

Appendix 1 – Proposals considered by Licensing Committee – 15 June 2016

Objective 1 – Vehicle conditions are further improved

Vehicles must be less than 6 years old on the date of the first application, unless they are in an 'exceptionally well maintained condition, subject to inspection at continuing 6 monthly intervals' A vehicle of 6 years and older has to undergo and pass a visual check and mechanical check before it is licensed. Currently a vehicle is permitted an unlimited number of attempts to pass these checks. It is proposed to limit the number of attempts.

Amendments have been made to the definition of a vehicle that is 'exceptionally well maintained'. This is explained below:

Proposal 1 - Should a vehicle fail a visual inspection a second inspection will be permitted. Should a vehicle fail the second visual inspection it will be deemed not to be of exceptional condition and consequently will not be licensed.

Proposal 2 - Should a vehicle of 6 years or older fail a mechanical inspection with defects in more than one critical area (listed below), it will be deemed not to be of exceptional condition and consequently will not be licensed.

Proposal 3 - Should a vehicle of less than 6 years old fail a mechanical inspection, one retest will be available. Should the vehicle fail the inspection at the second attempt with defects in more than one critical area the vehicle will not be licensed.

Critical areas covered by the inspection: engine; brakes; suspension; steering, tyres

Objective 2 – Vehicle emissions are reduced

Vehicle Age – Vehicles must be less than 6 years old on the date of the first application with the exception of purpose-built London style cabs.

Proposal 4 – To remove purpose built London style cabs from the list of exemptions. Work is underway to replace diesel purpose built London style cabs with ultra low emission vehicles. This proposal removes the risk of surplus London style cabs of 6 years and over being licensed within the district.

Proposal 5 – To add ultra low emission vehicles to the list of exemptions, permitting vehicles 6 years and over on the first application

Vehicle emissions – Newer vehicles not requiring an MOT as deemed to be compliant. Vehicle emission standards are regulated through the MOT, where required. Currently there are no restrictions on the type of engine permitted.

Proposal 6 - To require vehicles to be fitted with a Euro 6 compliant engine, from January 2021.

Euro emissions standards were first introduced in 1992 (Euro 1) with the aim of making cars cleaner. For diesel cars, the new Euro 6 standards, introduced in September 2014 dramatically dropped the permitted level of nitrogen oxide emitted down to a maximum of 80mg/km compared to the 180mg/km set by the Euro 5 standard. The limit for nitrogen oxide from petrol cars remains unchanged from the Euro 5 standard at 60mg/km. The permitted levels of carbon monoxide and particulate matter remain unchanged from the Euro 5 standard.

Or

To require vehicles to be fitted with a Euro 4 compliant engine (registered since January 2005), from 1 January 2017

To require vehicles to be fitted with a Euro 5 compliant engine (registered since September 2009), from 1 January 2021

To require vehicles to be fitted with a Euro 6 compliant engine (registered since September 2014), from 1 January 2025

Objective 3 - Licensed taxi vehicles are more easily recognisable

Vehicle Design, colour – Currently there are no restrictions on the exterior colour of a hackney carriage.

Members of the public can often confuse private hire vehicles with taxi, failing to realise that private hire vehicles are not available for immediate hire. So it is important to distinguish between the two types of vehicle. Measures currently used to distinguish the two types of vehicle include colour coded licence plates, mandatory door signage detailing the words 'advanced bookings only' on private hire vehicles and mandatory roof sign for hackney carriages.

Proposal 7 - To introduce a livery colour for hackney carriages, making the vehicles more recognisable to the public. From 1 January 2018 all vehicles relating to new applications for a hackney carriage licence must be the livery colour agreed by the council.

Objective 4 - Customers of the service feel the council is spending money well

Motor insurance certificate – Currently there is not a policy relating to the length of cover notes or insurance certificates. Consequently there is currently nothing to prevent a licence holder from submitting short term cover notes for the whole period of the licence, creating an administrative burden. Although drivers submitting short term cover notes is not currently an issue here in North West Leicestershire, it has become an problem for other licensing authorities.

Proposal 8 – In the event that a short term cover is in place at the time of grant the licence holder must present a further insurance certificate to the licensing team before the expiry of the cover note. Failure to present an insurance certificate before the expiry of the cover note will result in the licensing team contacting the licence holder requiring evidence of insurance to be produced. This service will be chargeable.

Customer feedback – Currently it is not a requirement to display a sign or notice informing customers how they can give feedback relating to the service provided. Currently, very little feedback is received by the licensing team.

Proposal 9 - To introduce a requirement to display a notice within the vehicle explaining to a passenger how they can provide feedback to the council.