior from excessive heat gain, contributing to a more comfortable and refreshing atmosphere for both passengers and drivers, especially during hot weather.

****Privacy:****

The presence of tinted windows safeguards passengers' privacy by creating an opaque barrier that obstructs the view from outside the taxi. This feature is particularly valuable for individuals carrying valuables or traveling with minors.

****UV Protection:****

Tinted windows serve as a protective shield against harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays emitted by the sun. This shielding effect safeguards passengers' skin from sunburn and premature aging, promoting overall well-being. Especially towards safety of children in car seats in iso fixing. Also on airport transfer, we are on motorways for long periods, with sun glaring through same window for long time scales.

****Vehicle Longevity:****

By mitigating the intensity of UV radiation, tinted windows help to preserve the interior of the taxi from fading and damage caused by prolonged exposure to sunlight. This proactive measure extends the vehicle's lifespan and reduces the need for frequent replacements.



****Energy Efficiency:****

Tinted windows play a crucial role in enhancing a taxi's energy efficiency by minimizing heat transfer into the vehicle's interior. This reduction in heat gain translates into lower fuel consumption and reduced emissions, promoting environmental sustainability.

****Aesthetic Appeal:****

The incorporation of tinted windows lends a stylish and professional appearance to taxis, enhancing their visual appeal and attracting potential customers. This aesthetic enhancement contributes to a positive brand image and elevates the overall taxi experience. Businesses requesting Mercedes & top spec vehicles have tints, which regulations stunts our growth. Knowsley, liverpool, sefton, cheshire all allow tints, which means losing business & contracts.

****Conclusion:****

The adoption of tinted windows in private hire airport transfers represents a sound investment that yields a multitude of benefits for both airport operators and their customers/clients. By prioritizing safety, comfort, privacy, UV protection, vehicle longevity, energy efficiency, and aesthetic appeal, tinted windows elevate the taxi experience to a higher standard, fostering a positive reputation and contributing to the industry's growth and success.

I also suggest a separate regulation just for airport transfer companies as tints aren't required for local taxis, working for local taxi companies around town, but 100% benefits cross country, business & airport drivers & operators.

Tint should be relaxed. With new cars, tint is standard on the better models and expensive to change. Newer electric cars come with tint as standard in most cases and helps reduce the need for heaters etc thus getting better range on the EV. Drivers will not change to EV or Hybrids unless we can have tints due to cost

As above for Private Hire Vehicles.

Same as above

Same as private hire questioning

Window tints shouldn't really be a councils problem, it should be taken up with the car manufacturers, until then it is not right a driver has to spend possibly thousands of pounds to replace perfectly good windows. It is now simply cheaper to take an entire new test in a different district (Sefton Knowsley Wolverhampton etc) and work for the same company than to spend a stupid amount of money to replace windows to obtain a WBC license



Although Wirral hacks are limited to work Wirral only and no other hackneys are allowed to work Wirral, they can still use a ph system. This puts them in same category as a private hire car, tinted windows keeps passengers cool in summer saves fuel, saves the planet. I understand why Wirral have banned tints but why not introduce cctv instead.

Most new vehicles come with tinted windows

Same as above.

All of new vehicles tinted windows made by factory fitted, so if anyone needs to change for council, they can't do it, its big problem. So I think tinted windows not problem, also others council allowed

Vehicles with factory fitted tint should be allowed

As above.Same question I think.

See answer 19

Council will follow the national policy and other near councils specially Liverpool city councils policy in this regard,

Most vehicles come with factory fitted tint as standard. These vehicles are obviously road legal.

again we should be able to buy any vehicle with factory fitted tinted windows, other vehicles that work the wirral are not restricted by our rules and have no issues

Should be same requirements as PHV

It's not a reasonable law

See answer 18

I think it should be scraped for private hire and Hackney for the reasons I have stated above.

as above for private hire

rules should be equal for all the vehicles not only taxis.

We require full advertising over the whole cab to help us financially.

Pretty much all new cars are being made with tinted windows now to protect the interiors and protect the passengers from harmful UVA rays to replace these can add up to £2000 to the cost of the car adding more costs to the driver in times of financial crisis again by not allowing you are discriminating against all drivers licenced with you as you allow drivers from other boroughs to work in the area with tinted windows and again being punished for putting money in to our local council if this is not remove the possibility of me going to another borough to be licenced if I can't find a car without tints is guaranteed

I think this should be increased following my comments in the last question



| |
|--|
| As above |
| Same as private hire. If it comes off the production line with tinted rear glass it should be aloud to pass the test |
| Can register in different area and still work on wirral |
| cars come with factory tints that's shouldn't be a problem |
| Factory fitted glass should NOT be replaced. |
| Again, this puts Wirral drivers at a disadvantage to other local authorities. |
| Silly requirement and serve's no practical perpas |
| As per my comments in Section 17 which can also relate to Hackney Carriage Vehicles. |
| Given they can pick straight up from street. No tint would be safer for drivers and passengers |
| Same as above |
| Taking the right to buy the type of vehicle away from the driver |
| As above, manufacturers standards should be considered |
| Again can make finding suitable vehicles difficult |
| No because this law is baseless, never seen any other council do that , most cars are now manufactured tinted |
| Pointless policy I have recently changed the windows in a Hackney cab at a cost of £2,500 , I couldn't do what private hire do and get licensed in another area so I had no alternative but to pay the cost, if vehicles can come in and pick the same passengers up as Wirral licensed drivers then they should abide by the same rules.. again this is discriminative to the Hackney driver. |
| No comment |
| As most new vehicles come with privacy glass as standard it's ridiculous that a driver has to rip that out to pass licensing |
| There no reason for it. it just put the driver in alot of stress to find car as most of the cars now come with tinted windows and alot of driver now going to deferent council to avoid that |
| As section 20 |
| The rear passenger windows should be allowed the factory tinted level for that car. If this means the car comes with privacy glass then it should be allowed. You can't really get near clear glass anymore and the cost if removing the glass is just unacceptable. Plus surely this would be classed as vehicle modification which you aren't supposed to allow. |
| As in q. 16 |



Same answer as previous

Should be the same as a private hire vehicle they have there light to let people know if they have customers in or not.

As a Hackney , I would think it would be industry standard

As above most vehicles have tint now

As above.

As above



Step Height

Question 19: Do you think it is necessary for a Private Hire Vehicle with an entrance step height exceeding 38cm to have a fitted step or portable step?

| Non-Licence Holder Comments |
|---|
| I wouldn't trust a portable step |
| If they are unable to get in to a private hire car then should request Hackney to keep the Hackney drivers driving and work |
| To enable those with limited mobility easier access |
| Also fitted with anti slip. The amount of times I have boarded and the step is either half torn and a trip hazard or has no anti slip ok at all |
| It helps for those with reduced mobility. |
| Make boarding easy and safer for all passengers |
| IT ASSISTS THOSE WITH MOBILITY DIFFICULTIES, BUT EASE OF ACCESS ISN'T JUST ABOUT STEP-UP HEIGHT, IT IS ALSO ABOUT HOW ELSE YOU CAN ENTER A VEHICLE, e.g., WHETHER YOU CAN USE A SHUFFLE BOARD TO GET OUT OF A WHEELCHAIR AND ONTO A CAR SEAT. |
| Private vehicle. |
| A fitted step would be more appropriate |
| Obviously to assist getting in or out of the vehicle. |
| All vehicles for use by the public should be adapted within reason to accommodate people with mobility difficulties. |
| To be inclusive and accessible as possible |
| Accessibility of taxis is important |
| Most of our service users have difficulties getting in and out of taxis |
| For some people 38cm is probably too high. |
| To make it easier for older people and young children to get in and out |
| Hackney carriage should be the vehicle offering thi ability |
| All passenger transport vehicles must be accessible for as wide a range of needs as possible. |
| not every body is fully mobile and needs help |

For elderly, disabled or less mobile people, the step height is very important. My partner is disabled and I have in the past had to lift her up into hire vehicles where a step has not been available.

Portable step would be preferable to a fitted step



Licence Holder Comments

Basically yes

Private hire vehicles are restricted to available entrance space. If someone needs a step i assume they will struggle to gain access. Thereby they should order a hackney

Make easier for customers

A lot of people find it easier to get into a slightly higher vehicle from the the kerb

Some elderly and infirm passengers do struggle with the height.

Were would you store it, who's responsible if the fare slips off it, Are the council giving drivers public liability insurance to ensure where covered

I carried a portable step for a vehicle i used in the past

Safety.

If passengers reuire an easy access vehilce they can request one (low rider etc)

I don't think it makes a difference as some vehicles are low as well as high

38cm is more than a foot which for some maybe difficult to manage so some type of a step sounds practical.

Important for accessibility for individuals with restricted mobility.

Not everyone has long legs or can step up high steps, like disabled people, high vehicles need steps

Where are you ment to put the step as well as take wheel chairs or case

Continue

This will add problems to the driver and customer. Storage is an issue and if someone misses or falls off the step there will be issues.

PHV doesn't needs steps

This is a sensible requirement as many elderly and disabled customers may ask for a low vehicle as they are unable or stryggle to get up into the higher vehicles

Some passengers do need assistance to enter a vehicle thus this would help

Should be same as hackney steps

People dont step in if they have issues, they sit and draw legs in with or eithout help. A step should be the choice of driver

any assistance helps

It is essential to facilitate the elderly & the disabled to ingress and egress the vehicle

If a hack needs it a car should to

We have made a step that does not come away from the vehicle when the passengers are getting out, we appreciate that all vehicles are getting higher and harder to get in and out - i personally believe the 38 cm rule should be respected for passengers with difficulties walking and using sticks etc

customer can normally choose high or lower vehicle while booking.

Got to have the same laws for both

Easy enough to carry a caravan step in the boot

Spoken to a lot of drivers who drive kia sportage and not one passanger has asked for the step.

It's just a expensive paper weight

Yes as we must cater for All passengers and we have many with poor mobility

I would keep this because this helps provide a better service for the customer using us as a public service vehicle

I think it is always important to carry a step to help my Customers

I agree this should stay as some passengers do require a step, although I don't think this step has to be fitted to the vehicle. A portable step should be available.

Makes it easier for older passengers

To assist passengers with walking difficulties

In my experience, passengers who experience difficulty entering / exiting the vehicle struggle more with lower seating as opposed to higher step heights. Those elderly with mobility issues tend to require almost lifting up from the seating as opposed to assistance stepping down. I do accept that there are individuals who will struggle with a higher step, therefore a portable step would be beneficial.

For safety

To aid less abled passengers passengers into the vehicle.

Drivers are trainer in assistance no need for a step, there are low riders a customer car request if the prefer.

Some private vehicles may be slightly higher than this, with the variety of vehicles available in a company, anyone needing a low vehicle can ask for one. On the reverse, I've seen people struggle with a lower car so a higher one would actually be of benefit to the.

Problem is who do you put the emphasis on when using a portable step the driver or passenger if he or she falls of the potable step as fiscally assisting somebody is no longer pro rata.



Again cross boarder hire allowed vehicles from outside the area without this rule and is forcing Wirral drivers to seek licenses in other areas and operate in Wirral which has an effect on the local economy

No step as my insurance company will not cover any accidents caused by passengers using the step. I do carry one to comply with council regulations but never use it. I always try to get close to the kerb for them to exit or enter

It will be good Idea for old people

Either step should be allowed as long as its safe.

15" is very high to a child or older person

Yes I think a small or elderly person would require one

A caravan portable step is fine

Question 20: Do you think it is necessary for a Hackney Carriage Vehicle with an entrance step height exceeding 38cm to have a fitted step or portable step?

| Non-Licence Holder Comments |
|--|
| I wouldn't trust a portable step |
| As above. |
| Yes. Elderly, disable and wheel chair users. Who would not use private cabs. |
| A fitted step would be more appropriate |
| For the same reason as previously. |
| To be inclusive and accessible as possible |
| Accessibility of taxis is important |
| Most of our service users have difficulties getting in and out of taxis |
| Some people may find 38cm to be too high. |
| To make it easier for older people and young children to get in and out |
| 38cm hight should be thee allowance on all Hackney Carriages |
| As per previous question. |
| not every body is fully mobile and needs help |
| For elderly, disabled or less mobile people, the step height is very important. My partner is disabled and I have in the past had to lift her up into hire vehicles where a step has not been available. |
| Accessibility |
| Portable step would be preferable to a fitted step |
| As above |



Licence Holder Comments

It helps everyone

For customer

Some elderly and infirm passengers do struggle with the height

Safety

Making the entrance to the vehicle as easy as possible for all passengers, step is a big help

Hackneys doesnt allow for sitting directly from the door, you have to acually step into the vehicle so a step is needed

To aid entry.

As above for a Private Hire Vehicle.

Important for accessibility for individuals with restricted mobility.

High vehicles need steps to help elderly and disabled or small people

Most new hacks cater for tgis

Safe for people to get in

Continue

Some passengers do need assistance to enter a vehicle thus this would help

these vehicles are used by people who struggle with getting in private hire vehicles and need the additional steps to gain access

The nature of the vehicle make sitting and drawing legs in more of an issue

yes they need a step

see answer 22

people have limited choice at the Hackney rank.

Disability and age

As it is now.

Needed for more disability work wheelchairs ect

Yes as we must cater for All passengers and we have many with poor mobility

Agree this should remain.

As per my comments in Section 21 which can also relate to Hackney Carriage Vehicles.

For safety

No step customers aint shy in my experience if my vehicle is to high i let a lowr vehice take the job it isnt a issue

Any older or disabled people wouldn't be able to get in and out of the vehicle

Again cross boarder hire allowed vehicles from outside the area without this rule and is forcing Wirral drivers to seek licenses in other areas and operate in Wirral which has an effect on the local economy

It will be good Idea for old people

Either step should be allowed as long as its safe

As q. 20

Again industry standard , if they think its needed it will be included

A caravan portable step is fine

As above



Question 21: Where bench seats are fitted to the rear of Private Hire Vehicles the seat must be at least 48” wide (16” per rear-seat passenger) measured along the front of the seat. Do you think the Council should maintain this requirement?

| Non-Licence Holder Comments |
|---|
| Passengers wouldn't be bothered if the back seat was smaller |
| If a car has four doors then should be able to be a taxi regardless of the size of the bench seat |
| TO ENSURE COMFORT AND SAFETY. |
| more comftable |
| In order to make it comfortable for the passengers. |
| To be inclusive and accessible as possible |
| Not sure about the dimensions, but plenty of room necessary |
| Size of genral popultion getting bigger so space required |
| people need space and its stop s a Vehicles being over loaded |
| Passengers should be comfortable and not cramped. |
| It's meant to carry people a smaller car is not practical |



Licence Holder Comments

If not you would struggle with fitting lets say 4 rugby players getting in

Let's be honest, peoples arses are getting wider but there has to be a limit

As factory fitted.

For comfort of passengers

Safety and comfort.

Perhaps cars with smaller seat can be licened to carry 3 passengers, 1 in from and 2 in the rear, smaller cars with larger passengers are not suitable or comfortable, and often unable to access seatbelt.

As long as the car has 3 rear seats it should be considered suitable. There is a very small amount of jobs that require all 4 seats to be used, but cars with 3 seats regardless of width are fit for purpose.

To maintain a degree of comfort for passengers

Passengers need comfort.

Other neighbouring areas don't have to abide by this rule it helps with car buying

Taxis need to be big enough for an average person, I've seen corsas plated as private hire, that's a small car. Minimum should be medium sized car(focus,Astra,i30, golf) as a minimum

Cars now are bigger

Smaller vehicles if plated should be only plated for 3 passengers

If airlines can get away with it

Most of the time this is an ample amount of space

some vehicles are to small to be considered a private hire vehicle, I wouldn't want to get in a vehicle that is small and cramped.

Makes it more comfortable for passenger's.

NC

It works without any problems thus far.

Cars that can not seat 3 people in the back should not be licensed for 4 passengers and the driver

If you are allowing other council drivers to drive Toyota prius+ as a 6 seater than why different rule for the wirral drivers

This has been a condition for a number of years and further research is required to ensure that 16" is sufficient for the average adult.

A car comes with the rear seats designed for that vehicle

I think as long as three passengers can fit comfortably then any size seats should be considered.

i do believe that its important to preserve the passengers comfort however i think discretion is needed especially the market is moving into EVs and for vehicles to be fuel efficient or range in electric vehicles

So 3 passengers can sit comfortably

never had an issue as regarding this .because my cab is a six seater.

I assume this has been set so to make the position of the passenger comfortable and if that's the case i see no reason to change

Agree

All private hire seats need to be as wide as possible

Comfortable

It would appear common sense to me, in order to allow for passenger comfort, albeit, I'd be surprised if there are any vehicles currently manufactured by mainstream car makers which do not have rear seats consistent with these dimensions.

Cars have gotten bigger over the decades, most cars today(exluding super mini,s) reach this criteria, and people these days don,t seem to be geting any slimmer

This will keep a level of comfort for the passengers

Comfort of passengers must be upheld

Not every person is the same size

Additional Comments

Question 22: Additional Comments

Non-Licence Holder Comments

I think this rule is outrageous 90 percent of cars made today come with tinted windows and the cost of getting them changed is in the thousands and is not fair when you can just go to sefton council and get badge there and plate the car with tints and work on the wirral so wirral are losing drivers and not bothered about it

There is nothing mentioned on seat belts. This should be encouraged by an alarm or warning system for both drivers and passengers. Most cars have them as standard these days

We need more wheelchair accessible taxis. There isn't enough

Please more stringently monitor our taxi drivers. Use regular passport checks. Implement a maximum driving time so drivers don't work all day/night .Had to call police as one driver was felling asleep at wheel wirh me and my 70 year mother in the vehicle. Police advised him to get some rest! Please implement a time period for our safety, same as truck/lorry drivers have. Sone drivers gave other jobs (shops etc) and work all day then taxi all night. Swap cars and continue. Please have photo and licence checks complete and visible to passengers at all times. Make taxi companies responsible instead of 'our drivers are self employed'. Items left in vehicles are never returned to base as these peoplevare self employed. There is simply No governance or policy that controls behaviours and drivers can simply do what they want, as long as their vehicle is ok and meets requirements. Is this right for our safety and well being? Or is this a freedom to abuse and take advantage of innocent public? Please implement controls and spot checks. Please.

Don't really see the point to this survey. If the taxi has an MOT and is safe for 12 months then that should be good enough.

Any additional changes every 6 months will be passed on. If the cost increases people will stop using them, just like the 20mph limit, where the taxi driver has started to pass it onto their clients.

THIS SURVEY IS SIGNIFICANT FOR THE QUESTIONS IT DOESN'T ASK, AS MUCH AS FOR THOSE IT DOES ASK. WHY ARE YOU NOT ASKING ABOUT WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBILITY? WE NEED TO MOVE TO A MIXED FLEET APPROACH FOR THE HCV FLEET - IN CONFORMITY WITH THE LATEST GOVERNMENT ADVICE, BECAUSE YOU ARE LOSING HCV DRIVERS DUE TO YOUR RIGID, ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL WAV POLICY. YOU ARE IGNORING THE NEEDS OF AMBULANT WHEELCHAIR USERS WHO WOULD PREFER TO TRAVEL WHILST NOT SAT IN THEIR WHEELCHAIRS.



THERE IS NOTHING IN THIS SURVEY THAT ASKS RESPONDENTS THEIR VIEWS ON LOW EMISSION VEHICLES.

In my view councillors should not be deciding if vehicles make the extended time rules. This should be done by VOSA or mot examiners. What mechanical knowledge do they have ?

I am concerned that maintaining the default 10-year age limit for vehicles causes taxi drivers too much inconvenience and unnecessary stress. We grant most requests for extensions anyway and the panels are a drain on council resources - officers' time as well as placing extra demands on the minority of councillors who are available for panels.

To be registered as a taxi driver and improve driving skills and safety for passengers and all road users, ALL DRIVERS (new and present) should have to pass an Advanced Driving Test, a Level 3 Bikeability test and sign a pledge to keep to speed limits and not to block viewpoints/pavements by parking on junctions/pavements. Professional drivers will then be up to date with the Highway Code (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-highway-code>), be able to demonstrate exemplary driving skills, understand how to overtake people cycling safely, reduce intimidation due to not speeding over the speed limit, increase safety by not blocking viewpoints on junctions, enable pedestrians to be able to use pavements safely by not parking on pavements and be able to set a good example to all other road users. These measures would increase safety for ALL road users and also help to encourage/ enable more active travel to take place safely (in accordance with Wirral Councils policies on Climate Change and Sustainability).

Whilst I'm happy for vehicles to be used for longer, ultimately I would like to see the electrification of the taxi fleet as soon as possible. If a vehicle is kept longer I'd like to see a way to making sure that the driver's next vehicle is electric. Can we find a mechanism for this? Perhaps some funding support for drivers and rules in place to make sure we hit our Climate Strategy at Wirral Council (no petrol/diesel cars on Wirral roads by 2030)

The provision for taxis is abysmal during the school runs. It can often be difficult to arrange taxis for residents hospital appointments or trips out

Drivers should be incentivised to switch to zero or low emissions vehicles, particularly for use in residential areas. It's also very hard to find a taxi willing to take you back to the Wirral from Liverpool, so maybe the tunnel fees could be scrapped for taxis?

I don't use taxis very much and feel that I cannot really answer most of the questions.

I don't use these vehicles often but I do want to feel they are safe and comfortable to use.

Any regulations on hours drivers are allowed to work?

We need more ranks in appropriate places such as Hoylake and Heswall as many won't take people from there to Prenton.

The price of fares between the tunnels needs addressing its a disgrace that we have to pay the same fare for a 5 mile journey as we do for a longer journey if it wasn't through the tunnel.

yes/no answers to vehicle age doesn't really help when looking at vehicle emissions.

e.g.,

<https://tfl.gov.uk/modes/driving/ultra-low-emission-zone>

Petrol cars that meet the ULEZ standards are generally those first registered as new with the DVLA after 2005, although cars that meet the standards have been available since 2001

Diesel cars that meet the standards are generally those first registered with the DVLA as new after September 2015

Given the huge benefits that London has seen on air pollution, our Wirral Plan and our Air Pollution strategy, is it possible to include meeting ULEZ standards or similar as a licensing criteria or have different age standards for petrol/diesel?

I would be keen also to see how we can incorporate low carbon fuels (e.g., support for electric vehicles) into the licensing criteria.

safety and accessibility should be a priority

Drivers should be of smart appearance

I have stopped using Hackney Carriage Vehicles due to the excessive prices they charge. There must be a way of regulating what they charge as some will charge over £70 to transfer from Liverpool to Birkenhead. With a private hire such as Uber you know what your fare is upfront .I believe that a printed receipt with the taxi number should be given out on every fare to people to be able to register complaints against excessive fares that are being charged by Hackney drivers.



Licence Holder Comments

Stop cross border hire as you the council don't know who is working your borough safety is no 1 plus these out of towners don't know the area plus the public end up paying more because of this

Wirral council should amend rules and regulations to align with other local councils such as Liverpool city and, Cheshire West and Chester

I think the council do need to look at the tinted windows as extra expenses when buying new vehicles

The renewal process always seems time consuming. If it could be streamlined somehow or if you were able to apply online or even through an app would be beneficial and bring everything upto date.

Drivers are moving over to Sefton or Cheshire west as you can get a better vehicle for the job we do and more comfort when doing 10 hr daily shifts. Think Wirral Council need to Allow tints and anything the other authorities allow that work on the Wirral.

I feel as though Wirral council are dictating what type of work I can do with regards to window tints. I am never given executive jobs because most of these type of jobs require a tint. I feel as though my potential earnings are limited because of this. I would like to purchase an executive vehicle and will need to move my badge and plate to another council to allow me to do this

There appears to be an increase of Wolverhampton and Sefton taxis working on the Wirral, the standard and cleanliness of these taxis are not the same as wirral taxis. Is there any way of atopping them?

If the licensing rules keep alienating drivers and causing unnecessary expenses in replacement glass/excess mots etc more and more drivers will continue to license out of area and work for operators with several ops licenses. This will eventually delete all the hackney trade on Wirral and the majority of drivers

Wirrals current regulations severly affects drivers negativley in order to be over cautious.

I think you require more random checks carried out on Taxis that operate within the wirral area both driver and cars

I'm pleased that you're doing this survey because lots of drivers have moved over to Sefton because of your rules. I feel that this could be a step forward and I hope you look at Sefton rules which seem to be better for drivers.

Most of the rules and criteria pertaining to car age and mots are archaic and based on older cars that were more likely to deteriorate more quickly. Modern cars are far more robust, resilient and hold up much better over time, cosmetically and mechanically. These rules

should be done away with. Forcing drivers to shell out for new cars when their current cars are perfectly suitable just because they have passed a certain arbitrary age is ridiculous.

I think everyone should be governed by the same rules , you can't have one rule for Wirral drivers & one for other licensing authorities if their working for Wirral licensed operators

It would be nice to see taxi licensing official's visiting the ranks and or out with the Police stop checking for vehicle conditions and driver documentation

Wirral council are making it hard to get a car registered with them and also keep cars on the road and working just as they over a certain age its not fair on drivers trying to make a living.

Removing the tinted glass restriction for new vehicles would encourage drivers to renew their present vehicles which would help to modernise the present WBC plated taxi fleet and as a bonus be more environmental friendly in the process.

Really there should be a full overhaul of the ph and hacks on the Wirral. As all out of town plated do as they like if you went out on the street you would be shocked

2 main issues on this survery, vechile age /tints. I fully believe we need to move with the times and other councils. If the car is safe and compliant age should be irrelevant. Tints 80% new cars come as standard which then puts an additional cost on the driver. Cctv should be fitted in all cars , and this come become mandatory/condition if tints are allowed. Ive noticed alot of drivers moving from WBC - to - LCC- Sefton for the 2 reasons above especially as they can work for uber/Argyle and Alpha with a liverpool badge/plate. Thanks.

Me personally I have the ok to not have my plates on the vehicle for the private work I do, there's guys I know who are Liverpool licensed who take take them on and off so they can work Uber and such like in quiet periods, I feel that Wirral should allow this aswell because it's causing me to loose out on money or the only option left is to settle another vehicle which is ridiculous and would be more of an outlay before making any money. I hope this can be looked at and considered being changed

Time for change or lots of valuable revenue will be lost.

I am a private hire operator doing business clients, cross country & airport transfers. I look to always update my vehicle & be competitive in pricing & contracts. It is getting more difficult to buy high spec/electric vehicles with no tints & still give that corporate look, that clients request. We advertise Mercedes upgrades, and with the vehicles getting more efficient to help with climate control all vehicles come with tints. So in past cannot buy top spec range thus losing out on work & contracts, restricting the growth of my company, because dont have vehicle they request & getting beating by liverpool, salford, knowley & cheshire operators because they are allowed.

for example i cant but A Electric Mercedes Vito Class Top Spec, Tints come as standard for climate control efficiency.



A change of rule/regulation or addition to help sole private hire operators who do business clients, cross country & airport transfer solely & not treated same as local taxis working for like of argyle satellite around town.

My thoughts are that Private Hire and Hackney Carriage vehicles should be treated similarly.

Wbc need to drop the privacy glass rule it becomes a mockery that we can get a badge out of area and still work on the Wirral like out of town drivers can.

I have been a Hackney driver for wbc for 15 years the rules set by wirral have been challenging

I have seen over the last 5 years drivers leave for neighbouring authorities and still working for wirral private hire firms

I have asked my self on numerous occasions wonder how much wbc are loosing in licence and vehicle licence fees

Just 2 miles through the tunnel the rules are more relaxed

As for window tint etc

Harmonisation of licensing rules across the LCR should be on the agenda .
How rides are booked has changed. Radical reform is overdue and that should consider whether the distinction between HC and PH is still necessary.

it's not really beneficial in any way to obtain a WBC private hire license anymore, I'd say it's more of an inconvenience when coming to renew or grant first licenses to vehicles aswell as even obtaining your private hire badges there is zero benefit getting a WBC badge when the majority of people working here have other council plates for less hassle and money

More inspections are needed, not appointments at the solar campus where you can just not turn up. I know staffing is low but you need to get out more and spot check cars on the road.

Window tints need to be allowed, trying to buy an executive car for like £20-30k without tints is a nightmare and are very very rare.

Vehicle magnets can be a problem these days with plastic or aluminium doors, maybe a small sticker like Cheshire west use

On a positive note, the licencing staff at solar campus are brilliant people. Very helpful

Tinted glasses is on most new cars as you would like driver to go carbon neutral we can not do this as most evs and hybrid come with tinted glasses and when the open was on people

where asking for cars with tinted glass but they jobs went taxi from other areas as Wirral driver could not do them this not fair

The M O T station should have the last word on whether a car or cab is suitable for the public.

I work for Argyle Satellite Taxis, we have vehicles licensed from various Liverpool councils and Chester all working for the same company picking up the same passengers as myself from all over the wirral. But any wirral driver is penalised by wirral councils draconian rules. Please let's have a level playing field.

Personally I will get my license from another licensing authority when Wirral one is about to expire as they are a lot more flexible, save me a lot of money and hassle.

If Wirral can match Liverpool, Sefton or Cheshire West vehicle licensing conditions then I may renew it with Wirral.

Majority of the local drivers have already changed and more are going that way.

Why would I pay more than £1,500 to take tints off a car to get it licensed when it comes as standard with most cars?

Why would I stay with Wirral when other licensing authorities allow up to and more than 12 year old vehicles?

Why would I waste thousands of pounds when I could just go to another authority and get more flexibility and a lot less hassle?

I hope you really make the right decision because you're losing a lot of drivers renewing their licenses very fast.

All of car age should be over 15 or 20 years old allowed and car company factory fitted tinted windows should be allowed.

Amending tinted window and vehicle age limit rules will stop drivers from getting badges from other councils and will result in increased revenue from licensing fees

Cross border hiring has decimated the local drivers serving local communities element of the licensed taxi trade. We now have drivers from everywhere working neighbourhoods/communities that are not local them. I was a local Wallasey driver serving and looking after the people of Wallasey. Since Alpha's takeover I'm very rarely in Wallasey anymore. My experienced eyes and ears are sadly not able to help keep a watch in my local community anymore and I very rarely get a chance to serve them. Shame really, because that's what I always loved about this job.



Now a days it is noticed that a lot of other councils vehicles , most of them very old , uncleaned cars with tinted windows) working in Wirral council area . Vehicles s out side the Liverpool city region (Wolverhampton, Bolton, Salford and Warrington) also working in Wirral Council Area. Council Licencing and enforcement teams attention is requesting to control this unauthorised operation with in the boundaries of Wirral Council.

I think we should have no age limit for a private hire and allow a tinted window.and also have a limit for a new drivers .thanks hope you take our comments seriously.

Personally I think wirral Council need to be addressing what is allowed via other authorities working in the area as we ourselves whom sat our badges with wirral are being penalised against other authorities.

Hackney Carriage Vehicle rules are totally outdated.and unfair.....Re Yellow trim on Seats, Yellow handles, rear 'doors open' sign needed are just a few but there are many more..... These are implemented but same vehicle on Private hire are not needed

🙄🙄🙄🙄🙄🙄..... But I suppose this is one of the reasons why we are called 'Wacky Wirral' when asked in correspondence very regularly!!!!

Mainly when get asked what Licensing Authority you are working/Licensed with when renewing our insurance!!!!

Anyway I know this won't get anywhere, so I am wasting my timeYET AGAIN!!!!

I have been a private hire driver and a Hackney driver on the wirral and forced out by your current policies being to strict on drivers who don't do that many hours therefore making it to difficult to make a living with your strict expensive dicisions forcing me to move to another council the plate a perfectly good car.

Age of PH vehicle policy must be addressed to stop drivers going to Sefton to get plated and badged. 6 month wait in Sefton to get badged!

I personally think all councils across England should be subject to the same rules, making it an even playing field.

My main concern is the windows issue. Wirral is losing income at an accelerating rate due to this. Drivers should have the right to choose a vehicle of their choice. Much more important to the council should be the type of person driving , i have heard awful stories of unacceptable driver attitude. The treatment of the old and infirm should be based on kindness and courtesy, , i have spent many years in the corporate world and am used to high standards of behaviour. If i were in licencing i would work towards a standard so as to change this low level and dangerous behaviour

It's time to cap the number of licences granted and to stop cross border allowances



As a Hackney Driver with private hire badges i have been in the Taxi Trade as a Hackney driver since 1998 first in Liverpool now Wirral i feel that we have no support both as drivers and owner from WBC and the LCR, During COVID we got a very small amount of money from LCR Mayor the bus and train companies Furlow all or most of there staff on full pay we got nothing, In 2013 the likes of Arriva/Stagecoach got enormous amounts of support for Hybrid fleets today 2023 we have received no help financially from WBC/LCR or Central Government the Hackney fleet on the Wirral is in dire straits because of the lack of funding support there are only 3 Hybrid Hackney vehicles out of about 180 on the road this tells you that people cant afford them without financial help the other problem Wheelchairs/Scooters are getting bigger and the old dying out fleet cant fit them in the Cabs, I feel that the WBC policy on rear loading vehicles is way behind the guidelines recommended by TFL we need alternative affordable vehicles that accomodate all people in or out of Wheelchairs/Scooters, I feel that the current structure of WBC is way behind the times and needs to be overhauled from top to bottom. i would be open to any discussion with WBC on moving forward.

The Taxi and Private Hire trade has reduced considerably due to Covid. Driver's were abandoned by the Government and received little or no financial support. They were wrned but took little notice. As a consequence many left the trade and will never return. To make it attractive or even possible to recruit new blood it has to be viable financially. At present it is not. Vehicles are not available in the affordability range that matches Wirral's earning levels. Lack of access to ranks that are full of illegally parked vehicles is generally ignored by parking enforements. "Liscard cresent and Hamilton Square to name a few" No enforecment relating to Private Hire vehicles picking up unbooked hirings often from taxi ranks. I have yet to see or hear of one prosecution. Yet Liverpool publish there's monthly on the web site. This may appear to be small issues that are usually ignored by licensing but they make a big difference if your income depends on it.

Rules are rules they should be same for everyone weather they are from Wirral Council or Liverpool City Council or any other Council. If you only say Wirral Council than you should not allow any other Council drivers work on the wirral and if you do so than they should follow the Wirral Council Rules.

I know alot of drivers have moved to different different councils because of rules me personally think its getting crazy all the different plates around the wirral now Wolverhampton being one of them.

Local Authorities have a difficult task, in ensuring that taxis and private hire have the highest standards without making those standards prohibitively expensive to the point where it undermines the viability of running a taxi or private hire vehicle. Particularly with recent changes in legislation which makes it easier for individuals to obtain licences with councils that may have lesser standards, but still work exclusively in Wirral

I drive for Sefton, despite living on the Wirral, because of the window tint rule, and the choice of cars available to me.



Way to strict on some policies it cost the driver a lot more money to have glass changed or restricts them from buying the car they want

As Wirral council keeps a strict regulations , people are going to other councils to get permits for the same vehicle , looses Wirral Council's revenue. Please Think

I think if Wirral council don't remove the requirement for window tints then more and more drivers will move to other councils when their badge's expire meaning less revenue for Wirral.

My review on your process's of understanding the trade is well respected and appreciated as a business owner however, with the current state of play in the public hire sector i feel you will struggle getting parts for vehicles it is almost impossible. By lowering the age standards of the vehicles you are also lowering the safety of the same vehicle. I believe under the circumstances with the lack of public hires vehicles available with the new policies therefore you MUST change to assist drivers to purchase WAVS you must understand that the drivers do not want to buy them regardless (or afford them). The Hackney trade is one of the most hardest to buy a WAV with guaranteed miles knowing that you are purchasing the vehicle with good faith is certainly is not what happens in the real world of Public Hire - we can see this just in mots and mileages on these vehicles and the amount of vehicles that do get clocked are disgraceful. The Public Hire hire stay in these vehicles to make more money and pay less tax and the Private Hire are investing in vehicles to off set taxes and provide a service and taking pride in what they are doing. My honest opinion of the Public Hire and the industry that i provide services for as soon as the cash payments received and the taxes of proven income comes into play the Hackney trade as well as the lack of vehicles will fail. The majority of the vehicles on the ranks are not servicing the disabled, no proper checks on MOTs that all straps and ramps are active and massive changes need to prevail if you are going down the road of older taxis to provide services to disabled people. Buggies and shopping trollies should also be secured in the vehicle at all times.

There should not be any upper age limit in private hire vehicle in today's world of inflation.

I have one year left with Wirral and I'm taking a course with Liverpool to get a badge with them as they allow window tints and they're cheaper.

Wirral is too expensive and too strict compared to other local authorities so I'm not staying.

We feel it would be advantageous for the disabled traveling public on the wirral to be able to use other wheelchair accessible vehicles, other than hackneys - i.e a private hire vehicle with possibly a rear loading ramp.

Biggest issue are age limits of vehicles and tinted windows .

Tinted windows,
Thus has to change before drivers just go elsewhere.

I have been a cab driver since 2005 in that time the job has got progressively worse with the amount of clubs and pubs shutting and bringing the weekend night shifts to its knees, then to put the icing on the cake you have all the cross border private hire cars coming in, Uber, Delta, Alpha and our own local Private hire firm Argyle with Liverpool Hackneys working Wirral. These said plated vehicles have got Liverpool, Sefton, Cheshire west, Bootle and now Wolverhampton. This last council is issuing these plates like confetti, this problem needs to be addressed as I can see Wirral not having any Hackney cabs in the near future. Remember no cabs no cab licence fee for Wirral Council, Wolverhampton will have them as private hire drivers. Access at Ham square rank opposite station can be stressful to work off as parked cars or vans seem to think they can park on it when they feel like! Also the rank in Liscard Crescent, when I asked a car to move off the rank on Ham Square I was told that I would have my windows smashed if I blocked him in, and one last thing, 20 mile an hour roads yes schools but all over Wirral, utter madness more emissions are released at 20 mile an hour or is it safety, I didn't see a tsunami of people getting ran over but there will be a tsunami of cars hitting other cars because everyone is too busy looking at their speedometer and not looking what's in front of them.

I hope that when you review that whatever your reasons for the age limit and the tinted windows that it only serves to financially punish and discriminate WBC drivers trying to earn a living which is getting harder in the financial crisis we're living in and showing no signs of changing soon as long as ALL vehicles meet the strict criteria set out by yourselves then ALL vehicles and drivers should be treated as equal

So overall in my opinion I think that we should slightly alter these requirements to make everything fair all around, this comes as I am an airport transfer and I keep my vehicle in top condition for the best experience for the customer!

As answered in question 18, I find it hard to understand why it is only Wirral council who has these restrictions which is forcing Wirral drivers to get licenced in Liverpool or Chester then come and work for Argyle taxis on the Wirral
Wirral council must be losing drivers and their money!
It also makes renewing vehicles difficult as most new vehicles have privacy glass fitted as standard!

Get online with regulations on factory fitted window tints as the other Merseyside councils. This must change!

I think the window tints on private hire vehicles should be scrapped as this puts local Wirral drivers at a disadvantage when drivers from Sefton/Liverpool are working for the same operators without window tints. A lot of local drivers are in the process of getting a Sefton Licence due to this issue.

Regarding hackney Carriages, newly licensed cabs under 3 years old should be scrapped and changed to 10 years in my opinion. Cost of cabs under 3 years old are now extortionately



priced and will have an effect in reducing Hackney's inWirral in the next few years. This will affect people who rely on the hackney trade, especially wheelchair users.

It should be only Wirral plated cars and taxis working Wirral for maximum passenger safety.

I think a taxi should only be able to pick up in the council they are licensed in drop off any were local drivers for local people

I would happily accept an invitation to consult with the Council over any of the issues I have highlighted in my survey response. For the Council to be losing funds to adjacent Councils, seems to me, to be incomprehensible in this current financial climate.

Furthermore to cede control to adjacent Councils over the acceptability and standards of drivers and vehicles trading on Wirral highways appears unjustifiable and irrational, particularly when the policy creating this circumstance, is at odds with the Department of Transport current guidance, dated November 2023.

A uniform set of rules should apply across all Hackney and private hire companies as well as councils

I Think the councils current legislation is spot on fir wirral councils requirements

One thing that really gets on my nerves is the fact I hold a wirral badge yet others go and get Sefton badges and work over here, we have a knowledge test yet they don't. Surly this should be compulsory to work on the wirral

I think the council should be more relaxed on the age of the cars. A lot of drivers have struggled because of covid and paying out for a new car just because it's 10 years old is unfair in my opinion

Please take my notes seriously in regards to age limit and tinted windows and it's drivers us drivers crazy. I know few people that can't find a vehicle they want because of tinted windows and I know a few who spent 2-3 grant just to meet your requirement whereas other drivers from other authority are working in our area without any restrictions. Not fair!

I only know the comments I have made have effected me over the years which causes extra hassle doing the job when things are tough enough as it is.

The main change that I would like to see as a private hire driver with an Operators license is the window tints. I only do airport transfers and I think we should be allowed to buy nicer spec minibuses which have tinted windows.

WE DO NOT NEED A METER INCREASE, UBER SHOULD BE MADE TO TAKE ON CABS ON THE WIRRAL ALL THE WHEEL CHAIR JOBS ARE GOING TO OUT OF TOWN DRIVERS! WILL HACKNEY DRIVERS ARE SUFFERING MAKE THEM TAKE US ON OR BAN THEM FROM TAKING WHEEL CHAIR BOOKING IN OUR BOROUGH LOCAL WORK FOR LOCAL DRIVER WITH LOCAL



KNOWLEDGE, CROSS BORDER HIRING IS HERE ITS A REAL ISSUE OUR COUNCIL NEEDS TO REACT TO MAKE DRIVERS WANT TO BE BADGED HERE

As a hackney owner/ driver i think we should be able to replace with 10 or 11 year olds from london etc as they are within price range because at the moment there is nothing to buy within our price range

Survey has already covered my main issues of phv age and the requirements for non- tinted windows

Scrap the tints nonsense as we will all be going to Sefton

Thankyou for doing this survey it is very much needed and appreciated

Cross boarder hiring has had a massive effect for all drivers and council you cannot impose rules for one and not the other without discrimination.

Drivers coming in from outside the area is a drain on the Wirral economy as they buy their fuel groceries in the town they live in.

Drivers getting licensed in other areas is also a drain on the economy as no doubt as to why we are having this survey.

I would like to see more help from the licensing department with regards to special dispensation towards removal of front and rear plates for events such as weddings corporate events. As have to turn away work as I cannot offer my car for such events. I take pride in offering a service above normal requirements and trying to offer a higher standard of service than what is available.

Please remove the window tint rule it's so hard to find a car without.

Rules governing the taxi trade at local levels are now absurd, you have p/h from other areas working Wirral, picking up the very people you say as a licensing authority your rules are there to protect but your rules don't apply to their vehicles, medicals are different. I know this is a national issue but it is absolutely ridiculous

I feel there is no reason for two tests a year as the spot checks the council carry out are very effective.

Regarding hackney carriage vehicles.

There should be more ranks across the wirral area. Not just in birkenhead liscard or new brighton. There should be ones at arrowe park hospital, St caths, clatterbridge. This would help spread the ranking up less taxis stuck in the town etc. If the hospital is on private land can't the licensing liase with the land owners? There seems to be no problem in Liverpool all hospitals near enough have hackney ranks for the hospitals. There could also be a rank put in Heswall like there used to be around the resturants etc. Oxton village by the resturants/pubs.

It's much safer having taxis waiting outside than people standing on street corners alone waiting for private hire for over an hour.

Hackney carriage vehicles have no upper age limit, this is because they are purpose built for the job. Private hire vehicles (e.g. Ford Mondeo) have a 10 year limit, these vehicles are not purpose built for their job so I believe the age limit to be a correct requirement. However I operate wheelchair accessible school minibuses operating exclusively for Wirral council, these buses are purpose built the same as a hackney vehicle but are licensed under the private hire age limit, I believe this should be reviewed due to being purpose built, their limited work and therefore limited annual mileage.

When I'm driving my clients I'm representing Wirral Council and I provide the client with a professional customer experience which in turn provides repeat business I am very happy with licensing and if I could ask anything I would ask you to have a rethink on Sun Protection glass in the rear. Thank You.

Dear Sir/Madam.

Could the Licensing office and panel consider a dispensation for Private hire vehicles that are booked through a licensed operator for Weddings and or Corporate transport to remove door signs and vehicle orange plates for the duration of the booking whilst keeping them secure in the vehicle until the booking is complete then refitted to said vehicle in line with normal Council policy.

Any bookings for Weddings/ Corporate transport would have to be booked by Email and payment by bank transfer or corporate business card.

The Vehicles driver would still have to wear their badge and display as normal the secondary badge in the vehicle.

Thank you for your time.

I think it is time to allow vehicles, which are more than 10 years old to work as a private hire in the Wirral council, thanks

WBC in the public interest(loss of revenue)need to stop allowing vehicles/drivers to move out of area. The only way to do this is to remove the window tint current rules. This is the main sticking point with all drivers. To remove tint can cosy up to £1500. Most drivers cannot afford this cost hence the reason for plating in Liverpool at a monstrous cost in loss of revenue to WBC

I don't believe the delegated powers is the appropriate method to be used to make the decisions, I also think the vehicle inspections at the solar campus should be questioned on there qualifications as to if they are trained mechanics and to actually learn there job between the difference between a taxi and a minibus

I would like to see a fairer playing field. Any vehicles working on the Wirral should be governed by the same rules regardless of where the car has been plated. FAIRNESS FOR ALL

We as a association already had a meeting with Mr Andrew Bushell, at the meeting we had discussed and raised our concerns about vehicle age limits and tinted windows, we believe Wirral council are losing money in revenue due to drivers are returning Wirral licences and obtaining licenses from other councils such as Liverpool City, Sefton, Wolverhampton, we had further communication with Mr Bushell via emails, Mr Bushell ensured us that he will share our concerns with the heads of Wirral Taxi Licensing Authority, we believe there is an panel meeting on 24th January 2024, we as an association would like to attend the meeting and share our concerns and suggestions.

Asking for drivers to change cars every 10 years is unreasonable

I do hope the council come to there senses and relax the rules on drivers vehicles, i am sure the council will get more revenue if they change the rules

A lot of there rules are out of date with current times. An need updating. I find it difficult to understand that drivers working for the same company on Wirral roads are under different rules. It's encouraging drivers to regeister with different councils to go around these rules. Which is not good for any one . I'm sure customers would be safer an feel safer if all cars are run by the same set of rules.

As we are called wirral city region , we should have all the same rules , a combined licencing region

Because vehicles which are suitable for taxi s are very expensive nowif the vehicle us still in very good condition then the licence should be at leat fifteen years ..



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**Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence Criteria in neighbouring
Authorities across the City Region**

| Licensing Authority | Age Policy PHV | Age Policy HCV | MOT Requirement PHV | MOT Requirement HCV | Windows HCV and PHV |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| Wirral Council | Upper age limit 10 Years | Entry no more than 3 years 10 years if a proprietor wishes to change a vehicle on an existing licence No upper age limit | 6 monthly after 6 years | 6 monthly after 10 years | The front windscreen must let at least 75% of light through and all other windows must let at least 70% of light through |
| Liverpool City Council | X | X | 6 monthly after 8 years | 6 monthly after 11 years | No enhance tint fitted to windows unless done at the point of manufacture in accordance with DVSA standards |
| Sefton Council | Entry 8 years or less | Entry 11 years or less | 6 monthly after 8 years | 6 monthly after 11 years | The front windscreen must have a minimum light transmission capacity of 75%. The windows to either side of the driver must have a minimum light transmission capacity of 70%. All windows fitted to the vehicle (apart from those in (i) above) must be the manufacturer approved standard fit, whether tinted or not. |
| Knowsley Council | X | X | 6 months after 8 years | X | Vehicles must be presented as originally constructed as per |

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------|--|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| | | | | | the Manufacturers Specification |
| Halton Council | Entry 13 years or less If wheelchair accessible can be licensed up to 16 years entry 5 years or less If not wheelchair accessible can be licensed up to 10 years | Entry 13 years or less If wheelchair accessible can be licensed up to 16 years entry 5 years or less If not wheelchair accessible can be licensed up to 10 years | 6 monthly after 3 years | 6 monthly after 3 years | Privacy glass shall be permitted subject to the following rules: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The permitted degree of tinting of glass in front of the 'B – Pillar' shall be in accordance with national standards. • The permitted degree of tinting of glass behind the vehicles 'B – Pillar' shall not exceed the vehicle manufacturer's specification for the vehicle in question. |
| St Helens | X | X | Under Revision | Under Revision | The front windscreen and front passenger windows must let at least 75% of light through. Film or spray which may alter the characteristics or appearance of the windows will not be permitted. |

Regulatory and General Purposes Committee – Terms of Reference

The principal role of the Regulatory and General Purposes Committee is as the administrative committee, established as an ordinary committee and acting under delegation pursuant to sections 101 and 102 of the Local Government Act 1972, and responsible for making decisions as licensing and registration authority on all regulatory matters not otherwise delegated to the Planning Committee or reserved to the Licensing Act Committee.

The Committee is charged by full Council to fulfil all of those functions, more particularly described as set out at Schedule 1 of the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 (as amended), and associated matters, including but not limited to:

- (a) functions relating to licensing, registration and ancillary matters other than those falling within the remit of the Licensing Act Committee, including but not limited to:
 - acupuncture, tattooing, ear-piercing and electrolysis;
 - caravan sites;
 - charity collections and street collections;
 - hackney carriage and private hire vehicle licences, drivers and operators;
 - entertainments;
 - market and street trading,
 - pleasure boats and pleasure vessels;
 - scrap yards;
 - sex shops and sex establishments;
 - solemnisation of marriages;
 - theatres and cinemas;
 - zoos, animal trainers and exhibitors and dangerous wild animals;
- (b) functions relating to health and safety at work, to the extent that those functions are discharged otherwise than in the authority's capacity as an employer;
- (c) functions relating to sea fisheries;
- (d) functions relating to statutory nuisance and contaminated land;
- (e) the passing of a resolution that schedule 2 to The Noise and Statutory Nuisance Act 1993 should apply in the authority's area;
- (f) commons regulation and town and village greens, the power to apply for an enforcement order against unlawful works on registered common land, the power to protect unclaimed registered common land and unclaimed town or village greens against unlawful interference and the power to institute proceedings for offences in respect of unclaimed land;
- (g) the power to make a closing order on a takeaway food shop;
- (h) the obtaining of particulars of persons interested in land under section 16 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976;

- (f) functions relating to elections and electoral registration not otherwise reserved to Full Council, including the making of recommendations to the Council as to recommendations to the Secretary of State on ward boundaries;
- (g) Power to consider and make recommendations to the Council on matters relating to the name and status of the Borough and individuals; and
- (h) making recommendations to Council on the promotion or approval of local bill.